

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG CLERKS WORKING IN SCHOOLS OF DISTRICT LUDHIANA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to find out about the school's clerks perception of their quality of work life. Convenient sampling method was followed. Survey was conducted and data was analyzed on the basis of responses provided by 50 respondents. A well structured questionnaire was formulated, which was subjected to pilot testing and re-drafted. Data was analysed with the help of factor analysis, Karl Pearson correlation technique and Chi square Test was used to understand the relationship between Gender and QWL respondents. The Chi Square Test showed that there is no relationship between Gender and QWL and Karl Pearson correlation coefficient revealed that there positive relation between QWL and job satisfaction. The result of study may have practical significance for human resource managers to improve staff job satisfaction level and designing their recruitment and retention policies.

Keywords: QWL, School, Clerk, Gender, Job satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of "quality of work life" began in late 1960s emphasizing the human dimensions of work by focusing on the quality of the relationship between the worker and the working environment. The term "quality of work life" (QWL) was first introduced in 1972 during an international labor relations conference (Davenport, 1999). Participation programmes emerged from contract bargaining between General Motors Corporations and United Auto Workers Union was called QWL in 1973 which was aimed at increasing worker's satisfaction with their jobs by giving them more information and a voice in decision making (Smith, 1983). In the 1980s, emphasis was increasingly placed on employee-centered productivity programs. In the mid 1990 till today faced with challenges of downsizing and corporate restructuring, QWL is reemerging -where rising educational levels and occupational aspirations in today's slow economic growth and reduced opportunities for advancement, naturally, there are rising concerns for QWL, and for career and personal life planning (Che et al. 2006).

There have been divergent views at to what really is QWL. It has become an umbrella term for a host of activities and has been defined differently by different people at different times. Quality of work life is a philosophy, a set of principles which holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and the capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect (Straw,

1984). The elements that are relevant to an individual's quality of work life includes the task, the physical work environment, administrative system and relationship between life on and off the job (Cunningham & Eberla, 1990). Walton, R.E. (1982) proposed eight major conceptual categories relating to QWL as (1) adequate and fair compensation, (2) safe and healthy working conditions, (3) immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, (4) opportunity for continued growth and security, (5) social integration in the work organization, (6) constitutionalism in the work organization, (7) work and total life space and (8) social relevance of work life. Runcie (1980) remarked that should an employee have positive perception of the quality of work life in the company, he would further probably strive to further improve the working conditions, increase production and quality products. Nordenfelt (1993) is of the opinion that by quality of life is meant something that has to do with the values of welfare or well-being. A distinction can be made between external welfare, that is, those phenomena which surround us and continuously affect us, and, on the other hand, our inner well-being, in other words, our reactions to the external world and our experiences in general so that it is an interaction rather than a one way influence of external factors. It provides healthier, satisfied and productive employees, which in turn provides efficient and profitable organization (Sadique, 2003).

To summarize, QWL refer to the favorableness or unsatisfactory of a total job environment of people. Quality of work life program are another way in which organization recognize their responsibility to develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for economic health of the organization. The elements in a typical quality of work life program including open communication, equitable rewards system, a concern for employee's job security and participation in addition to improving the work system, quality of work life program usually emphasis on development of more co-operative labor management relations. The success of any organization depends on how it attracts recruits, motivates, and retains its workforce. Organizations need to be more flexible so that they develop their talented workforce and gain their commitment. Thus, organizations are required to retain employees by addressing their work life issues. The basic objectives of a QWL program are improved working conditions for the employees to increase organizational effectiveness.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mostly the studies conducted in this area of management have been conducted in banks and insurance sector, schools and college teachers and on Doctors. No work so far has been conducted on QWL and work related factors of school's clerks. So the present study was designed with a view to achieve the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the factor affecting QWL of clerks in schools;
- To understand the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction; and
- To understand the relationship between QWL and Gender.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The research examines the factors related to the work environment that may contribute to the high turnover of women. Men are not only paid bonuses more often but the sums they are paid are also larger (Lehto, 2008). Men not only receive more pay and diverse additional

bonuses, but are also more likely to request a pay increase. Such requests had been made by 44% of men but by only 29% of women in the five years before the survey (QWL survey, 2003). Thus, the following hypothesis is posited:

H0 (1) Perception of employees towards factors affecting quality of work life is independent of gender

A review supported a positive linear relationship between job satisfaction and QWL. The author agrees that QWL is not job satisfaction which is only one among its many aspects. All aspects that different people will have different perspectives on what makes for high QWL (Mukerjee, 1989). High QWL has been equated with high employee motivation and also with a high level of employee satisfaction (Lawler, 1975). Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited:

H0 (2) There is no significant association between quality of work life and job satisfaction

DATABASE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was restricted to Ludhiana district only. The sample size was 50 employee respondents of school's clerks. For the purpose of selection of respondents, convenient sampling technique was used. The study was conducted with pre structured questionnaire. 17 items were used to data collection of QWL in terms of job satisfaction and all statements were positive apart from these some introductory items viz. Age, gender, tenure, experience, income, marital status, stratum etc. have also been included. A five-point scale with 1 being "strongly disagree" and being 5 "strongly agree" was used. To know the satisfaction level of respondents a ten - point scale with 1 being "highly dissatisfied" and being 10 "highly satisfied" was used. The inter item consistency was .856 and Guttman Split-Half Coefficient.789. Thus, these results suggested that the instrument was reliable and valid for this study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of Respondents

A total of 50 clerk respondent participated in the survey. Majority of the respondent were married (30), majority of respondent were getting salary between 21,000-30,000, Majority of the respondent were from urban stratum (26), Majority of the respondent were respondent were Post graduate. 28 respondents were at the younger age group (30 to 40 years old) and most of them (31) have been working from 16-25 years. Majority of respondents were male.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Educational Qualification	Graduate	10	Tenure	0-5	8
	Post graduate	27		6-15	11
	Technical	13		16-25	31
Gender	Female	20	Income	<20,000	22
	Male	30		21,000-30,000	38
Stratum	Urban	26	Marital Status	Married	30
	Rural	24		single	20
Age	<25	2		30-40	28
	25-30	6		>=40	14

As researcher had discussed in research methodology that 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree and so mean near to 3 (Table 2) showed that respondents are agreed with their QWL statements and perceived better QWL because all statements have mean score more than 3.

Table 2. Frequencies of Statements (Mean Scores)

Statements	Mean Score
Gross emoluments offered by this organization are commensurate with once responsibility, education, training and experience.	3.70
Fringe benefits and welfare measures available in this organization take care of the interest of employees and their families effectively.	3.68
In this organization there is no need to worry about the termination of job any time.	4.08
In this organization while performing a job the state of mind remains relatively peaceful.	4.62
The income from job alone is enough to meet your family needs.	4.54
Technological changes in the Industry are not likely to render the employees of the organization as jobless.	3.70
In this organization work schedule allows to vary starting times, lunch times and quitting times as per conveniences.	3.70
In this organization, there is no requirement to stay at work place beyond office hours.	3.70
Gross emoluments offered by this organization are commensurate with its ability to pay.	3.68
In this organization while performing the assigned job, one rarely faces crisis situations due to work load.	4.80
Both planning and implementation of the activities relating to the job are part of job responsibility in the organization.	3.87
In this organization work assigned to an employee can be clearly identified as a separate whole task which is interesting and meaningful.	4.05
Fringe benefits and welfare measures available in this organization compare well with those available in other organizations.	3.87
Suggestions made by employees are duly considered by the management.	3.27
Meaningful training programs are conducted by organization at regular intervals.	3.78
Working life in this organization is satisfactory.	3.67
Organization takes care for the welfare of person of all age.	3.24

Factor Analysis

All the factors had been given appropriate names (Adequate Income & Fair Compensation, Job security, Time pressure, Career Opportunities and Eminence of Work Life) according to the variables that had been loaded on to each factor. The names of the factors, the statement labels and factor loadings were summarized below (Table 2). Table revealed that factor I was linear combination of variable number 1,7,13 and 14. Factor 2 was linear combination of variable number 2, 8 and 15. Factor 3 was linear combination of variable number 3, 9 and

16. Factor 4 was linear combination of variable number 5 and 11. All the factors having factor loading more than .40 and Eigen value more than one had been retained. In table 3 'S' stands for statement.

Factor 1: Adequate Income & Fair Compensation

Factor 1 had four items and factor loading range from .990-.670. The factor named as "Gross emoluments offered by this organization are commensurate with once responsibility, education, training and experience, Fringe benefits and welfare measures available in this organization take care of the interest of employees and their families effectively, The income from job alone is enough to meet your family needs, Gross emoluments offered by this organization are commensurate with its ability to pay and Fringe benefits and welfare measures available in this organization compare well with those available in other organizations. Hence name is appropriate.

Factor 2 Job Security

Factor 2 consisted four items with loading range from .798-.867. It had items related to "In this organization there is no need to worry about the termination of job any time and Technological changes in the Industry are not likely to render the employees of the organization as jobless". Hence "Job security" is the name given for this factor.

Factor 3 Time Pressure

Factor 3 included 4 items which "In this organization while performing a job the state of mind remains relatively peaceful, In this organization work schedule allows to vary starting times, lunch times and quitting times as per conveniences, In this organization, there is no requirement to stay at work place beyond office hours and In this organization while performing the assigned job, one rarely faces crisis situations due to work load. Hence "Time Pressure" name is given to this factor.

Factor 4 Career Opportunities

It included five items and factor loading range from .898-.580. It included items as "In this organization while performing a job the state of mind remains relatively peaceful, Both planning and implementation of the activities relating to the job are part of job responsibility in the organization , In this organization work assigned to an employee can be clearly identified as a separate whole task which is interesting and meaningful, Suggestions made by employees are duly considered by the management and Meaningful training programs are conducted by organization at regular intervals, hence name "Career opportunities" appropriate for this factor.

Factor 5 Eminence of Work Life

It included two items and factor loading .982-.785. It included items as "Working life in this organization is satisfactory and Organization takes care for the welfare of person of all age".

Table 3. Naming of Factors

Statements	Component (Factor Loading)				
	1	2	3	4	5
S1	.990				
S2	.889				
S3		.980			
S4			.880		
S5	.900				
S6		.867			
S7			.780		
S8			.890		
S9	.874				
S10	-	-	-	-	-
S11				.898	
S12				.670	
S13	.670				
S14				.580	
S15				.690	
S16					.982
S17					.785
Eigen Value	3.423	1.847	2.55	2.638	1.767
Variance (%)	29.017	21.680	16.925	14.100	13.267

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Relationship between Gender and QWL (Table 4 And 5 Inference)

Relationship between gender and QWL using Chi Square Test

H (0) there is no significant relationship between Gender and QWL.

Table 3 showed that to know the impact of gender on QWL, chi square Test was used. The formula of Chi Square Test was used to know the expected values as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

O = the frequencies observed

E = the frequencies expected

\sum = the 'sum of'

Calculation of Chi Square Test:

Level O significance =5%

Degree of freedom= (r-1)(c-1) = (5-1)*(2-1) =4*1 =1

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Table Value= 9.49

Calculated value= 4.352 (see Table 5)

Decision: As the calculated value is less than the tabulated value our Null hypothesis is accepted i.e. there is no significant relationship between Gender and QWL.

Table 4. Relationship between Gender and Quality of work life

Gender	Male	Female	Total
QWL			
Strongly agree	10(7.8)	3(5.3)	13
Agree	6(6.6)	5(4.4)	11
Neutral	4(3)	1(2)	5
Disagree	7(7.8)	6(5.2)	13
Strongly Disagree	3(4.8)	5(3.2)	8
Total	30	20	50

Note: *significant value at 95% level of significance

Table 5. Calculation of Chi Square value

Observed frequency (O)	Expected Frequency(E)	(O-E) ² /E
10	7.8	.621
6	6.6	.0545
4	3	.333
7	7.8	.082
3	4.8	.675
3	5.2	.931
5	4.4	.020
1	2	.5
6	5.2	.123
5	3.2	1.0125
	Calculated Value	4.352

To understand the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction among respondents null hypothesis was set. To test the H_0 Karl Pearson correlations was used, ignoring the possible effect of all other influences (Table 6). It was, however, also useful to consider the extent to which a dependent variable like overall satisfaction was related to a number of independent variables as a group. The coefficient of correlation not only described value but also direction. The direction of correlation was positive. It means that QWL have positive impact on job satisfaction. Thus our null hypothesis that QWL has no association with job satisfaction was rejected. The results signify ($p < 0.01$) that there exists positive correlation between QWL and job satisfaction. This result supports H_2 .

Table 6. Correlations between QWL and job satisfaction

		Job satisfaction	Quality of work life
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.786(**)
	N	50	50
Quality of work life	Pearson Correlation	.786(**)	1
	N	50	50

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

CONCLUSION

The study found that employees agreed that there was a high level of satisfaction among the employees regarding their Quality of Work life in schools and perception of employees regarding their QWL is independent of gender. The factors determining the satisfaction with the quality of work life in the organization were “Adequate Income & Fair Compensation, Job security, Time pressure, Career opportunities and Eminence of Work Life. Male and female respondent’s perception was same regarding their quality of work life; this result was consistent with a previous research study conducted by Bhuvanewari (2012). All these factors are positively correlated with the quality of work life; all these result were also consistent with the previous research study conducted by Taneja Girish & Kumari Lalita (2012) in banking sector in Punjab state of India. So by improving these factors quality of work life can be enhanced schools. A model can be formed with the help of factors found in this study.

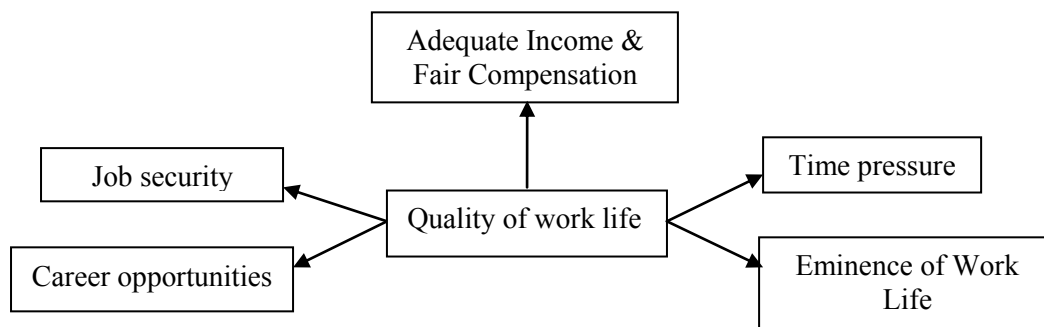


Fig. 1. Model of Quality of Work Life

LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study suffered from some limitations like small sample size and limited area of investigation which might not be true representative of the whole population of the schools clerks. So, before generalization, there is a need to conduct an in-depth study covering larger sample size and broader areas of investigation. Further research should be conducted in order to identify other factors as working environment, Social relevance of work and Constitutionalism in work organization that could contribute to clerk’s QWL. In summary, the limitations of individual job satisfaction had been pointed out in the literature for assessing the QWL and there had been a little attempt in the past to measure QWL in terms of job satisfaction in district Ludhiana of Punjab. So this study is an attempt to further

develop theoretical underpinnings to the available literature on QWL. Study recommends that further study can be done on impact of QWL of clerks on their job stress, productivity and/or job commitment.

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