

Quality of Work Life – Linkage with Job Satisfaction and Performance

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ABSTRACT : *The increased complexity of today's environment poses several challenges to hospital management during the next decade. Trends such as changing organizational structures, increased knowledge and specialisation, interdisciplinary collaboration, advancement of technology, new health problems and health care policy, and sophistication in medical education have a part to play. All these affect the nursing profession and skill requirements as well as their commitment to performance in hospitals. In view of this, hospital management has to ensure quality of life for nurses that can provide satisfaction and enhance job performance. In this paper, an attempt is made to review the literature on quality of life to identify the concept and measurement variables as well its linkage with satisfaction and performance.*

Keywords— *quality of life, job performance, job satisfaction*

I. INTRODUCTION

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). Given the diversity in perspectives two questions remain: what constitutes a high quality of work life? How its impact can be measured? Researchers observed that a high quality of work life (QWL) is essential for organizations to achieve high performance and growth in profitability. Though in the earlier stages, QWL was focused on objective criteria like attracting talent, job security, earnings and benefits; its focus has gradually shifted to job satisfaction and commitment (Elizur & Shye, 1990).

II. QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) CONCERN

The quality of work life (QWL) as a human resource intervention has gained significance in the USA and Scandinavia during the 1960s -1970s. The impact of computer technology and increased automation led to a greater de-skilling, dehumanization, and alienation at workplace. Though developed economies and their industrial organizations have become affluent, the benefit of such affluence was not passed on to the working class. Instead, measures like outsourcing were adopted to reduce reliance on domestic labor and reduce costs in the name of gaining competitive cost advantage. As a result, the workers faced heavy workloads, significant stress for meeting targets and deadlines, greater control, less autonomy and less job security than ever before. Also the emergence of high tech jobs and the employment of 24/7 knowledge workers in IT sectors, has drawn the attention of researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds to explore ways to create better work life conditions. The objectives of such exercise was finding ways of motivating workers towards achieving high performance, enhancing job satisfaction and reducing threat of employee attrition (Hannif & et.al, 2008, 272).

III. QUALITY OF WORK LIFE – CONCEPT AND DIMENSIONS

The concept "quality of work life" was first discussed in 1972 during an international labor relations conference. It received more attention after United Auto Workers and General Motors initiated a QWL program for work reforms. Robbins (1989) defined 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" (p. 207). In other words, it refers to the relationship between a worker and his environment, that can be broken down into different dimensions like the social, technical and economic, in which the work is normally viewed and designed.

It is a complex, multidimensional, generic concept (Hsu & Kernohan, 2006). Most literature on the QWL originates from the discipline of Industrial Labor Relationships (Hsu & Kernohan, 2006). QWL has been defined by researchers in different ways, which has brought about certain equivalents such as work quality, function of job content, employee's well-being, the quality of the relationship between employees, working environment, and the balance between job demands and decision autonomy or the balance between control need and control capacity (Korunka, Hoonakker, & Carayon, 2008; Lewis, Brazil, Krueger, Lohfeld, & Tjam, 2001; Schouteten, 2004; Van Laar, Edwards, & Easton, 2007) QWL is thus recognized as a multi-dimensional construct and the categorization is neither universal or eternal.

Different researchers have come up with different categories and factors to define and measure quality of life. Walton (1980) divided QWL main components into four categories. According to him, the affecting factors on QWL include: work meaningfulness, work social and organizational equilibrium, work challenge and richness.

Klatt, Murdick and Schuster (1985) have identified eleven dimensions of QWL in the year. They are: pay, occupational stress, organizational health programmes, alternative work schedule, participate management and control of work, recognition, superior-subordinate relations, grievance procedure, adequacy of resources, seniority and merit in promotion and development and employment on permanent basis.

Winter et al., (2000) viewed QWL for attitudinal response among the employees which includes role stress, job characteristics, and supervisory, structural and social characteristics to directly and in directly shape academicians' experiences, attitudes and behaviors. Mosharraf (2000) analyzed the security of employment, job/role clarity, understanding supervisors, work not stressful, access to relevant information and social and welfare facilities to measure the QWL in banks.

According to Nadler & Lawler the types of QWL activities can be listed as (i) Participative problem solving, (ii) Work restructuring, (iii) Innovative rewards systems and (iv) Improving the work environment.

Bhanugopan & Fish (2008) suggested indicators like lack of job stress, lack of job burnout, lack of turnover intentions and job satisfaction. They included measures like job satisfaction, earning money, membership in successful teams, job security & job growth. Connell & Hannif (2009) reported three factors – (i) Job content; (ii) Working hours and work-life balance; and (iii) Managerial/supervisory style and strategies. They believe key concepts tend to include job security, reward systems, pay and opportunity for growth among other factors. Measures of Quality of Work Life according to Adhikari & Gautam (2010) are: adequate pay and benefits, job security, safe and health working condition, meaningful job and autonomy in the job.

Measures of Quality of Work Life include - (i) increased worker involvement, participation and power, (ii) Increased emphasis on employee skill development, (iii) Increased autonomy for action and decision making at worker level and (iv) Reduced status distinctions among levels in hierarchy.

Mirsepasi, (2006), having examined the different views and observed that QWL is explained by the following factors: (i) Fair and proper payment for good performance (ii) Safe and secure work situation, (iii) The possibility of learning and using new skills, (iv) Establishing social integration in the organization, (v) Keeping individual rights, (vi) Equilibrium in job divisions and unemployment and (vii) Creating work and organizational commitment.

According to Casio (1998) quality of work life comprises both the mental and objective aspects of work life. The objective ones emphasize the circumstances and procedures relating to promotion policies, participatory supervision, and safe working conditions, whereas the subjective relate to supervision, communication, leadership etc. He identified 8 factors that determine quality of work life as given under. Communication, employee involvement, desire and motivation to work, job security, career progress, solving problems, salary, and pride of a job.

Schermernhorn & John (1989) opined that the following factors must exist in the organization - fair and adequate pay, health and safety of working conditions, creating opportunities to learn, growth in the

professionalism path, professional integrity in the organization, support of individual rights and proud of the job.

Hsu and Kernohan (2006) carried out a descriptive study with a convenience sample. They selected 16 focus groups, each containing 3-5 registered nurses with at least 2 years of experience in one medical centre and five regional hospitals. They identified 56 QWL categories and fitted into 6 dimensions namely, socio-economic relevance, demography, organizational aspects, work aspects, human relation aspects and self-actualization. Major issues emphasized by focus groups are managing shift work within the demands of family life; accommodation; support resources; and nurses' clinical ladder system and salary system.

Sirgy and et al (2001) categorized QWL into two major categories: lower- and higher order needs. The lower-order QWL comprised of health/safety needs and economic/family needs whereas the higher-order QWL is comprised of social needs, esteem needs, self actualization needs, knowledge needs, and aesthetic needs. For measurement, they suggested review in terms of the following seven categories of needs.

1. Health and safety needs (protection against disease and injury within and outside the workplace)
2. The needs of family economy (wages, job security and etc)
3. The need for social (cooperative work between colleagues, and having free time in the workplaces)
4. Social needs(having the cooperative work between colleagues and spare time at work place)
5. The need for self-esteem (recognition and appreciation of the work inside and outside the organization)
6. The need for training (training to improve job skills)
7. The aesthetic needs (creativity workplace and personal creativity and general aesthetics).

Donald, et al, (2005) investigated QWL indicators in six Canadian Public Health Care Organizations (HCO's) by reviewing documentation relevant to QWL and conducting focus group or team interviews. Group interviews were taped and analyzed with qualitative data techniques. They found employee well being and working conditions are important indicators of QWL. They found vagueness in defining QWL indicators and they suggested increased HCO resources, integration of HCO management systems will help to access the relevant information.

Zare, Hamid, Haghgooyan, Zolfa and Asl, Zahra Karimi (2012) undertook a study on quality of work life to identify its dimensions Library method was used to gather information on theoretical basics, literature and to identify aspects and scales. Field study method was used to gather information through questionnaires distributed among 30 experts. The data so collected was analyzed using Analytical hierarchy process (AHP); it is found that QWL can be explained by four factors as given under.

1. **Work life balance** - Fair working hours, Work-life atmosphere, Opportunity for doing religious ceremonies, Ergonomics, No physical and mental damages, Distance between workplace and home
2. **Social factors** - The importance of work in the society, social integration in organization, Social networks in work, Respecting employees, Self-esteem feeling in the organization, Good colleagues
3. **Economic factors** - Salary, Health service, Insurance, Retirement, Job security
4. **Job content** - Team working, independence, meaningful work, rich and challenging work, ownership feeling in work, the need of creativity in work, growth opportunity.

From the above expositions, we can arrive at two conclusions.

- (i) QWL is a multi –dimensional concept.
- (ii) Due to its multi –dimensional nature, it is a relative concept which cannot be precisely defined and measured.

When it comes to categorization, the following classifications can be found - (i) the mental and objective aspects of work life (Casio, 1998), (ii) lower- and higher order needs (Sirgy and et al, 2001) and (iii) job characteristics, and supervisory, structural and social characteristics (Winter et al., 2000).

The factors that were stated by different researchers are grouped and stated in Table -. The key concepts captured and discussed in the existing literature include job security, better reward systems, higher pay, opportunity for growth, and participative groups, among others (Havlovic, 1991; Straw and Heckscher, 1984; Scobel, 1975).

Table -1 Dimension and factors of quality of life

Dimension	Factors
Job design	Job content, work meaningfulness, work challenge, work richness, meaningful job and autonomy in the job, work restructuring, and job/role clarity.
Work environment and facilities	Improving the work environment, social and welfare facilities, etc.
Job security	Employment on permanent basis.
Health, stress and safety	Health and safety of working conditions, protection against disease and injury within and outside the workplace; occupational stress, organizational health programmes, job stress, and lack of job burnout.
Wages and rewards	Fair and adequate pay , fair and proper payment for good performance, Innovative rewards systems, the circumstances and procedures relating to promotion policies, seniority and merit in promotion and development.
Work life balance	Working hours and alternative work schedule.
Aesthetics and creativity	General aesthetics, free time in the workplaces, creativity workplace and personal creativity.
Conflict	Cooperative work between colleagues' adequacy of resources, work and organizational equilibrium, and grievance procedure.
Learning and development	Increased emphasis on employee skill development, possibility of learning and using new skills, training to improve job skills, creating opportunities to learn, growth in the professionalism path, job growth and career progress
Leadership and employee empowerment	Superior –subordinate relations, Participatory supervision, Communication, desire and motivation to work, Creating work and organizational commitment, employee involvement, participation and power, Increased autonomy for action and decision making at worker level, access to relevant information and participative problem solving,
Job satisfaction	Recognition and appreciation of the work inside and outside the organization, membership in successful teams, proud of the job, and lack of turnover intentions.

IV. QWL – JOB SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

QWL is defined as the favorable conditions and environments of a workplace that support and promote employee satisfaction by providing them with rewards, job security, and growth opportunities. However, some researchers point out that Quality of Work Life (QWL) is not only related to personnel's well-being and their attitudes and feelings towards their job (Beaudoin & Edgar, 2003) but also goes beyond job satisfaction (Bo-Znadh, 1998; Cheung & Tang, 2009; Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel, & Lee, 2001).

Job satisfaction facet:

Locke (1976) defined employee satisfaction (often referred to as job satisfaction) as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). Employee needs and wants are satisfied when they perceive that rewards from the organization, including compensation, promotion, recognition, development, and meaningful work, meet or exceed their expectation (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Largely, it appears that the main outcomes of an effective QWL program are improved working conditions for employees and greater organizational effectiveness for employers. (Adhikari Gautam, 2010). QWL positively facilitates the creation of a more flexible, loyal, and motivated workforce, and thereby determines the company's competitiveness.

Great place to work -Quality of Work Life of secondary teachers and principals was investigated by Rossmiller (1992). It was found that QWL positively influenced the respect accorded to teachers, teacher participation in decisions affecting their work, professional collaboration and interaction, use of skills and knowledge and the teaching learning environment.

Research has indicated that the QWL affects organizational culture and effectiveness, staff's health, high stress and burnout levels, more complaints, higher direct medical expenses and patients morbidity and mortality rates have been noted as the repercussions of low levels of QWL (An, Yom, & Ruggiero, 2011; Cole et al., 2005; Laschinger, Finegan, Shamian, & Almost, 2001, Nayeri et al., 2009 and Sirgy et al., 2001).

Bragard et.al (2012) examined relationship between Quality of work life (QWL) and Quality of Work Life Systemic Inventory (QWLSI), and discussed an intervention methodology based on the analysis of the QWLSI. One hundred and thirteen medical residents during 2002 and 2006 completed the QWLSI, the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Job Stress. Residents perceiving low QWL experienced high emotional exhaustion ($\beta = 0.282$; $P < 0.01$) and job stress ($\beta = 0.370$; $P < 0.001$) levels. . This sample of medical residents had an average QWL ($\mu = 5.8$; $SD = 3.1$). It is found that QWL was very low for three subscales: arrangement of work schedule ($\mu = 9$; $SD = 6.3$), support offered to employee ($\mu = 7.6$; $SD = 6.1$) and working relationship with superiors ($\mu = 6.9$; $SD = 5.3$). They suggested that prevention should focus on reduction of work hours, development of support and change in leadership style.

Efraty and Sirgy (1990) conducted a study based on a sample of 219 service deliverers to the elderly in a large mid-western city. Quality of work life (QWL) was conceptualized in terms of need satisfaction stemming from an interaction of workers' needs (survival, social, ego, and self-actualization needs) and those organizational resources relevant for meeting them. It was hypothesized that need satisfaction (or QWL) is positively related to organizational identification, job satisfaction, job involvement, job effort and job performance; and negatively related to personal alienation. The results were consistent with the hypotheses

Better motivation - Emadzadeh, Khorasani, and Nematizadeh (2012) studied the quality of work life of primary school teachers in Isfahan city and found that their quality of work life is less than average. However, their motivation was high despite dissatisfaction in salaries paid. The study employed descriptive survey method and collected data through a questionnaire From 120 teachers selected on a random basis from a population of 862 teachers in Isfahan city The questionnaire was tested for reliability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient 87% was significant at alpha 1%. The data were analyzed using ANOVA, Levin test and t-test.

Commitment - Asgari, Mohammad Hadi and Dadashi, Mohammad Ali (2011) undertook research to determine the relationship between the quality of work life and organizational commitment of Melli Bank staff in west domain of Mazandaran in 2009-2010. The research method was descriptive and of the correlation type. The population of the research was all the workers of Melli Bank in west of Mazandaran with total number of 467, out of which 210 individuals were selected as the sample according to Morgan's table. In order to collect data two questionnaires were used: Walton's quality of work life questionnaire, and Allen-Meyer's organizational commitment questionnaire. Allen-Meyer's organizational commitment questionnaire includes 24 questions, using which all three aspects of commitment including affective, continuance and normative were assessed. This questionnaire is also designed based on Likert scale of five points. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure reliability which was 87%. In data analysis SPSS software, stepwise regression, and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used. The relationship between organizational commitment and quality of life and also its dimensions affective, continuance and normative were proved.

Ashoob (2006) examined the relationship between quality of work life and organizational commitment of The High Schools of Gonbad-e- Kavus City using Walton's eight components of QWL. He concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between quality of work life and organizational commitment.

Chen Huang (2005) found that personal characteristics like gender, age, and marital status lead to significant differences in quality of work life and organizational commitment.

Turner (2005) studied the relationship between commitment to university and willingness to work among 205 students who had student jobs, and found out that there's a significant relationship between commitment to university and willingness to work. Sports College in the US is dependent on student jobs to a great extent. According to the results older students have higher levels of commitment.

Turner (2007) has developed strategic plans due to importance of investing on preserving athletes. He carried out his research on 190 athletes who were selected randomly and concluded that women are more committed to the team and university. Moreover, all three components of commitment had a significant relationship with team satisfaction and not leaving the team. According to these findings satisfaction has an important role in commitment to the team. Also the higher the age, the more committed individuals get to the team.

Job satisfaction - Davoodi (1998) studied the impact of QWL on job satisfaction among operational staff of Mobarakeh Steel Complex". He tested the following hypotheses:

- Informal involvement of operational staff in decision making related to working conditions leads to an increase in job satisfaction;
- informal involvement of operational staff in decision making related to the work itself leads to an increase in job satisfaction;
- Informal involvement of operational staff in decision making related to working conditions leads to a decrease in occupational accidents;
- Informal involvement of operational staff in decision making related to the work itself leads to a decrease in occupational accidents.

He found positive relationships and concluded that employee involvement will lead to satisfaction and less accidents.

Performance facet:

Researchers and practitioners found a significant correlation between measures of QWL and business performance in terms of market performance, stakeholder value, and business sustainability as well as differentiating competitive capabilities in terms of service quality, delivery, employee knowledge, flexibility, and technological leadership. Positive results of QWL reduced absenteeism, lower turnover, and improved job satisfaction. A large body of prior research supports the service profit chain concept. Lau (2000) used an ad hoc approach to study two key elements of the service profit chain model, namely QWL and performance. The study showed that service organizations that emphasized QWL for their employees tended to have better sales growth, asset growth, and return on asset growth (ROAG) over a five-year period when contrasted to other S&P 500 firms.

Najafi (2006) examined the relationship between quality of work life and profiting of middle managers of Iranian Companies" using Casio's components and found a positive and significant correlation between them. According to him, about 20% of profiting is due to quality of work life and the remaining 80% is the effect of other factors. Fallah (2006) found a significant relationship between quality of work life and performance Kosar Economical Organization Staff" using Walton's components in her study.

Nayeri, et.al (2011), carried out a descriptive study to investigate the relationship between the QWL and productivity among 360 clinical nurses working in the hospitals of Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Findings showed that the QWL is at a moderate level among 61.4% of the participants. Only 3.6% of the nurses reported that they were satisfied with their work. None of those who reported the productivity as low reported their work life quality to be desirable. Spearman-rho test showed a significant relationship between productivity and one's QWL ($p < 0.001$). Considering the results, the researchers opined that managers should adopt appropriate policies to promote the QWL to enhance productivity.

V. CONCLUSION

The above discussion has helped us to conclude that the identification of the measures of quality of life is indeed a difficult task, though there is a sort of common agreement on its concept of employee well being. Evidently there are objective (physical and structural design) factors that provide work place setting and intervening policy factors that affect work processes of employees. As regards the outcome factors the immediate effects on psychology of employees (positive attitudes, commitment, and satisfaction) and ultimate effects on performance of organisation are being considered by researchers. Figure -1 provides a diagrammatic view of the linkages QWL has with satisfaction and performance based on the above discussion.

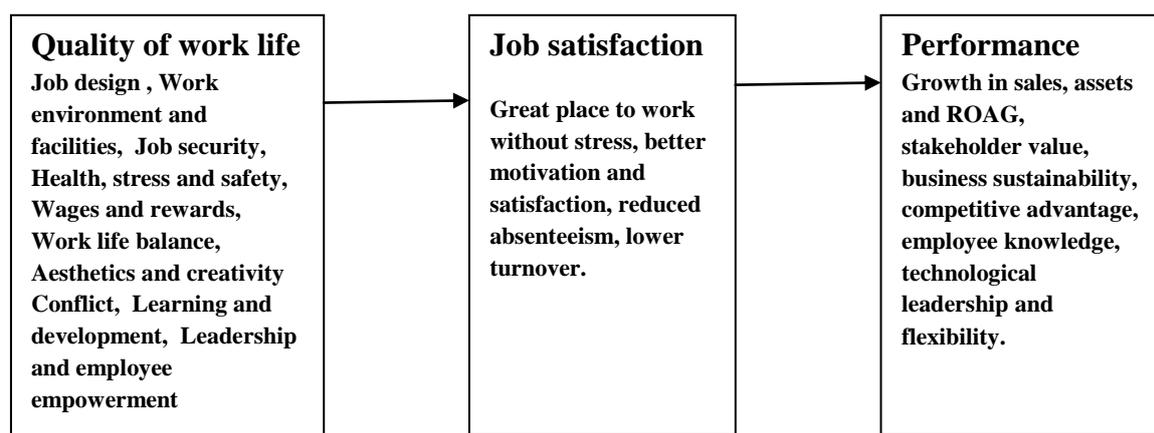


Figure -1 QWL and Job satisfaction and performance

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