

A Study On Perceptions Of Quality Of Work Life - With Special Reference To Academicians Working In Engineering Colleges With Special Reference To Coimbatore District

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Abstract: ‘Quality of Work Life’ is re-emerging where employees are seeking out more meaning. QWL has different meanings for different people. While some consider it industrial democracy or co-determination with increased employee participation in the decision making process, for others, particularly managers and administrators, the term denotes improvement in the psychological aspects of work to improve productivity. Unions and workers interpret it as more equitable sharing of profits, job security and healthy and humane working conditions. Others view it as improving social relationships at workplace through autonomous workgroups. Finally, others take a broader view of changing the entire organizational climate by humanizing work, individualizing organizations and changing the structural and managerial systems. Hence, the present study focuses on the impact and perceptions about various attributes of quality of work life among academicians working in engineering colleges in Coimbatore District. There is a significant correlation found among all these contributing factors that have positive effect on the overall quality of work life of the academicians. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the impact and the perceptions towards various attributes of quality of work life among the academicians working in engineering colleges in Coimbatore District is found to be positive.

PREAMBLE

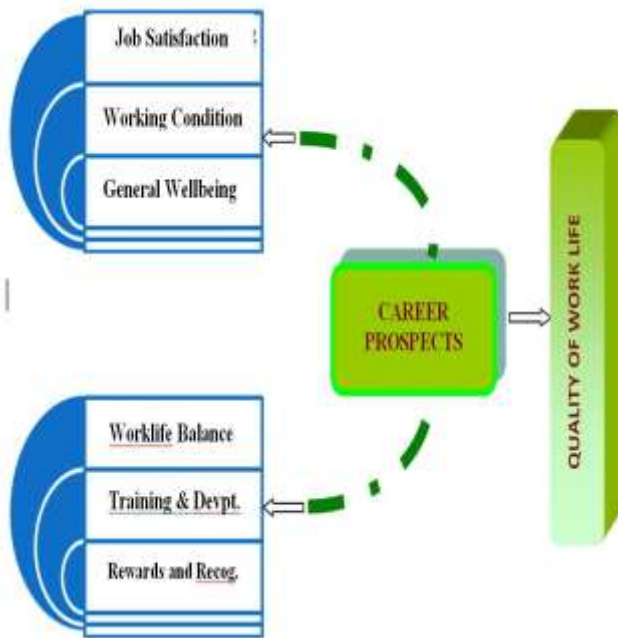
Origin of Quality of Work Life Legislation enacted in early 20th century to protect employees from job-injury and to eliminate hazardous working conditions, followed by the unionization movement in the 1930 and 1940s were the initial steps. Emphasis was given to job security, due to process at the work place and economic gains for the workers. The 1950s and the 1960s saw the development of different theories by psychologists proposing a “positive relationship between morale and productivity”, and the possibility that improved human relations would lead to the enhancement of both.

Attempts at reform to acquire equal employment opportunity and job enrichment schemes also were introduced. Finally, in the 1970s the ideal of QWL was conceived which, according to Walton, is broader than these earlier developments and is something that must include ‘the values that were at the heart of these earlier reform movements’ and ‘human needs and aspirations’.

The theories of motivation and leadership provided a sound base for the concept of QWL. If the lower – order needs are satisfied, people seek satisfaction for the higher – order needs. QWL activity gained importance between 1969 and 1974, when a broad group of researchers, scholars, union leaders and government personnel development interest in how to improve the quality of an individual through on – the job experience.

The United States department of health, education and welfare sponsored a study on this issue, which led to the publication of work in America. Simultaneously, the pressure of inflation promoted the US Government to address some of these issues. Accordingly, a Federal Productivity Commission was established. This commission sponsored several labor management QWL experiments which were jointly conducted by the University of Michigan quality of work programme and the newly – evolved National Quality of Work Centre.

MODEL SHOWING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON DETERMINANTS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sekharan (2011) observes that, historically the concept of Quality of Work Life had originally included only the issues of wages, working hours, and 26 working conditions. However, the concept has now been expanded to include such factors as the extent of workers' involvement in the job, their levels of satisfaction with various aspects in the work environment, their perceived job competence, accomplishment on the job etc. **Gani (2012)** in his study stated that the core of the Quality of Work Life concept is the value of treating the worker as a human being and emphasizing changes in the socio-technical system of thorough improvement, in physical and psychological working environment, design and redesign of work practices, hierarchical structure and the production process brought with the active involvement of workers in decision making. **Mishra & Gupta (2009)** stated quite often it is complex to know what motivates employees which is similar studies also reveals that it is important to recognize that individuals have unique motives for working which is similar to the study. Though there is no universally accepted definition of the term QWL, yet there is consensus in the research literature that QWL involves a focus on all aspects of working life that might conceivably be relevant to worker satisfaction and motivation, and that QWL is related

with the well-being of employees. **Muse et al., (2008)** studied the conflict approach, that a family-responsive culture is only relevant for employees who have substantial family responsibilities, such as parents and couples. The enrichment approach, expected to be most effective for employees with the fewest family resources, is less applicable in this case, because singles do not need this particular resource. A family-friendly culture may even lower singles' work outcomes if they feel excluded by such a culture. **Turner (2007)** has developed strategic plans due to importance of investing in 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. **Hart (2008)** investigated the positive and negative work experiences reported by teachers and how these contribute to their quality of work life. The theoretical model developed by Hart contends that it is psychologically meaningful to distinguish between positive and negative work experiences and that these operate along separate paths to determine quality of work life, positive experiences through morale and negative experiences through psychological distress. **Saravanan.S & Elamathi.K (2015)** investigate Demographic Profile and Quality of Work Life among Women Employees in Private Sector Banks in Coimbatore District. The adjusted R^2 is 0.84 this indicates that 84.% of the variance is predicted by Age, Educational Qualification, Designation, Monthly salary, Residential status, Marital status, Number of family members, Annual income of the family and Experience in the present Job. A large value indicates that a unit change in this predictor variable has a large effect on the criterion variable. The researcher has found that predictors examination of the standardized beta coefficient, it is seen that variables such as Age, ($\beta = -0.046$) Educational Qualification ($\beta = 0.195$), Monthly salary ($\beta = 0.249$), Marital status ($\beta = 0.297$), Number of family members ($\beta = -0.115$), Annual income of the family ($\beta = 0.208$) predict the working condition at 0.05 level of significance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i) To measure the impact of various dimensions on the quality of work life among the academicians working in engineering colleges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research instruments are prepared on the basis of the objectives set for the study. Questionnaire was prepared for the collection of primary data. Quality of Work Life and Determinants of Quality of Work Life scale was developed and this was pretested. Some modifications were made in the content of the questionnaire and positioning of the questions to make it easier to answer. The final questionnaire was then framed based on the inputs from the initial survey. A structured questionnaire was administered to the academicians for collection of primary data and was ascertained on a five point grading scale (Likert Scale format).

Validity of the Instruments

Validity of the questionnaire was established by the initial survey. Several academicians were asked to scrutinize each item in the survey instrument and on the basis of the feedback of the academicians modifications were made in the content of the questionnaire. The initial survey and the feedback were consistent with the available literature and thus the instrument was validated.

Sampling Design

The study is exploratory in nature based on structured questionnaire with 632 respondents complying sampling adequacy among Government and Self-Financing colleges selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique and the samples are collected from 15 engineering colleges based on the academic performance of the Engineering Colleges published by Anna University for the year *April / May 2013* and *November / December 2013*). The colleges were stratified and confined to top 15 engineering colleges from Coimbatore District, that consisted the population of 3007 faculties from which the researcher restricted the samples to 21% i.e. 632 faculties were selected for the study.

Period of Study

The study is conducted based on Primary Data and information from Secondary Sources. The primary data were collected from the select respondents of engineering colleges between January 2014 and March 2014.

Statement of the Problem

Before a problem can be solved, one needs to understand and agree on what that problem is. Poor working conditions, unfavorable terms of employment, inhuman treatment by superiors, frustration due to alienation over conditions of employment, interpersonal conflicts, role conflicts, job pressures, lack of freedom in work, absence of challenge in work, are some of the problem faced by working people. It is essential to understand two terms in connection with Quality of Work Life viz. quality of work and quality of life. "Quality of Work" refers to a favorable working environment which encourages, participation, better communication, equality, fairness and job satisfaction. On the other hand "Quality of Life" means 'assertiveness, acquisition of money and material things'. Hence, the present study focuses on the impact and perceptions about various attributes of quality of work life among academicians working in engineering colleges in Coimbatore District.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

H_0 : There is no significant difference between measurement of various dimensions with the Age, Education, Designation, Monthly Income and Experience of the Academicians working in Engineering Colleges.

Table- 1- ANOVA- Difference between measurements of various dimensions with the Personal variables of the Academicians working in Engineering Colleges.

life F= 6.249, Sig.0.002, Job Satisfaction, F=3.577, Sig. 0.029, Working Condition, 4.728, Sig. 0.009, General Well Being, 12.631, Sig. 0.000 Career Prospects, 3.627, sig.0.027, Training and Development F=7.379, Sig.0.001 and finally,

Variables	Age		Education		Designation		Monthly Income		Experience	
Factors	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Quality of Work Life	1.416	0.243	6.249	0.002	9.742	000	2.346	0.072	7.322	000
Job Satisfaction	6.412	0.002	3.577	0.029	10.866	000	4.761	0.003	15.327	000
Working Condition	5.824	0.003	4.728	0.009	4.367	0.013	3.94	0.008	3.506	0.015
General Well Being	6.491	0.002	12.631	000	2.825	0.06	3.199	0.023	3.506	0.015
Career Prospects	13.657	000	3.627	0.027	8.598	000	7.113	000	16.765	000
Training and Development	2.712	0.067	7.379	0.001	4.33	0.014	3.155	0.024	9.038	000
Rewards and Recognition	7.102	0.001	6.353	0.002	13.173	000	3.157	0.024	13.628	000

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that, there is no significant difference between age group and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life such as Quality of Work life F= 1.146, Sig.0.243, Training and Development F=2.712, Sig.0.067 are found to be not significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. Whereas there is a significant difference between age and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life is Job Satisfaction, F=6.412, Sig. 0.002, Working Condition, 5.824, Sig. 0.003, General Well Being, 6.491, Sig. 0.002, Career Prospects, 13.657, Sig. 0.000, and finally, Rewards and Recognition, 7.102, Sig. 0.001 are found to be significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is significant difference between educational qualification group and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life such as Quality of Work

Rewards and Recognition, 6.353, Sig. 0.002 are found to be significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is significant difference between Designation and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life such as Quality of Work Life, F=9.742, Sig.0.000, Job Satisfaction, F=10.866, Sig.0.000, Working Condition, F=4.367, Sig.0.013, General Well Being, F=2.825, Sig.0.060, Career Prospects, F=8.598, Sig.0.000, Training and Development, F=4.330, Sig.0.014, and finally, Rewards and Recognition, F=13.173, Sig.0.000 are found to be significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is significant difference between Monthly Income and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life such as Quality of Work Life, F=2.346, Sig.0.072, Job Satisfaction, F=4.761,

Sig.0.003, Working Condition, $F=3.940$, Sig.0.008, General Well Being, $F=3.199$, Sig.0.023, Career Prospects, $F=7.113$, Sig.0.000, Training and Development, $F=3.155$, Sig.0.024 and finally, Rewards and Recognition, $F=3.157$, Sig.0.024 are found to be significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is significant difference between Experience and factors contributing towards overall quality of work life such as Quality of Work Life, $F=7.322$, Sig.0.000, Job Satisfaction, $F=15.327$, Sig.0.000, Working Condition, $F=3.506$, Sig.0.015, General Well Being, $F=9.392$, Sig.0.000, Career Prospects, $F=16.765$, Sig.0.000, Training and Development, $F=9.038$, Sig.0.000 and finally, rewards and recognition, $F=13.628$, Sig.0.000 are found to be significant at 5% level and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

SUGGESTIONS

Commitment towards the Job

It is recommended that the assessment of commitment formed to evaluate the faculty performance based on their individual capabilities and skills, social relevance and consistency. However, it is found that majority of the faculties were found highly committed to their job commitment. This shall be observed by the institution and shall frequently boost their morale by providing benefits that will motivate and keep their commitment intact.

Need of Job Security in Private Institutions

Few of the respondents did not feel secure in their jobs. This results in indirect pressure leading to depression. Job security in private institutions shall be made assured to the academicians that will help them to exhibit higher level of commitment and more skill that will be productive for the institutions.

Career growth of Academicians should be considered

It is suggested that if the academicians quality of work life, commitment, training and development, recognition and rewards and career growth are taken into due consideration by the management, then the academicians' self-improvement will definitely be achieved which in turn will help the growth of the individual and the institutions as well.

Attention towards faculty training

A few of the academicians felt that attention on faculty training needs to be provided and a continuous assessment based on their quality

improvement will help the academicians to improve their capabilities.

CONCLUSION

The research on the quality of work life based on the perception of the academicians reveals overall satisfaction. However, few areas of problems need to be considered for the betterment of the present situation with regards to various determining factors such as job satisfaction, working conditions, general wellbeing and work life balance, training and development, career prospects and recognition and rewards which significantly lead towards quality of work life. There is a significant correlation found among all these contributing factors that have positive effect on the overall quality of work life of the academicians. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the impact and the perceptions towards various attributes of quality of work life among the academicians working in engineering colleges in Coimbatore District is found to be positive.

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