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THE CO-RELATION BETWEEN QWL AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES IN INDIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the degree of QWL of University employees and, to explore the association between QWL and some demographic characteristics among them. The study adopted a case study research method. The investigation was carried out in the University, and the universe of the study comprises of employees from University. The sample was made up of both males and females, from all the race groups within the University. Primary data was used for research whereas secondary data was utilized for literature review. The study suggested statistically significant correlation between the demographic variables namely age, period of service, income and education of employees of University and QWL. Also, it concluded that employees' gender has no specific relation regarding the degree of their QWL. The study suggests that quality of work life condition in the University is favorable to the total job environment of its employees. The paper focuses on two questions: what is the level of 'Quality of Work Life' of employees of the University? And is there any relationship between gender, age, work experience, income & educational qualification of the employees and their QWL. The

overall findings of this study are quite encouraging and will contribute to the extant literature in a positive way. It is expected that the contribution from this study will help the top management from this organization in developing apposite policies that can augment employees' satisfaction with their personal as well as professional lives.

Keywords

Quality of Work Life, Demographic Characteristics, Human Resource Management, University Employees, Walton's Model, Organizational Behavior, Gender, Age, Income, Work experience, Educational Level

1. Introduction

QWL evolved in the late 1960s and accentuated the human dimensions of work that was focused on the quality of the connection between the worker and the working atmosphere (Rose et. al. 2006). The term 'quality of work life' was first conceived by Louis Davis. QWL in course of time has become a major issue among the employees at all levels. How different organizations are concerned with QWL issue is both of speculative and practical importance. Every worker has perceived QWL in their own suitable and comfortable ways, but the gist of all the findings conclude on same issues. Dolan, et al. (2008) state that the concern for QWL had preoccupied social scientists for the past several decades. In the trend of changes in a number of aspects from environment to technology as well as the rise of employee unions, employers are suggesting salary as compensation and also create specific benefits to form a quality working environment that will fascinate and keep the talented brains in whole fields (Phan & Vo, 2016 pg 194). Similarly, Kumari (2013) depicts QWL as an umbrella term for different activities and asserts that it has been defined differently by different people. Quality of work life is the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experience in the organization (Geetha & Mani, 2016, pg 8295). Mudiraj (2017) in his study on mental health of teachers in Hyderabad, illustrate QWL in terms of human growth, exciting workplace, creativity and innovativeness, concern for individuals and democratization of workplace and find out a positive but low relationship between mental health and Quality of Work Life .

Al Muftah and Lafi, (2011) in their study on oil and gas industry employees in Qatar define QWL as a philosophy that considers people as the most important recourses in the

organization and views them as an asset to the organization rather than as costs. Similarly, Pisheh (2012) in his study describes QWL as the legitimate right of public employees. In 1972, the first International QWL conference was held in Toronto and in the same year the international council for quality of work life was established' (Bindu and Yashika, 2013, p.14). The participants present there concluded finally that improvement at the workplace and in the nature of work can show the way to better work performance and a improved quality of life (Wyatt and Wah 2001; Sadique 2003; Rose et al. 2006; Islam and Siengthai 2009). Given the fact that the importance of QWL is very eminent, Daud, (2010) proposed that a high level of QWL is compulsory for organizations to maintain attraction and retention employees. Richard E. Walton (1975) one of the protagonist of the work on QWL in his study titled "Criteria for Quality of Work life" elucidates the term with mention to eight extensive conditions of employment that represent desirable quality of work life. He recommended the same standard criteria for measuring QWL. The eight criteria proposed by Walton (1975) to measure QWL include the following points: safe and healthy work conditions, balanced role of work and personal life and constitutionalism in the Work, organizational prospect to use and develop human capability, adequate and fair compensation, future opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in the work place and, social relevance of work. Despite the fact that it is unusual to find work-life situations that comply with all the eight criteria proposed by Walton at a single place, we can perceive these eight components of QWL as objectives to seek for through this study. European Commission (EC) projected ten dimensions for QWL: gender equality; intrinsic job quality; health & safety at work; flexibility & security; skills, life-long learning & career development; Work organization and work-life balance, inclusion & access to the labor market; diversity & non-discrimination; social dialogue & worker involvement and overall work performance (Royuela et al. 2008).

Since the QWL is a concept of behavioral science, discussion on the topic is very useful at the organizational level. The functional aspect of QWL deals with issues related to the workplace, and the association of the employees with the organization. At this point it is assumed that QWL explicitly suggests the degree of motivation, involvement, commitment and overall satisfaction endured by the employees at the workplace. It also determines the level of a person's capability to carry out their individual requirements and balance their personal and work life. For more than two decades substantial research has been done on QWL of employees

in different fields. Nevertheless, the term Quality of Work Life is comparatively new, but its importance and the significance it occupies in real life is quite deep-rooted. Both employers and employees now better recognize the value of the Quality of work life in an organization. Quality of work life is essential for good organizational performance (Grayson, 1973), and is a critical issue that influence motivation among employees at workplace (Ghosh, 1992). Hence, we agree with Bhuvaneshwari et al. (2012) that study of quality of work life must be considered as an imperative at both individual and organizational level.

In the following section of the study we are going to highlight some of the previous works related to QWL as perceived by different scholars.

2. Literature Review

It would be contempt to say that there has been some confusion about what QWL means and the confusion still continues (Nadler and Lawler, 1983). Today the term QWL is used to represents a wide range of issues and endeavor, and has been defined differently by its most articulate champions. Katzell et al. (1975) in their literature review on QWL suggested that QWL is an individual's appraisal of the assumption of the work and life relationship. They concluded that an employee can experience and enjoy a high QWL only if he is optimistic towards his job and its future prospects, he is motivated to continue the job and perform well and believe that his work life corresponds well with his personal life to allow him an equilibrium between the two in terms of his personal values and standards. Quality of Work Life is in a sense the favorableness or un-favorableness of a job environment for its employees (Davis, 1989). Quality of work life program basically serves two main purposes, first it enhances the productivity and secondly it increases the satisfaction of employees (Gadon, 1984). Rose et al. (2006) contends that QWL is a philosophy or a set of principles, which regards people as trustworthy, responsible and capable of playing a constructive role in an organization. It also treats people with respect and reverence.

In his extensive study on relationship between work satisfaction and Quality of people's lives, Rice (1985), concluded that work experiences of any individual person and the following consequences can affect a person's entire Quality of life, both directly and indirectly by their influence on family interactions, leisure activities and degree of wellbeing and energy. If an employee has positive opinion about the quality of work-life in an organization, he is likely to make every effort to augment the working conditions, increase productivity and improve the

quality of the products (Runcie, 1980). Various researchers on the topic of QWL suggests that enhancement in quality of work life has the potential and scope to improve productivity (Ledford and Lawler, 1982), as well as organizational effectiveness at large (Buchanan and Boddy, 1982) can also facilitate reduction in the frequency of grievances, turnover and absenteeism (Goodman, 1980) and also reduce the rate of industrial accidents (Havolovic, 1991) Contemporary workers are now concentrating to find out the accurate implication of the QWL concept and are trying to identify the crucial factors that determine such an experience at workplace. According to Dutch Landen, “an environment in which people are considered organizational essential members, human souls are challenged, personal growth and development are inspired and works are performed, is an environment with high quality of work life” (Belcher, 2001, p. 102). Thus, the quality of work life establishes an environment in which organizations give their employees certain opportunities to meet their requirements (M’adanipour, 2001). First definitions of QWL transpired during 1959 to 1972 which considered QWL simply as a variable or outcome. Later on different scholars forwarded varied definitions of QWL based upon their findings. Nadler and Lawler (1983), defines QWL as an approach to feel about people, work, and organizations with a positive attitude. “QWL is the quality of the relationship between employees and the total working environment, with human dimensions added to the usual technical and economic considerations” (Davis, 1983, p.80).Contemplating upon these definitions, we assert that quality is no more a specialized word but has become a necessary and must for the best survival since it is related to the work environment on the whole and the influence on work and employees as well as on organization’s efficiency.

During and after the 1990’s the QWL concept became specific to each individual which indicates that QWL relates differently with each individual, and probably may vary according to the individual’s age, career stage, and position in an organization. Lau, et al. (2001) acknowledged QWL as the complimentary work environment that sustain and encourages satisfaction among the employees by bestowing them with rewards, job security and career growth prospects. Proceeding further, Serey (2006), conclusively defined QWL that best meets the modern work environment. Serey observed in his research on QWL, that career growth opportunity is a crucial factor determining constructs of QWL. QWL is defined by Islam and Siengthai (2009) as the complimentary work environment for an employee’s benefit, welfare and management approaches towards operational workers and also the general employees.

Employees ought to believe that they have a high quality of work life when a sense of sincerity and conviction prevail amongst the management and the employees; moreover there is nothing to worry about being short-changed or misguided in task performance (Yeo and Li, 2011).

This assessment of QWL literature specifies that QWL is a multi-dimensional concept formulated of a number of coherent aspects that demand particular consideration to conceptualize and determine. We can also assume from the literature review that the term QWL is absolutely associated with issues that are related to an employee's job such as job satisfaction, job involvement and security, motivation and productivity, health, safety and wellbeing, competence development and, balance between private and professional life. Regardless of the ever growing intricacies of work life, the eight dimensional construct of QWL proposed by Walton is still considered a functional tool to analyze QWL. In this study also, Walton's theoretical model is used to determine the level of QWL among the University employees.

3. Quality of Work Life and Human Resource Management

In this age of global business, quality of human resource demands a centre-stage in an organization irrespective of its stature and credibility. To maintaining the quality of such human inputs, the management is bound to support the quality of work life program thoroughly. The organizations today are exhibiting increased interest in their most important asset ie human resources due to the fact that the ways and methods by which they manage their employees are significant for the success of the organization. This fact can be an important base for sustainable competitive advantage among the organizations that can be obtained mainly through improved QWL at the workplace. Straw and Heckscher (1984), believe that QWL is a philosophy or a set of principles, which consider people as the most important resource in an organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution within and, they also assert that people in an organization should be treated with dignity and respect. On the basis of this philosophy we argue that the human resources are the main factor of competitive advantage, success and survival of any organization.

Now we briefly discuss a major component of management, the Human Resource Management (HRM). In simple words, HRM means to select, develop, motivate and maintain human resources, in the organizations. Quality of work life is a highly suitable human resource management approach needed by developing countries (Pranee, 2010).). In the context of HRM,

quality of working life is a philosophy as it is rooted in strong humanistic values. Mahapatra (2011) examines that QWL particularly focus upon the issue of creating a work environment which is amicable for humans. Human resource management does not only deal with optimal utilization of manpower in an organization but, is also concerned about other HR initiatives such as effective planning, development and management (Ahmad, 2003). A good human resource practice ensures that the workforce is productive and satisfied with its job; hence, QWL is becoming a crucial human resource factor in organizations (Ahmad, 2013, p.81). As a matter of fact it is perceived that by implying high quality Human Resource Management and practices the quality of self motivation can be inculcated among the employees who further lead to the outstanding performance. This motivational ethos in corporate culture can be obtained on the part of the HR department by expanding different human resource management practices and policies.

Various researchers in their work have argued that QWL and the job-related concerns such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment are the basic issues associated with human resource and organizational development (OD) aspect from the commencement of 1960's itself, representing the significance of corporate values and ethics at work place (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Leopold, 2005). Murugan (2012) asserts that QWL programs are one of the ways through which organizations acknowledge their accountability to develop jobs and working conditions that are affable for the employees and economically beneficial for the organization as well.

4. Association Between Quality of Work Life and Demographic Characteristics

Employees' perception of quality of work life varies according to the demographic and organizational attributes and comprehending this notion would help the management to create the circumstances to improve the QWL (Murugan, 2012). Proceeding further, QWL has become an important matter of discussion within organizations because they want to elevate organizational effectiveness as well as create employee satisfaction simultaneously. Karrir and Khurana (1996) observed significant relationship between QWL and the variables such as education, ethnicity, income level, job satisfaction and job involvement among the managers in public, private and cooperative industries. There is a significant association between the duration of service period and the level of quality of work life in teaching environment of the people.

(Bharti et al., 2010). Factors like age, employment, gender, education and income are very important to relate with the level of QWL among the employees (Wright, 2002). Dalaney & Huselid (1996), in their study conducted on Iowa civil servants, in the U.S.A observed that the length of service was negatively associated with QWL. Likewise, another research conducted by Stamps & Piedmonte (1986), on nursing staff found that the length of employment has both significant and negative impact on QWL.

5. Statement of the Problem

Education sector plays an important role in the development of a nation. It is a requisite to evaluate the degree QWL of the employees of universities because, if the employees feel that QWL is not adequate, they may leave the present job and search for a job with better QWL instead. Hasan, Chowdhury & Alam (2008), point out that faculty turnover has a very important effect on the overall educational system in a country. To sum up, any improvement in quality of life at workplace would prove beneficial for both the employees and organizations as a whole and in the long run can benefit the society also.

6. Objectives of the Study

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- to examine the existing quality of work life of University employees
- to examine the relationship between quality of work life and some demographic characteristics of the University employees and,
- To propose some of the measures to improve the Quality of Work Life in this University

7. Significance of the Study

The term QWL gained momentum in the late 1960s to evaluate the effects of job on the overall health and general well-being of employees and as a means to positively affect the quality of a person's job related experience (Taneja & Kumari, 2012). During the mid 1970s, the major concern for an employer was improvement in the work design as well as the working conditions. Contrary to this, Cummings and Worley (2001) found that the QWL concept in the 1980s concerned about other components of job as well that influences employees' job

satisfaction and productivity - reward systems, physical work environment, employee involvement, rights and self esteem. The statement hints that quality can be generally defined as “conformance to requirements” or as “fitness for purpose”. We argue that since the term quality of work-life comprises of different issues related to work-life of an employee and insists on a supportive organizational behavior, it should be extensive both in concept and scope. It is presumed that the present study will play a positive role in realizing the present status of this particular university and provide some strategies to comply with the employee’s satisfaction according to the university’s convenience.

8. The Question and Hypotheses of the Current Study are:

Q1 What is the level of ‘Quality of Work Life’ of employees of the University

H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and quality of work life.

H2: There is a significant relationship between age and quality of work life.

H3: There is a significant relationship between work experience and quality of work life.

H4: There is a significant relationship between employees’ income and their quality of work life.

H5: There is a significant relationship between employees’ educational qualification and their quality of work life.

9. Research Methodology

This section of the paper focuses upon the research methodology which was applied during the study. Specific importance is given to the research design which included the selection of sample, data gathering and the statistical methods that were used.

9.1 Research Design

The study adopted a case study research method. The methodology facilitates a researcher to examine the data more directly and precisely. Further, it allows the worker to explore and understand the complex issues of the study. Case study research method is an experimental investigation undertaken to examine a contemporary phenomenon in real-life context where the restrictions between the phenomenon and context are not clearly visible, hence various sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984)

9.2 Sample and Procedure

The investigation was carried out in the University, and the universe of the study comprises of employees from University. The sample was made up of both males and females, from all the race groups within the University. The study is based largely upon the primary source data where as the secondary data was used for literature and evidences. Primary data was collected from the employees by providing them with a questionnaire. The QWL questionnaire was designed based on Walton's (1975) theory of QWL and the respondents were asked to answer the questionnaire in their best possible way.

9.3 Questionnaires

For this study a questionnaire was prepared which was divided into two parts, the first part comprised of thirty questions. These questions were further categorized into eight different sections according to Walton's(1975) model (Social Relevance, Adequate and Fair Compensation, Social integration in the work force, Safe and Healthy Work Environment, Opportunities to use and develop human capacity, Promotion Policy, Constitutionalism in the work organization and, Opportunity for career growth). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on each statement from "1" as "I absolutely agree" to "5" as "I absolutely disagree" (Number 3 was neither agree nor disagree). The respondents were asked to identify the topic that impinges on their quality of work life as a whole. In the second part of the questionnaire the demographical features of respondents namely; gender, age, years of service, education and their income level were listed down for evaluation.

9.4 Data Collection

The complete set of data for the study was attained by visiting the university premises and distributing the questionnaires. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and participants were free to refuse participation and participants could discontinue their participation any time without being prejudiced. . The investigator attempted to keep all information collected in this study strictly confidential. Participants were also guaranteed that if any publication results from this research, they would not be identified by their personal names or the name of the University. Overall 250 questionnaires were distributed out of which 190 valid responses were included in the analysis.

10. Statistical Analysis

A total of 190 questionnaires were included in the final analysis. Since the study uses multiple items in all constructs, Cronbach alpha reliability test was done. The Cronbach alpha value for this study is 0.86 which was relatively high. Since the score of the test for the tool was above 0.70, the tools were found to be reliable indicating the reliability of the study. The collected data were analyzed and various statistical tests were applied (Percentage analysis, Chi-square Test, Pearson's coefficient of correlation).

10.1 Profile of the Respondents

Based upon their gender, age, experience, educational qualification and income per month, details of the demographic profile of the respondents is displayed in Table 1.

The following research information was collected from the respondents:

10.1.1 Gender:

From table 1, it can be deduced that there were more male respondents (71.5%) than female (28.5%) respondents.

10.1.2 Age

Table 1 illustrates that a large percentage of the sample (59.1%) is younger than 41 years old, from which 33.2% is between the ages of 36 – 40 years. Only 4.7% of the sample is older than 50 years.

10.1.3 Experience

Regarding the period of service of the respondents, it can be concluded from table 1, that 60.5% of the respondents are employed for more than 5 years where, 27.4% has a service period of 6 – 8 years, 16.8% has a service period of between 9 – 11 years and 16.3% has a service period of more than 12 years.

10.1.4 Income

From table 1, it is clear that about 48.5% of the respondents fall into the income group of INR 40001 to 100,000 and 8.4% receive salary above INR 100,000.

10.1.5 Educational qualification

In terms of educational qualification, about 32.1% respondents are graduates, 42.6% completed Master's degree, and 25.3% are Ph.D. holders.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Employee category	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	136	71.5
Female	54	28.5
Age (in Years)		
<25	0	0
25 to 30	11	5.7
31to 35	39	20.5
36to 40	63	33.2
41 to45	48	25.3
46to50	20	10.5
Above 51	9	4.7
Period of Service (in Years)		
< 2	30	15.8
3 to 5	45	23.7
6 to 8	52	27.4
9 to 11	32	16.8
over 12	31	16.3
Income Per Month		
Below INR40000	12	6.3
INR40001- 60000	70	36.8
INR60001- 80000	67	35.3
INR80001- 100000	25	13.2
INR100001 & above	16	8.4
Educational Qualification		
Bachelors level	61	32.1
Post Graduate level	81	42.6
Doctorate level	48	25.3

11. Findings and Discussion

11.1 Level of Quality of Work Life

The respondents were asked to evaluate different factors on five point Likert scales. The factors were social Relevance, Adequate and Fair Compensation, Social integration in the work force, Safe and Healthy Work Environment, Opportunities to use and develop human capacity, Promotion Policy, Constitutionalism in the work organization and, Opportunity for career growth. Table 2.1 shows the level of quality of work life as perceived by University employees.

From Table 2.1 it can be deciphered that in terms of the quality of work life of employees in University 23.7% of the respondents has high level of quality of work life while only 15.3% of the respondents have low level of quality of work life. The majority of respondents have medium level of QWL (61%). All together 84.7% of employees enjoy favorable QWL in University which is a good predictor of able management. The data also illustrates that majority of employees have considered all the eight dimensions of QWL investigated in this study as favorable.

Table 2:
N=190

Level	QWL	No. of employees	Percentage	Questionnaire score	Mean	Minimum score
High	High	45	23.7	111-150	3.123	48
Medium	medium	116	61	70-110	S.D	Maximum score
Low	Low	29	15.3	30-69	1.001	150

11.2 Hypothesis 1: To know the impact of gender on QWL, Chi square Test was used.

Calculation of chi-square test:

Level of significance = 5%

Degree of Freedom (df) = (no. of rows-1) (no. of colomns-1)

$$= (5-1) (2-1), = 4 \times 1, = 4$$

At df =4, Table value of chi square = 9.488

- Test Statistics: $X^2 = \sum[(Fo-Fe)^2/Fe]$ where,

Fo= observed frequency

Fe= expected frequency for each cell

$$Fe = (\text{frequency for the column})(\text{frequency for the row})/n$$

According to the result (Table 2.1), the calculated value of chi-square test is 2.062 which is less than the table value i.e. 9.488. Thus, the hypothesis 1 (i.e. there is a significant relationship between gender of the employees and QWL) becomes redundant. . It means that the level of QWL was similar for both sex and their perception was same regarding their quality of work life. This result was consistent with a previous research study conducted by Bhuvanewari (2012).

Table 2.1

Hypothesis	Test	Calculated value	Confidence Interval
Gender(H1)	Chi Square	2.062	95%

11.3 Hypothesis 2: According to the table 2.2, analysis revealed that there is a significant association between age and QWL among University employees since Sig<0.05. The result supports hypothesis 2. Age has been identified as a strong predictor of QWL, with older workers generally enjoying higher quality of work life than younger workers (Stamps and Piedmonte, 1986).

Table 2.2

Variables	Correlation Value	Significance
Quality of Work Life	-.195	p<0.05

11.4 Hypothesis 3: Table 2.3 confirms a relationship between work experience & QWL (Sig<0.05) and justifies hypothesis 3. Same result was observed by Bharathi et.al. (2010) that here is a significant association between the length of service of the respondents and their perceived levels of overall quality of work life in teaching environment.

Table 2.3

Variables	Correlation Value	Significance
Quality of Work Life	0.036	p<0.05

11.5 Hypothesis 4: Table 2.4 shows a significant relation between University employees' income and their QWL (Sig<0.05). Previous research among nursing professionals also reported statistically significant association with the QWL measure and income of the employees (Schmidt and Dantas, 2012). Similarly Okpara (2005) stated that several private sector studies have found that better paid workers tend to have a higher QWL.

Table 2.4

Variables	Correlation Value	Significance
Quality of Work Life	0. 019	p<0.05

11.6 Hypothesis 5: A relationship between University employees' education and their QWL is evident from table 2.5 (Sig<0.05). Employees with higher education levels tend to be more aware of the available alternatives for changing jobs and are typically less likely to develop strong affections towards their current jobs and employing organizations (Mowday et al., 1982). On the same note, higher level of education leads to higher level of QWL (Mishra et al.1997).

Table2.5

Variables	Correlation Value	Significance
Quality of Work Life	-.009	p<0.05

12. Limitations and Further Research

There were several limitations regarding this study that need to be highlighted, so that it can be considered for future research. The major limitations were small sample size and limited area of investigation which might not be true representative of the whole population of university employees and hence raises the question on the generalization of findings. This study investigated the relation between gender, age, income and work experience and education of the employees of University with QWL. It is suggested that the study be expanded including other variables of demography like marital status, ethnicity, native place of the employees and their interaction with all the dimensions of QWL so that a constructive comparison can be made before reaching any consequential conclusion. It is also recommended that future research may be conducted on quality of work life and productivity of the employees of University. It is suggested that administrators should continue or even upgrade their efforts at meeting the needs of their employees through work life strategies and schemes to achieve a better quality work life for them.

13. Conclusions

This study provides valuable implications for Asian universities that have shown growing interest in attracting and retaining quality employees in their learning institutions. This study examined the level of QWL of the University employees and the relationship between QWL and some demographic characteristics of the employees. Overall, the findings of the present study have provided satisfactory answers to the research questions and hypotheses. The study suggested statistically significant correlation between the demographic variables namely age, period of service, income and education of employees of University and QWL. Also, it concluded that employees' gender has no specific relation regarding the degree of their QWL. The study suggests that quality of work life condition in the University is favorable to the total job environment of its employees. It also revealed that majority of employees have considered the level of QWL investigated in this study as favorable which is a predictor of good management. Yet there is much scope for improvement in future, since employing well planned QWL initiatives for employees will surely benefit the university in terms of competitive

advantage in general. We conclude that the overall findings of this study are quite encouraging and will contribute to the extant literature in a positive way.

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