

A comparative Study of QWL Amongst Staff in Select Technical Institutions of Haryana

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Abstract

Emergence of concern for QWL can be traced to the revival of interest in the larger area of quality of life in most of the countries of world. Quality of working life has been differentiated from the broader concept of Quality of Life. However, it will be argued here that the specific attention to work-related aspects of quality of life is valid. Whilst Quality of Life has been more widely studied, Quality of working life, remains relatively unexplored and unexplained. A review of the literature reveals relatively little on quality of working life. Where quality of working life has been explored, writers differ in their views on its' core constituents. It is argued that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts as regards Quality of working Life, and, therefore, the failure to attend to the bigger picture may lead to the failure of interventions which tackle only one aspect. A clearer understanding of the inter-relationship of the various facets of quality of working life offers the opportunity for improved analysis of cause and effect in the workplace. This consideration of Quality of working Life as the greater context for various factors in the workplace, such as job satisfaction and stress, may offer opportunity for more cost-effective interventions in the workplace. The present study is an attempt to compare and assess the QWL among teaching and non-teaching staff members in technical institutions of Haryana.

Introduction

QWL refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of a job environment for people. It refers to the quality of relationship between employees and the total working environment. According to Harrison , QWL is the degree of which work in an organization contributes to material and psychological well-being of its members.

Quality of Work Life is a process of joint decision-making, collaboration and building mutual respect between management and employees. It is concerned with increasing labour management cooperatives to solve the problems of improving organizational performance and employee satisfaction. According to the American Society of Training and Development, it is a process of work organization which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shaping the organisation's environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed towards meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organisation and improved quality of work for employees. Quality of work life (QWL) has become a focus of growing concern in work and humanistic values which got neglected in the process of excessive concern for economic development and materialism during a major part of the twentieth century. Quality of work life means a set of objective organizational conditions and practices (e.g., promotion from within policies, democratic supervision, employee involvement, safe working conditions etc.). The other way equates QWL with employees' perceptions that they are safe, relatively well satisfied, and able to grow and develop as human beings.

Literature Review

Beukema (1987) defines QWL as the degree to which employees are able to shape their jobs actively, in accordance with their options, interests and needs. It is the degree of power an organization gives to its employees to design their work. This means that the individual employee has the full freedom to design his job functions to meet his personal needs and interests. This definition emphasizes the individual's choice of interest in carrying out the task. However, this definition differs from the former which stresses on the organization that designs the job to meet employees' interest. It is difficult for the organization to fulfill the personal needs and values of each employee. However if the organization provides the appropriate authority to design work activities for the individual employees, then it is highly possible that the work activities can match their employees' needs that contribute to the organizational performance.

Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger (1997) define QWL as the feelings that employees have towards their jobs, colleagues and organizations that ignite a chain leading to the organizations' growth and profitability. A good feeling towards their job means that the employees feel happy doing work which will lead to a productive work environment. This definition provides an insight that the satisfying work environment is considered to provide better QWL.

Lau, Wong, Chan and Law (2001) operationalised QWL as the favourable working environment that supports and promotes satisfaction by providing employees with rewards, job security and career growth opportunities. Indirectly the definition indicates that an individual who is not satisfied with reward may be satisfied with the job security and to some extent would enjoy the career opportunity provided by the organization for their personal as well as professionals' growth.

Suttle (1977) defines QWL as the degree to which employees are able to satisfy important personal basic needs through their experience in the organization is no longer relevant. Generally jobs in the contemporary work environment offer sufficient rewards, benefits, recognition and control to employees over their actions. Although to some extent contemporary workforce members are compensated appropriately, their personal spending practices, lifestyles, leisure activities, individual value systems, health and so forth can affect their levels of need. It is similar to the argument posted in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs in which each individual has different level of needs because in reality what is important to some employees may not be important to others although they are being treated equally in the same organization. This definition, focusing on personal needs has neglected the fact that the construct of QWL is subjective and continuously evolves due to burgeoning needs of each and every employee.

Surely, groups of people from varied socio-cultural contexts will view QWL in a variety of ways, which are determined, in part, by local values and conditions. The findings of a literature search for various features defining QWL led to an identification of two general factor, namely, work/work environment and employee welfare and well-being. Within the first factor are included such features as democracy (Cooper, 1988), task content/physical features of the job (Kirkman, 1981) and promotion (Kahn, 1981; Macarov, 1981). The second

factor mainly emphasizes employee welfare and well being. Hofstede (1980) identified four broad dimensions of culture that he named individualism, power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance.

In light of the above findings and considering the variables extracted from all these studies, the current study focuses on relevant variable affecting Quality of Work Life in technical education institutes of Haryana.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the study

- *To assess and compare the level of quality of work life amongst teaching and non-teaching staff members of technical institutions in Haryana.*

The study is based on primary data collected through well structured questionnaire based on six dimensions of QWL. The questionnaire was subject to a pilot study and alternations for better analysis and interpretation were incorporated. The slightly customized questionnaire included 76 items in Part I and 13 items in Part II. The first part was related to the responses from employees of technical institutions six dimensions of QWL and 13 items of part II were related to institutional & personal profile of respondents. All the responses on variable were obtained on a 5 point Likert scale (from for highly unsatisfactory to 5 for highly satisfactory). While conducting the survey due care was given to include respondents from various cadres of employees i.e. Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors from the teaching class and also the various departments of non-teaching class. A pilot study was undertaken and necessary changes incorporated in the questionnaire thereby. Out of 500 questionnaire distributed in various parts of Haryana 486 were found fit for analysis. The 15 factor extracted after running factor analysis on the 76 questions pertaining to QWL were further subject to t test analysis.

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The t-test results are shown in table below

	Teaching		Non-Teaching		t	Sig.
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
1. Task Management	3.702	0.595	3.619	0.693	1.118	0.264
2. Autonomy	3.299	0.717	3.280	0.759	0.216	0.829
3. Drudgery	3.334	0.697	3.353	0.673	-0.221	0.825
4. Career Advancement	3.429	0.792	3.423	0.829	0.062	0.951
5. Listening Management	3.420	0.724	3.344	0.795	0.860	0.390
6. Effective Leadership	3.526	0.705	3.373	0.785	1.768	0.078
7. Progressive Organization	3.128	0.711	3.036	0.772	1.057	0.291
8. Conducive Environment	3.418	0.671	3.297	0.704	1.487	0.138
9. Pesponsive Selves	3.813	0.672	3.624	0.844	2.219	0.027
10. Motivating Self	3.751	0.634	3.572	0.770	2.253	0.025
11. Efficient Leadership	3.999	0.557	3.906	0.746	1.305	0.192

12. Self Competence	3.632	0.663	3.548	0.644	1.254	0.210
13. Rewarding Organization	3.548	0.644	3.413	0.755	1.688	0.092
14. Social Welfare	3.052	0.877	2.972	0.996	0.737	0.461
15. General Well Being	3.455	0.802	3.341	1.014	1.126	0.261

Parametric tests provide inferences for making statements about the means of parent population t-test is used for this purpose. The t-statistic assumes that the variable is normally distributed and the mean is known (or assumed to be known), and the population variance is estimated from the sample.

The null hypothesis (Ho) was assumed that there is no difference in perception of teaching and non-teaching regarding QWL.

Out of 15 factor extracted there are two dimensions namely 'responsive selves' and 'motivating self' on which the responses of teaching and non-teaching members with respect to quality of work life differs respectively. The variables aptly explain the fact that teaching staff members do give more importance to involvement in the job, willingness to undertake responsibility and team commitment as significant variables of QWL. A positive and constructive approach and high level of discipline is also important which is vivid in the mean score (3.75%) of dimension 'Motivating Self' with respect to teaching staff.

All the other 13 dimensions invited consistent responses from both teaching & non-teaching staff. A cursory glance at the t-test results displays that Task Management, Autonomy, Career Advantage, Effective leadership. Progressive organisation, conducive environment, Efficient leadership, Self competence, Rewarding organizations, Social welfare & General Well Being have all been given more importance by teaching staff with respect to QWL. The non-teaching staff gave more weightage to Drudgery and Listening Management aspects of QWL.

Conclusion

Quality of work life engulfs a lot of dimensions. The management or employees of technical education institutes need to focus their attention on those dimensions which directly has an impact of overall quality of work life perception of employees and strive to provision of the same to insure satisfaction of employees. These are significant variations in responses on dimensions of responsive selves and motivating self between teaching and non-teaching staff members, more importantly held by teaching staff members.

The management needs to ensure that these dimensions are taken care of and positively addressed so that the teaching as well non-teaching employees of both Government and Private institutions are satisfied with the quality of work life. The positive perception with respect to the above dimensions will definitely play a crucial role in retaining the staff members and thereby improve the image of the institutions attracting quality talent.

The teaching staff members of the select technical institutions pay more attention to involvement in the job, willingness to undertake responsibility and team commitment to organizational goals positive approach and discipline variables and also relevant jobs imported as per their skills and knowledge. The employers need to focus on these aspects with respect to addressing the satisfaction of teaching staff members.

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