

Perceived Quality Of Work Life at an Electronic Manufacturing Industry in Mysuru

Yashwanth Yadav ^{c1}, K.V.A.Balaji², N.Narendra³

¹PG student, M.Tech (Master Of Engineering Management) S.J.C.E. Mysuru, Karnataka, India

²Professor Department Of Mechanical Engineering S.J.C.E. Mysuru, Karnataka, India

³Managing Director VITPL, Mysuru , Karnataka , India

Abstract - Work is an integral part of everyday life. On an average, people spend twelve hours of their daily life on work and it almost forms one third of their entire life. Research on Quality of Work Life is considered to be very important both at the individual and organizational levels since it is involved with job satisfaction, productivity, job involvement, job enrichment and so on. The success of any organization is highly dependent on how it attracts, recruits, motivates, and retains its workforce. Today's organizations need to be more flexible so that they are equipped to develop their workforce and enjoy their commitment. This study makes an attempt to analyse the "Quality of Work Life among employees in a Electronic Manufacturing Unit". In order to improve quality of work life, various coping techniques have been isolated to upgrade the employee's attitude towards their job and their work environment in the organization

Key Words: productivity, attracts recruits, motivates, retains, job involvement, job enrichment, job Satisfaction, working environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life (QWL) is viewed as an alternative to the control approach of managing people. The QWL approach considers people as an 'asset' to the organization rather than as 'costs'. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. This approach motivates people by satisfying not only their economic needs but also their social and psychological ones. To satisfy the new generation workforce, organizations need to concentrate on job designs and organization of work. Further, today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives. Successful organizations support and provide facilities to their people to help them to balance the scales. In this process, organizations are coming up with new and innovative ideas

to improve the quality of work and quality of work life of every individual in the organization. Various programs like flex time, alternative work schedules, compressed work weeks, telecommuting etc., are being adopted by these organizations. Technological advances further help organizations to implement these programs successfully. Organizations are enjoying the fruits of implementing QWL programs in the form of increased productivity, and an efficient, satisfied, and committed workforce which aims to achieve organizational objectives. (Stephen.P.Robbins)

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various authors and researchers have proposed models of Quality of Work Life which include a wide range of factors. Some models are reviewed below to design this stud

Hackman and Oldham [1] drew attention to what they described as psychological growth needs as relevant to the consideration of Quality of Work Life. Several such needs were identified; Skill variety, Task Identity, Task significance, Autonomy and Feedback. They suggested that such needs have to be addressed if employees are to experience high Quality Of Work Life.

In contrast to such theory based models, Taylor [2] more pragmatically identified the essential components of Quality of Work Life as; basic extrinsic job factors of wages, hours and working conditions, and the intrinsic job notions of the nature of the work itself. He suggested that a number of other aspects could be added, including; individual power, employee participation in the management, fairness and equity, social support, use of one's present skills , self development, a meaningful future at work, social relevance of the work or product, effect on extra work activities. Taylor suggested that relevant Quality of Work Life concepts may vary according to organization and employee group.

Warr, P, Cook, J and Wall, T [3] in an investigation of Quality of Work Life, considered a range of apparently relevant factors, including work involvement, intrinsic job motivation, higher ordered strength, perceived intrinsic job characteristics, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, happiness, and self-rated anxiety. They discussed a range of correlations derived from their work, such as those between work involvement and job satisfaction, intrinsic job motivation and perceived intrinsic job characteristics. In particular, these researchers found evidence for a moderate association between total job satisfaction and total life satisfaction and happiness, with a less strong, but significant association with self-rated anxiety. Thus, whilst some authors have emphasized the workplace aspects in Quality of Work Life, others have identified the relevance of personality factors, psychological well being, and broader concepts of happiness and life satisfaction.

Factors more obviously and directly affecting work has, however, served as the main focus of attention, as researchers have tried to trace out the important influences on Quality of Work Life in the workplace.

Mirvis and Lawler [4] suggested that Quality of Work Life was associated with satisfaction with wages, hours and working conditions, describing the "basic elements of a good Quality of Work Life" as - safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement.

Baba and Jamal [5] listed what they described as typical indicators of quality of working life, including: job satisfaction, job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role conflict, work overload, job stress, organizational commitment and turn-over intentions. They also explored routinisation of job content, suggesting that this facet should be investigated as part of the concept of Quality of work Life.

Sirgy et.al.,[7] suggested that the key factors in Quality of Work Life are need satisfaction based on job requirements, need satisfaction based on work environment, need satisfaction based on supervisory behavior, need satisfaction based on ancillary programmes, and organizational commitment. They defined Quality of Work Life as satisfaction of these key needs through resources, activities, and outcomes stemming from participation in the workplace. Maslow's needs were seen as relevant in underpinning this model, covering health & safety, economic and family, social, esteem and actualization, Knowledge and aesthetics, although the relevance of non-work aspects is played down as attention is focused on quality of work life rather than the broader concept of quality of life. These attempts at defining Quality of Work Life have included theoretical approaches, lists of identified factors, correlation analyses, with opinions varying as to whether such definitions and explanations can be both global, or need to be specific to each work setting.

Bearfield, [8] used 16 questions to examine quality of working life, and distinguished between causes of dissatisfaction in professionals, intermediate clerical, sales and service workers, indicating that different concerns might have to be addressed for different groups. The distinction made between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in Quality of Work Life that reflects the influence of job satisfaction theories.

Herzberg et.al [9] used "Hygiene factors" and "Motivator factors" to distinguish between the separate causes of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. It has been suggested that Motivators are intrinsic to the job, that is; job content, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. The Hygiene factors or dissatisfiers or avoidance factors include aspects of the job environment such as interpersonal relationships, salary, working conditions and security. Of these, the most common cause of job dissatisfaction can be company policy and administration, whilst achievement can be the greatest source of extreme satisfaction.

An individual's experience of satisfaction or dissatisfaction can be substantially rooted in their perception, rather than simply reflecting their "real world". Further, an individual's perception can be affected by relative comparison - "am I paid as much as that person" - and comparisons of internalized ideals, aspirations, and expectations, for example, with the individual's current state (Lawler and Porter, 1966). In summary, wherever it has been considered, authors differ in their views on the core constituents of Quality of Working Life.

Sinha and Sayeed[10] propound that working life is a part of larger ecological complex of human environments and sources. In a bid to find out what it is which motivates people to work, social scientist in general, and psychologists in particular, have gone through long and twisting channels that involved gradual development and application of various concepts like job enlargement, job enrichment, organizational structure and climate, organizational effectiveness, job design, worker participation, organizational development, and so on. But all these were judged to have limited focus and usefulness. The quest for searching what motivates people resulted in the filtering out of the concept of quality of work life from a variety of studies conducted in industrial and organizational psychology and related disciplines. Initially this concept was directed mainly as a concern for assessing higher order work needs, but gradually it was found that the Quality of Work Life cannot be attained unless all needs arising in the organizational settings are taken care.

On the basis of this literature review & broad discussions with practitioners in the unit where this study was carried out, seventeen dimensions of Quality Of Work Life have been identified with the help of Quality Of Work Life Questionnaire (QWLQ) by Sinha And Sayeed[10].

1. Economic Benefits (EB)
2. Physical Working Conditions (PWC)
3. Mental State (MS)

4. Career Orientation (CO)
5. Advancement on Merit (AM)
6. Effect On personal Life (EPL)
7. Union Management Relations (UMR)
8. Self-Respect (SR)
9. Supervisory Relationship (RS)
10. Intra-group Relations (IGR)
11. Sense Of Achievement VS Apathy (SA)
12. Confidence In Management (CM)
13. Meaningful Development (MD)
14. Control, Influence Participation (CIP)
15. Employee Commitment (EC)
16. General Life Satisfaction (GLS)
17. Organizational Climate (OC)

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample

This study was carried out among the supervisory staff, shop floor employees and administrative staff. The electronic manufacturing enterprise where this study was carried out had a total of seven hundred employees among whom 150 of them willingly participated in this study. The sample selection was totally random without any bias.

3.2. QUESTIONNAIRE

In this study the standard questionnaire developed and standardized by Sinha and Sayeed (1980) was used to collect the data from the respondents. The research instrument had 85 questions trying to measure seventeen dimensions. Perception of the employees regarding these dimensions were collected on a seven point Likert Scale as “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree” and the rating give as 1 to 7 respectively.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Table -1

Profile of Samples	
Category of Employees	Number of Respondents
Shop Floor Workers	80
Administrative Staff	40
Supervisors	30
Total	150

4.0 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The objective of this study was to find the factors that influenced the Quality Of Work Life (QWL) in this electronic manufacturing industry. Thus, the data was subjected to a Factor Analysis to obtain the driving factors for this organization that resulted in 23 factors.

5.0 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Cronbach’s Alpha

To test the reliability of the data collected, Cronbach’s Alpha is used and its value was found to be 0.921 which shows instrument has the required reliability. as shown in Table 2

Cronbach’s Alpha	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.921	85

The rotated component matrix in Table 2 explains how the factor loadings are rotated and spread across all the dimensions, so that factor loadings distributed under the common underlying dimensions that resulted in 23 factors. Using Varimax Rotation method the components are rotated and the components are extracted using Principal Component Analysis method.

Interpretation of factors is facilitated by identifying the statements that have large loadings in the same factor. The factor can be interpreted in terms of the statement that loads high on it. The factors that influence the employee retention in the organization were found to have 85 individual statements. Out of seventeen dimensions, 23 individual variables influences the employee retention more, they are, therefore based on factor loadings statements as considered Table -3 Factor Loading from Rotated Matrix for Items in the Research Instrument

S.L.NO	QUESSINNARE	FACTOR LOADING
1	Does your company's "overtime" payments satisfy you?	0.972
2	"I feel incompetent for the job I am doing".	0.972
3	To what extent does the management recognizes and pays attention to your union's actions?	0.972
4	To what extent is the " sick leave policy" or "medical	0.972

	leave " facilities sufficient in your employment?	
5	To what extent do you have a say in termination of jobs of people in your workplace?	0.964
6	"I am sufficiently paid for the work I do".	0.963
7	"My supervisor always makes his expectations clear".	0.963
8	In general, how much say do you have on what goes on in your work group?	0.955
9	"The management appreciates my skills, abilities and performances".	0.955
10	How much are you satisfied with clothes, dresses and other such wears?	0.955
11	"The management is fair enough in giving rewards of merit to individuals"	0.954
12	To what extent does your supervisor show you how to improve your performance?	0.952
13	How much are you satisfied with the "retirement plans" of your company?	0.925
14	How much influence do you hold in settling differences and quarrels in your company?	0.888
15	To what extent does the company make an effort to help employees get and maintain good income?	0.888
16	"The management is fair enough in giving rewards of merit to individuals"	0.887

17	"The management takes due care of my dignity as an individual".	0.886
18	To what extent do you influence decisions regarding promotions?	0.885
19	To what extent do things about working here (people, policies, or conditions) encourage you to work hard?	0.885
20	"My company offers me education and training to keep me in touch with the field and do better".	0.858
21	"My company gives me an opportunity to feel part of the management".	0.875
22	"My social relations are satisfactory"	0.875
23	How much are you satisfied with your land and property position?	0.875
24	"My work gives me a feeling of achievement"	0.875
25	To what extent does the company have a real interest in the welfare and happiness of those who work here?	0.853
26	How much are you satisfied with respect to you and your family foodings?	0.853
27	To what extent are you told what you need to know to do your job in the best possible way?	0.853
28	"My fellow workers are very cooperative"	0.853
29	To what extent does the your supervisor provide the help you need so that you	0.844

	can schedule work ahead of time?	
30	To what extent are you satisfied with educational facilities available for your family?	0.843
31	To what extent does the company's medical aid facilities satisfy you?	0.836
32	"There is very little in my job to keep me interested".	0.836
33	"My job has given me a feeling of status in society"	0.834
34	To what extent do the "savings plan" facilities present in your employment?	0.777
35	"I devote myself to the job".	0.758
36	How adequate for your needs is the amount of information you get about what is going on in other departments and shifts?	0.752
37	To what extent does this organization have a real interest in the welfare and happiness of those who work here?	0.752
38	"The management does not fail to appreciate the importance of my work".	0.752
39	To what extent do you influence decisions regarding pay bonus etc.?	0.751
40	"I think of myself as a part of the company team".	0.746
41	"My company offers enough opportunities to change job within the company".	0.744
42	How much does this organization try to	0.742

	improve working conditions?	
43	To what extent do you enjoy performing the actual day to day activities that make up your job?	0.742
44	"I have opportunities to use my special skills and abilities in my job".	0.740
45	"I give my best efforts as part of contributions to company products".	0.733
46	To what extent are the working conditions, such as plant maintenance, sufficient?	0.729
47	"I make use of the company sponsored training for my job".	0.728
48	"My superior gets along well with people"	0.722
49	To what extent does your supervisor offer new ideas for job related problems?	0.719
50	To what extent do you think your superior has confidence and trust in you?	0.717
51	To what extent do you feel a real responsibility to achieve the success of the company?	0.698
52	"I have a say in deciding how to schedule my work".	0.695
53	"My company takes care of my future career plans".	0.695
54	How much does your supervisor encourage people to give their best effort?	0.695

55	How much do persons in your work group encourage each other to work as a team?	0.656
56	"I am satisfied with the fairness of promotion procedures in my company".	0.649
57	How friendly and easy to approach are persons in your work group?	0.668
58	To what extent do persons in your work group show you how to do a better job?	0.638
59	How satisfactory is your financial condition?	0.605
60	In case of emergencies and difficulties how much influence do you exercise a way out?	0.595
61	To what extent are you told what you need to know to do your job in the best possible way?	0.595
62	To what extent are you satisfied with educational facilities available for your family?	0.595
63	"Sudden leave or break in work makes me feel relieved and happy."	0.550
64	"My job has enough prestige with in the company".	0.550
65	Does your company's "overtime" payments satisfy you?	0.550
66	"Doing my job well, I get a feeling of satisfaction".	0.533
67	"I get recognition for the good work I do	0.526

	here"	
68	"My supervisor is good at planning and scheduling of work".	0.525
69	To what extent is the " sick leave policy" or "medical leave " facilities sufficient in your employment?	0.523
70	When you talk with persons with in your work group, to what extent do they pay attention to what you are saying?	0.520
71	To what extent are work activities sensibly organized in this company?	0.519
72	To what extent do you have control in deciding to change the method of your work?	0.517
73	"In decisions regarding selection of people for jobs, my views are heard	0.512
74	How much are you satisfied with your place of residence / housing facility?	0.488
75	"My colleagues treat me with due respect".	0.454
76	"My contacts with fellow workers outside work is good".	0.453
77	To what extent do persons in your group provide the help you need so that you can plan, organize and schedule work ahead of time?	0.453
78	"My supervisor accepts my ideas and suggestions".	0.453

From factor loading

1).Table 3 if the loading factor >0.9 it is considered to be excellent variable contributing to the perceived QWL..

2).Where loading factor lies in between >0.8<0.9 is considered to be moderate requiring some improvements

.3).Items with Loading factor that is <0.8 is considered as weak and a lot of action should be take to enhance the perceived QWL.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Quality Of Work Life refers to the set of measurable attributes of a work environment as perceived by those working in it. QWL is the key to business success because it impacts productivity. Therefore, organizations have to have mechanisms for periodic measurement of Quality Of Work Life and take appropriate measures to maintain a desirable work environment at all times. Numerous studies have indicated that the Quality Of Work Life can make a real difference between a good performance and a poor performance.

QWL determines how an individual perceives his work, performance, productivity and satisfaction. Thus there is ample evidence that QWL and organisational productivity have a direct bearing on each other. Many times even though the organization offers great benefits both economically, and socially, people just dissociate themselves from poor relationship with their leaders. Studies show that people tend to engage more with the company, which is why one of the main areas evaluated in a study of QWL.

The results of this particular study have been tabulated depending upon the perception levels of workers in the electronic manufacturing unit. The dimensions have been classified into good, moderate and poor thereby revealing the ones that require efforts from the organization to improve upon the existing perceived QWL.

Table 4 Classification of Dimensions based on Factor Loading

S.L.NO	Dimensions	Perception Level
1	Economic Benefit	Good
2	Physical Working Condition	Good
3	Career Orientation	Good
4	Self Respect	Good
5	Supervisory Relationship	Good
6	Confidence in Management	Good
7	Control Influence	Good

	Participation	
8	Employee Commitment	Good
9	Intra-group Relations	Good
10	Mental State	Moderate
11	Advance On Merit	Moderate
12	Effect on Personal Life	Moderate
13	Sense Of Achievement v/s Apathy	Moderate
14	Union Management Relations	Moderate
15	Meaningful Development	Poor
16	General Life Satisfaction	Poor
17	Organizational Climate	Poor

Thus the organization has to concentrate on items 10 to 17 namely Mental Status, Advance on merit, Effect on personal life, Sense of achievement, Union management relationship, Meaningful Development, General life satisfaction, Organizational Climate in order to change the perceived levels of QWL.

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Yashwanth Yadav c ,PG student,
M.Tech (Master Of Engineering
Management) S.J.C.E. Mysuru,
Karnataka, India



K.V.A.Balaji , Professor
Department Of Mechanical
Engineering S.J.C.E. Mysuru,
Karnataka, India



N.Narendra
Managing Director
VITPL,Mysuru,Karnataka, India