



A Study on Quality of Work Life

* Dr.N.Thenpandian

* Associate Professor & Head, Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai

ABSTRACT

This study quantifies the effects of quality of work life on employees. It aims to gain an insight into current working life policies and practices, as well as work-life balance issues of employees. Several notable factors that influence quality of work life are Adequate and Fair Compensation; Safe and Healthy Working Conditions; Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capabilities; Opportunity for Career Growth etc. QWL provides for the balanced relationship among work, non- work and family aspects of life. In other words, family life and social life should not be strained by working hours including overtime work, work during inconvenient hours, business travel, transfers, vacations, etc.

Keywords : Quality, Employees, QWL

Introduction

Quality is generally defined as "Conformance to requirements". Quality is "as fitness for purpose". The concept of quality is not apply to all goods and services created by human beings, but also for workplace where the employees were employed.

Quality in the workplace comes from understanding and then fully meeting, the needs of all your internal and external customers, now and into the future and doing so with continual improvement inefficiency and effectiveness.

The success of any organization is highly dependant 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. Therefore, organizations are required to adopt a strategy to improve the employees 'quality of work life'(QWL) to satisfy both the organizational objectives and employee needs. The term (QWL) refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of a total job environment for people.

Review of Literature

Goudwaard and Andries (2006) studied the relationship between the employment status and working conditions. They used data from the third European Survey on working conditions to look at changes in employment relations between 1996 and 2000. It analyses the relationship between employment status and working conditions. The concept of employment status is two-dimensional. The research distinguishes between two types of employment contracts: permanent or openended. It distinguishes between fulltime and part-time employees. These two dimensions are linked together, with a higher proportion of part-time European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions.

Raza and Gupta (2000) have conducted a study to measure the extent of job satisfaction and effect of job anxiety on job satisfaction and their inter relationship among library professionals according to their hierarchy of the post. The data was collected from a sample of 65 library professionals employed in Delhi University System. This was an empirical study to establish some relationship between job anxiety and job satisfaction in the library environment, which could be useful for maximising the output and efficiency of library operations.

McCormick and Solman (1992) studied teachers' attributions

of responsibility for Occupational stress and satisfaction in Australia. The study suggests different levels of stress exist at elementary and secondary levels and pointed out that stress and job satisfaction is related.

QUALITY

Q - Quest for excellence
 U - Understanding
 A - Action
 L - Leadership
 I - Involvement of the people
 T - Team spirit
 Y - Yardstick to measure progress

The above said are very essential things to improve the work life of employees in the organization.

Factors That Influence And Decide The Quality Of Work Life:

Work is an integral part of our everyday life, as it is our livelihood or career or business. On an average we spend around twelve hours daily in the work place, that is one third of our entire life; it does influence the overall quality of our life. It should yield job satisfaction, give peace of mind, a fulfillment of having done a task, as it is expected.

The factors that influence and decide the Quality of work life are:

1. Attitude
2. Environment
3. Opportunities
4. Nature of Job
5. People
6. Stress Level
7. Career Prospects
8. Challenges
9. Growth and Development
10. Risk Involved and Reward

Attitude: The person who is entrusted with a particular job needs to have sufficient knowledge, required skill and expertise, enough experience, enthusiasm, energy level, willingness to learn new things, dynamism, sense of belongingness in the organization.

Environment: The job may involve dealing with customers who have varied tolerance level, preferences, behavioral pattern, level of understanding; or it may involve working with dangerous machines like drilling pipes, cranes, lathe machines, welding and soldering machines, or even with animals where maximum safety precautions have to be

observed which needs lot of concentration and alertness. **Opportunities:** Some jobs offer opportunities for learning, research, discovery, self-development, enhancement of skills, room for innovation, public recognition, exploration, celebrity-status and loads and loads of fame. **Nature of Job:** For example, a driller in the oil drilling unit, a diver, a fire-fighter, traffic policeman, train engine driver, construction laborers, welder, miner, lathe mechanic have to do dangerous jobs and have to be more alert in order to avoid any loss of limb, or loss of life which is irreparable.

People: Almost everyone has to deal with three set of people in the work place. Those are namely boss, co-workers in the same level and subordinates.

Stress Level: All these above mentioned factors are inter-related and inter-dependant. Stress level need not be directly proportional to the compensation. Stress is of different types - mental stress/physical stress and psychological or emotional stress.

Career Prospects: Every job should offer career development. That is an important factor which decides the quality of work life. Status improvement, more recognition from the Management, appreciations are the motivating factors for anyone to take keen interest in his job.

Challenges: The job should offer some challenges at least to make it interesting; That enables an employee to upgrade his knowledge and skill and capabilities; whereas the monotony of the job makes a person dull, non-enthusiastic, dissatisfied, frustrating, complacent, initiative - less and uninteresting.

Growth and Development: If an organization does not give chance for growth and personal development it is very difficult to retain the talented personnel and also to find new talent with experience and skill.

Risk Involved and Reward: Generally reward or compensation is directly proportional to the quantum of work, man-hours, nature and extent of responsibility, accountability, delegated powers, authority of position in the organizational chart, risk involved, level of expected commitment, deadlines and targets, industry, country, demand and supply of skilled manpower and even political stability and economic policies of a nation.

MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING THE QWL

QWL means having good supervision, good working conditions, good pay and benefits an interesting and challenging, and a rewarding job. The major factors that effect the QWL may be stated thus.

Pay

QWL is basically built around the concept of equitable pay. In the days ahead, employees may want to participate in the profits of the firm as will. Employees must be paid their due share in the progress and prosperity of the firm.

Benefits

Workers throughout the globe have raises their expectations over the years and now feel entitled to benefits that were once considered a part of the bargaining process.

Job Security

Employees want stability of employment. They do not like to be the victims of whimsical personal policies and stay at the

mercy of employers.

Alternative Work Schedules

Employees demand more freedom at the workplace, especially in scheduling their work. Among the alternative work schedules capable of enhancing the quality of work life for some employees are:

- i. Flexi time: A system of flexible working hours,
- ii. Staggered hours: Here groups of employees begin and end work at different intervals.
- iii. Compressed workweek: It involves more hours of work per day for fewer days, per week.
- iv. Job enrichment: It attempts to increase a person's level of output by providing that persons with exciting, interesting, stimulating or challenging work.
- v. Autonomous work groups (AWGs): Here a group of workers will be given some control of decision-making and have responsibility for a task area without day-to-day supervision, and with authority to influence and control both group members and their behavior.

Occupational Stress

Occupational mental-health programs dealing with stress are beginning to emerge as a new and important aspect of QWL programs. Obviously, and individual suffering from an uncomfortable amount of job-related stress cannot enjoy a high quality of work life.

Worker Participation

Employees have a genuine hunger for participation in organizational issues affecting their lives. Naturally they demand far more participation in the decision making process at the workplace.

Social Integration

The work environment should provide opportunities for preserving an employee's personal identity and self-esteem through freedom from prejudice, a sense of community, interpersonal openness and the absence of stratification in the organization.

Work and total life space

A person's work should not overbalance his life. Ideally speaking, work schedules, career demands and other job requirements should not take up too much of a person's leisure time and family life.

WAY TO CREATE HIGH QWL

QWL deals with the relationship between every employee and his or her work organization. This relationship is formal in sometimes less formal. This contract is psychological; contract. "Psychological contract is the set of expectations held by the individual specifying what the individual and the organization expect to give and receive from each other in the course of their working relationship". This contract represents the expected exchange of values that encourages the individual to work for the organization and motivates the organization to employ that person, (i.e.) Contribution and Inducements.

Conclusion

A happy and healthy employee will give better turnover, make good decisions and positively contribute to the organizational goal. An assured good quality of work life will not only attract young and new talent but also retain the existing experienced talent. Since employees are the backbone of the company. They should satisfy them in order to improve the business in the higher competitive market of the liberalized economy.

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