

EXPLORING DIMENSIONS AND ANTECEDENTS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Quality of work life (QWL) is a major determinant of job satisfaction, employee retention and attraction. QWL is mutually interrelated with the work environment and personal life needs. Working women are bearing major responsibilities at home and meeting higher job expectations and facing heavier demands at work. Work-life imbalance will escalate the stress level and increase the conflict in organisations. Maintenance of better QWL is possible only if the employee is satisfied with his work through the higher job expectations and matching the personal life and work life needs with his prospects. In this study, the attempt has been made to study the major influencers and dominant dimensions of QWL, especially among working women. The result reveals that, among the QWL variables, job nature factor is the dominant one followed by monetary benefit factor, non-monetary benefit factor, organisational climate factor, organisational structure factor and skills enrichment factor in the order of their dominance. Monthly family income and nature of family significantly influence QWL.

Keywords: Quality of work life, Job nature, Monetary benefits, Non-monetary benefits, Organisational climate, Organisational structure, Skills enrichment and working women.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life (QWL) is a comprehensive function to improve employee satisfaction through strengthening the work environment with continuous learning to adopt the organisational change and transition. QWL is a major determinant of job satisfaction, employee retention and attraction. QWL is mutually interrelated with the work environment and personal life needs. In a current dynamic business environment, every organisation is doing research to identify the new ways of doing business. It is very important and achievable when their employees are satisfied with both life and work. But in today's work force, women are always the major victims in maintenance of QWL (Ogunsanya and Olorunfemi, 2012). Working women are bearing major responsibilities at home and meeting higher job expectations and facing heavier demands at work. Work-life imbalance will escalate the stress level and increase the conflict in organisations (Hobson et al., 2001; Bellet al., 2012). Achieving the organisational goal is very imperative for the success of the organisation. But in these days, it is possible only if the employee is satisfied with his work through the higher job expectations and matching the personal life and work life needs with his prospects (Saltzstein et al., 2001). In this study, the attempt has been made to study the major influencers and dominant dimensions of QWL, especially among working women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Burra and Chirayath (2013) and Kumar (2013) have identified that nature of job, extra work, participative decision-making, constructive feedback, flexi time, goal congruence, salary contentment, self-efficiency, well-communicated instructions, weekly breaks, uncertain future, team bonding, employee turnover are significantly related to QWL. Anbugeetha (2013) and Rathamani and Ramchandra (2013) have studied the psychological and physical aspects of QWL among employees in textile industry. The result reveals that psychological, physical and economic aspects are having relationship with QWL and improved productivity. She suggested to take initiative to develop new QWL development programmes with active involvement of all employees will drive the organisation to achieve its goal. Kaur and Singh (2013), Jayakumar and Kalaiselvi (2012) and Lau and May (1998) have carried an exploratory research in QWL with an objective to develop jobs that are excellent for people and production. The result reveals that adequate pay, healthy work environment, career development opportunities and social integration factors are significantly influencing the QWL. Gupta and Padmawat (2013) and Katz et al. (1985) have identified the work-related attributes and beyond work-related attributes affecting the QWL of the employees in manufacturing sector, and they also suggested the management to give more autonomy, responsibility and authority to its employees for enhancement of QWL. Mohanty (2014), Ahmad (2013) and Srivastava and Kanpur (2014) have highlighted the necessities of work-life balance policies and programmes for better maintenance of QWL. Muthulakshmi and

Raju (2014) and Kalleberget al. (2009) say that good and bad stress are significantly influencing the QWL among women employees, and they suggested the working women to cope with the measures which mitigate the stress level to improve their QWL. Gowgi and Ramanaiah (2014) have conducted a hypothetical study on work/life balance among information technology (IT) employees with a motive to compare gender-wise difference in QWL. The result reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female employees, and they concluded that through training programmes, IT organisations can balance professional and personal life among employees.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the personal profiles of the working women in Chennai city.
- To identify the underlying dominant dimensions of QWL variables.
- To study the influence of personal profiles on total QWL among working women in Chennai city

Research Methodology

Primary data were collected with the help of a well-designed structured questionnaire from 200 women employees residing in Chennai using convenient sampling method. The QWL variables were measured using 5-point Likert scale. To check the reliability of scale, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was used. The value being 0.924, scale is more consistent and highly reliable.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire has been divided into two sections.

Section 1 deals with personal profiles such as age, marital status, educational qualification, nature of family, monthly family income, nature of organisation, schedule of work and level of employment.

Section 2 deals with 20 variables on QWL among respondents.

Statistical Tools Used

The data collected were subjected to percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, factor analysis and multiple regression analysis using SPSS Version 17.0.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Personal profiles of the respondents

Profile	Groups with Frequency				Total
Age (years)	[Upto25]= 75 [37.5%]	[26-35]= 51 [25.5%]	[36-45]= 26 [13.0%]	[>45]=48 [24.0%]	200 [100%]
Educational qualification	School education = 38 [19.0%]	UG = 56 [28.0%]	PG = 71 [35.5%]		200 [100%]
	Professional = 11 [5.5%]	Diploma = 24 [12%]			
Level of employment	Higher level = 32 [16.0%]	Middle level = 107 [53.5%]	Lower level = 61 [30.5%]		200 [100%]
Marital status	Unmarried = 103 [51.5%]		Married = 97 [48.5%]		200 [100%]
Nature of organisation	Government sector = 83 [41.5%]		Private sector = 117 [58.5%]		200 [100%]
Nature of family	Nuclear family = 129 [64.5%]		Joint family = 71 [35.5%]		200 [100%]
Schedule of work	Day shift = 148 [74%]		Night shift = 52 [26%]		200 [100%]
Family monthly income (Rs.)	Up to Rs. 20,000= 133 [66.5%]	[Rs. 20,001-50,000]= 37 [18.5%]	[Rs. 50,001-100,000]= 13 [6.5%]	[>Rs. 100,000]= 17 [8.5%]	200 [100%]

Table 1 indicates that sizable portion of the respondents is belonging to the age group up to 25 years (37.5%) and postgraduates (35.5%). Majority of the respondents are unmarried (51.5%), earning monthly family income less than Rs.20,000 (66.5%), belonging to the nuclear family (64.5%) and working in private organisations (58.5%), on day-shift schedule (74%) and in middle-level designations (53.5%).

Table 2: Factorisation of quality of work life (QWL) variables

Factor Names and % of Variance Explained	Variables	Factor Loading	Communalities	MSA	Mean	SD
Job nature factor (JNF)(10.536%)	Role clarity	0.781	0.640	0.740	3.65	1.005
	Job rotation	0.700	0.615	0.748	3.53	1.002
	Proper job design	0.527	0.403	0.797	3.73	0.906
Monetary benefits factor (MBF)(10.039%)	Job clarity	0.464	0.397	0.785	3.87	0.909
	Fringe benefits	0.756	0.695	0.676	3.53	1.124
	Adequate pay	0.725	0.708	0.781	3.61	0.986
	Transport facilities	0.608	0.555	0.807	3.47	1.198
Non-monetary benefits factor (NMBF)(9.801%)	Adequate resources	0.580	0.437	0.717	3.60	1.007
	Work autonomy	0.748	0.722	0.663	3.69	0.908
	Pleasant working environment	0.610	0.527	0.763	3.71	1.014
Organisational climate factor (OCF)(9.393%)	Career development opportunities	0.575	0.530	0.720	3.55	1.030
	Proper break	0.682	0.545	0.775	3.62	1.067
	Job recognition	0.641	0.541	0.680	3.73	0.926
	Assistance from colleagues	0.620	0.568	0.747	3.67	1.002
Organisational structure factor (OSF)(9.132%)	Health, safety and welfare measures	0.404	0.465	0.810	3.62	1.118
	Flexible policies	0.791	0.688	0.613	3.62	1.020
	Innovation and creativity	0.740	0.620	0.708	3.56	1.015
	Sufficient leaves	0.441	0.433	0.744	3.79	0.964
Skills enrichment factor (SEF)(8.046%)	Matching skills with job	0.752	0.670	0.767	4.12	0.838
	Challenging job	0.730	0.682	0.750	4.09	0.916

KMO-MSA = 0.795 total % of variance explained = 57.205

Bartlett's test of sphericity chi-square value of 898.975 with df 190 at Pvalue of 0.000

Table 2 shows that QWL variables with their communalities and measuring sampling adequacy (MSA) value ranging from 0.397 to 0.722 and from 0.613 to 0.810, respectively, have goodness of fit for factorisation. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test-MSA value of 0.795 and chi-square value of 898.975 with df of 190 and P value of 0.000 reveal that factor analysis can be applied for factorisation of 20 QWL variables. Six dominant independent QWL factors explaining 57.205% of total variance have been extracted out of 20 QWL variables. Of them, the most dominant factor is job nature factor (JNF) followed by monetary benefits factor (MBF), non-monetary benefits factor (NMBF), organisational climate factor (OCF), organisational structure factor (OSF) and skills enrichment factor (SEF) in the order of their dominance.

Table 3: Personal profiles significantly influencing total quality of work life (QWL)

Model	Unstandardised Co-efficients		Standardised Co-efficients	T	Sig.	Inference
	B	Std. Error				
(Constant)	20.425	0.945		21.616	0.000	Significant
Nature of family	3.125	1.123	0.245	2.783	0.006	Significant
Monthly income	0.962	0.463	0.183	2.081	0.040	Significant
Constant = 20.425 with t value of 21.616 at P value of 0.000						
R = 0.499 R ² = 0.249 F = 6.039 @ P value of 0.000						

Table 3 reveals that ordinary least squares(OLS)model has a goodness of fit for multiple regression analysis, and the linear combination of monthly family income and nature of family was significantly related to QWL, {F = 6.039, P< 0.001}. The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.499, indicating that 25% of the variance of the respondents' QWL can be accounted for by linear combination of monthly family income and nature of family. From all these, it could be said that monthly family income and nature of family significantly influence QWL, whereas age, nature of organisation, educational qualification, marital status, level of employment, workings hours per day, schedule of work have no significant influence on QWL. Therefore, the women employees hailing from joint families have higher QWL than those from nuclear families. Moreover, as the income level improves, there is a significant enhancement in QWL.

Major Findings and Suggestions of the Study

1. Majority of the respondents are unmarried, earning monthly family income less than Rs.20,000, belonging to the nuclear family and working in private organisations on day-shift schedule in middlelevel designations. Sizable portion of the respondents are aged below 25 years and postgraduate.
2. They are of the opinion that among the QWL variables, JNF is the dominant one followed by MBF, NMBF, OCF, OSF and SEF in the order of their dominance.

Monthly family income and nature of family significantly influence QWL.

3. Job nature plays a vital role in maintenance and enhancement of better QWL. So the organisations are suggested to make the role clarity, job clarity and proper job design with matching the skills, abilities and job expectation of the employees to enhance QWL.

4. Organisations are suggested to adopt effective modern motivational methods to satisfy their employees in both monetary and non-monetary aspects for higher employee satisfaction which is a major determinant of QWL. Working women are suggested to spend quality time with family and also for self-development through job rotation to enrich the skills which mitigate the work-life imbalance.

CONCLUSION

The dominant aspects required for the maintenance of better QWL among working women are role clarity, job rotation, proper job design, job clarity, fringe benefits, adequate pay, transport facilities, adequate resources, work autonomy, pleasant working, environment, career development opportunities, proper break and job recognition. Further, monthly family income and nature of family have impact on QWL. Therefore, the women employees hailing from joint families have higher QWL than those from nuclear families. And as the income level improves, there is a significant enhancement in QWL.

Limitations and Scope for Future Studies

This study adopted the non-probability convenient sampling. So limitations associated with non-probability sampling method are also applicable in this study.

Due to time and cost constraint, the study restricted its sample size to 200 working women in Chennai city. This study covers women employees in Chennai city only; it may not be generalised to other cities, states and country as whole. In future, this study may be extended to compare the QWL maintained between public and private sector employees. Comparative study between gender groups and different levels of employment may be extended in future to explore more insights for betterment of QWL.

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