
Quality of Work Life - A Study of OP Jindal Group

Ms. Leena P. Singh,

PhD Research Scholar, Department of Business Management, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore

Abstract

Quality of Work Life (QWL) is the degree to which employees are able to shape their jobs actively, in accordance with their options, interests and needs. However if the organization provides the appropriate authority to design work activities to the individual employees, then it is highly possible that the work activities can match their employees' needs that contribute to the organizational performance, Beukema (1987). QWL is thus the extent of relationships between individuals and organizational factors that are existing in the working environment. It is focusing strongly on providing a work environment conducive to satisfy individual needs. It is assumed that if employees have more positive attitudes about the organization and their productivity increases, everything else being equal, the organization should be more effective. It is seen from various researches that employees of an organization often take their work to home due to heavy work demands, by which they cannot pay right attention to their family problems, take care of their family members, which ultimately leads to a disturbed and unbalanced work-life. The main purpose of this research is to investigate the overall quality of work life of O. P. Jindal Group, New Delhi. A literature review of previous study is given along with a questionnaire survey has been done using a standard questionnaire. To fulfill the objectives correlation of the factors among each other and also with QWL is calculated. The findings of the study reflect that the QWL of the group is positively influenced by the factors taken for the study.

Keywords: QWL, Organization culture.

1. Introduction

In the earlier days where scientific, administrative, industrial & bureaucratic management policies focused on the prime importance of resources to be utilized effectively & efficiently for organizational goal attainment, where the role of employees is just as a physical working tool of the organization. But after the Hawthorne experiment done by Prof. Elton Mayo and his colleagues at the Western Electric Company's plant from 1927 to 1932 where he stated "The freedom to innovate, flexibility in job, co-operative work procedures in team with individual expertise is more relevant than the physical working condition of the organization for the efficient goal attainment" & Douglas Macgregor's theory X & theory Y, the behavioral approach came to fore for the inclusive development of the employees and treat them as the part of the organizational assets. Now-a-days employees are appraised through the HRA (human resource accounting) process which shows the expenditure made on the recruitment & selection, training & development, health & safety benefits of the employee is the organizational investment over the employees for their job satisfaction, greater work performance, loyalty & commitment towards the organization & individual growth which will ultimately lead to the organizational growth. Here the human beings are treated as the "assets" rather than of their mere presence in the organization.

The consistent & continuous development of the new techniques, procedures and methodologies focusing job satisfaction, growth & development, higher motivational level, work-life balance of employees are for the wholesome development of **QWL (quality of work life)** of the employees. The term QWL gained importance in the late 1960s as a way of concerns about effects of job/work on health and general well-being and ways to positively influence the quality of a person's work experience. Up until the mid 1970s, employer's concern was on work design and working conditions improvement. However, in the next decade of 1980s, the concept of QWL included other aspects that affect employees' job satisfaction and productivity and these aspects are, reward systems, physical work environment, employee involvement, rights and esteem needs (Cummings and Worley, 2005). Origin of Quality of work life is dated back in industrial revolution. When higher productivity is emphasized to such an extent that workers were considered as machines or we can say human factor is totally misplaced. Soon the negative results of this practice became prevalent in the form of absenteeism, low turnover, poor morale and occasional sabotage, boredom, fatigue, accidents resulting from inattention, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc. Therefore in early 20th century Legislation was enacted to avoid job-injuries and

dangerous working conditions. Job security was stressed in the unionization movement (1930-1940), mainly because of the production process and economic gains for the workers. During 1950s and 1960s, various theories were developed by psychologists suggesting a "positive relationship between morale and productivity", and the possibility that improvement in human relations would lead to enhancement of both. This paper investigates the overall quality of work life in O. P. Jindal Group, New Delhi. Also shows the importance of each factor to enhance the quality of work life in JSPL, Jindal SAW and JSL. This will provide a limelight for the future research.

2. Review of Literature:

As the work culture changes drastically in the recent years, the traditional concept of work to fulfil humans' basic needs are also facing out. The basic needs are continued to diversify and change according to the evolution of the work system and standards of living of a workforce. There is a plethora of literature highlighting the factors critical for the assessment of QWL (Calson, 1978; Kalra & Ghosh, 1974; Morton, 1977; Rosow, 1980; Srinivas, 1994; Walton, 1973). Attempts also have been made to empirically define QWL (Levine et al., 1984; Mirvis & Lawler, 1984; Taylor, 1978; Walton, 1975). Comprehensive delineation of the QWL concept is found in three major works: Levine et al. (1984), Taylor (1978) and Walton (1975). Other researchers have attempted to measure QWL in a variety of settings using combinations of various questionnaires such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, alienation, job stress, organizational identification, job involvement and finally work role ambiguity, conflict, and overload were studied as proxy measures of QWL. There appeared to be no one commonly accepted definition for quality of work life. Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger (1997) proposed that QWL, which was measured by the feelings that employees have towards their jobs, colleagues, and companies would enhance a chain effect leading to organization's growth and profitability. According to Havlovic (1991), Scobel (1975) and Straw and Heckscher (1984), the key concepts captured in QWL include job security, better reward systems, higher pay, opportunity for growth, and participative groups among others. Walton (1974) proposed the conceptual categories of QWL. He suggested eight aspects in which employees perceptions towards their work organizations could determine their QWL: adequate and fair compensation; safe and healthy environment; development of human capacities; growth and security; social integrative constitutionalism; the total life space and social relevance. In UK, Gilgeous (1998) assessed how manufacturing managers perceived their QWL in five different industries. Despite the growing complexity of working life, Walton's (1975) eight-part typology of the dimensions of QWL remains a useful analytical tool. Thus a definition by Suttle (1977) on the QWL as the degree to which work are able to satisfy important personal basic needs through their experience in the organisation 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 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 an ever growing need of each and every employee. Hackman and Oldhams (1980) further highlight the constructs of QWL in relation to the interaction between work environment and personal needs. The work environment that is able to fulfill employees' personal needs is considered to provide a positive interaction effect, which will lead to an excellent QWL. They emphasized the personal needs are satisfied when rewards from the organisation, such as compensation, promotion, recognition and development meet their expectations. Parallel to this definition, Lawler (1982) defines QWL in terms of job characteristics and work conditions. He highlights that the core dimension of the entire QWL in the organization is to improve employees' well-being and productivity. The most common interaction that relates to improvement of employees' well-being and productivity is the design of the job. Job design that is able to provide higher employee satisfaction is expected to be more productive. However, he accepted the fact that QWL is complex, because it comprises physical and mental well being of employees.

Later definition by Beukema (1987) describes 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 to the individual employees, then it is highly possible that the work activities can match their employees' needs that contribute to the organizational performance. In the same vein 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 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. Proceeding to

previous definitions, 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 professional growth.

The recent definition by Serey (2006) on QWL is quite conclusive and best meet the contemporary work environment. The definition is related to meaningful and satisfying work. It includes (i) an opportunity to exercise one's talents and capacities, to face challenges and situations that require independent initiative and self-direction; (ii) an activity thought to be worthwhile by the individuals involved; (iii) an activity in which one understands the role the individual plays in the achievement of some overall goals; and (iv) a sense of taking pride in what one is doing and in doing it well. This issue of meaningful and satisfying work is often merged with discussions of job satisfaction, and believed to be more favorable to QWL.

This review on the definitions of QWL indicates that QWL is a multi-dimensional construct, made up of a number of interrelated factors that need careful consideration to conceptualize and measure. It is associated with job satisfaction job involvement, motivation, productivity, health, safety and well-being, job security, competence development and balance between work and non work life as is conceptualized by European Foundation for the Improvement of Living Conditions (2002). The term refers to the favorableness or unfavorableness of a total job environment for people. QWL programs are another way in which organizations recognize their responsibility to develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for economic health of the organization. The elements in a typical QWL program are: Open communication, Career development and growth, Flexible work management, Employee motivation, Emotional supervisory support, Work-life balance, Favorable working environment and Strong organizational relations. Evolution of the technological and globalization trends in the organization expand the organizational premise to the extent where it becomes desirable for the organizations to adopt approaches to procure, maintain, develop and retain the talent in & for the organizations. The terms such as job design and redesign, job classification, job definition, job enrichment, job simplification, all are vital parts of QWL. QWL is not only focusing on the single employee benefits but to the overall harmonious relationship within an organization where cooperation & competency working together for the result of greater performance. It describes the impact of the work environment on employees' work life and non-work life benefits.

3. Objectives of The Study

- To determine overall quality of work life of O.P. Jindal Group, New Delhi.

- To study the importance of each factor to enhance quality of work life in Jindal group.

4. Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the Quality of Work Life in O P Jindal group. It includes the executives and the non-executives of the departments of the organization. The views of the employees were taken.

5. Hypothesis Formulation

The hypothesis put forward for the purpose of research is as follows:

H1: *Quality of work life in O P Jindal group on an average is satisfactory.*

6. Research Methodology

The study is designed to conduct an enquiry on the Quality of work life in Jindal group, New Delhi. Data was collected through questionnaire survey, files and documents of organization, interview of prominent executives and observation. Secondary data of the organization is collected from various sources like records, files, journals, organizational profile and other relevant documents of the organization. The research is intended to find out the direct/ indirect impact of the factors on the Quality of Work Life of the organizations. As to fulfill the objectives of the study we need to calculate the correlation of the factors among each other and also with the quality of Work life. On the basis of which impact of each factor is determined that affects each other and the overall quality of work life of the organization. By taking simple correlation among the factors and the factors with quality of work life for each sample company and for the whole group the analysis is being done. Then the through the interpretation details we can analyze the better correlation factors of the companies and also the company which has a better correlated factors. The results of the correlation have to be compared with the standardized values to ascertain the interpreted correlation value. The correlation matrices help to determine how the factors are correlated with QWL and how they are related with each other and the extent to which they are related with each other and affecting each other.

7. Analysis and Interpretation

A one-tailed t-test is performed to examine the overall satisfaction level with the QWL and it was found that there is no significance difference in the imparted QWL as a whole and in the factors affecting QWL individually among the sample companies of Jindal group. As all the calculated t-values of all the different components taken for study are less than the tabulated value i.e. 1.645 (at 0.05 significance level and d.f. 58) as determined and the hypotheses taken for test was accepted. The factors included in the study are work environment, Freedom to Work, Salary and Compensation, Opportunity, Health, safety and Security, Training and Development, performance appraisal and stress management. The correlation matrices help to determine how the factors are correlated with QWL and how they are related with each other and the extent to which they are related with each other and affecting each other.

Table-I Correlations Matrix For O P Jindal Group

| Factors | W.E | F.T.W | S & C | Oppr | H.S.S | T & D | P. A. | S.M. | QWL |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|------|----------|
| W.E. | 1 | | | | | | | | 0.570356 |
| F.T.W. | 0.375523 | 1 | | | | | | | 0.58427 |
| S & C | 0.214388 | 0.57138 | 1 | | | | | | 0.638775 |
| Oppr. | 0.574185 | 0.08365 | 0.16279 | 1 | | | | | 0.639812 |
| H.S.S | 0.27252 | 0.45715 | 0.39501 | 0.42136 | 1 | | | | 0.779008 |
| T & D | 0.221183 | 0.50843 | 0.60087 | 0.32136 | 0.754098 | 1 | | | 0.808148 |
| P.A. | 0.487188 | 0.14744 | 0.28364 | 0.58985 | 0.421324 | 0.41483 | 1 | | 0.746547 |
| S.M. | 0.107402 | 0.07202 | 0.21983 | 0.35635 | 0.411241 | 0.45405 | 0.55081 | 1 | 0.596675 |

The above table shows that the quality of work life is highly correlated with salary & compensation, opportunity, health safety and security, training & development, and performance appraisal. It is moderately correlated with work environment and freedom of work and stress management. Work environment is moderately correlated with opportunity and performance appraisal but poorly correlated with freedom to work, salary and compensation, health, safety, and security, training & development, and stress management. Freedom to work is moderately correlated with salary and compensation, health, safety & Security, Training & Development. It is negatively correlated with opportunity, stress management. Salary & compensation is highly correlated with training development. It is poorly correlated with opportunity and health, safety and security performance appraisal & Stress management. Opportunity is moderately correlated with health, safety & security, and performance appraisal but poorly correlated with training & development, and stress management. Health, safety and security is highly correlated with training development. It is moderately correlated with performance management and stress management. Training & Development is moderately correlated with performance appraisal stress management. Performance is moderately correlated with stress management.

8. Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the findings of the study that satisfaction with the quality of work life is highly satisfactory in the O P Jindal. As on an overall basis the Quality of Work as well as Life of the employee is benefited with the imparted Quality of Work Life in the company. QWL pays prime attention towards the Job Satisfaction, Employee Motivation, Work Culture, Work Environment, Opportunity for Growth, Health, Safety & Security, Trainings and the Stress Reducing Techniques. The Jindal group has proposed a QWL with well designed and structured policy and practices in the organization which starts from fair Recruitments, need specific Trainings, Potential and Self Development Techniques, fair remuneration and compensation policy, leave and Retirement benefits policy, relating pay structure, awards & rewards to the performance of the employee so that they would feel motivated to perform, Welfare Measures, infrastructure policy and a full fledged Knowledge Management system that enable the

employees to get their desired information as per their need from the system. The finding which resembles with the taken objectives concludes that employees of the whole group believe that Provision for opportunity to grow, performance are the key concepts to grow backed by improvised training program. Though Salary plays a paramount role but stress reduction programmes would be more preferable for them as a better QWL. HRD as a specialized Department is desirable for the Organization Development as it carries the Innovative Interventions to make the employees more satisfied and more productive which will help the organizations to reduce its work load and make it cost efficient. The never ending implications of QWL in the organizations should emphasize on Inclusive Growth of the Human Asset. It has not only to be an Organization Centric but also to be Employee Centric. The features as how and whether the employees are benefited through it, can be delineated as Employee Learning, Employee Satisfaction, taking up the Employees' Morale high, Improvement in Employee Standards, dynamic growth prospects etc.

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