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A Study on impact of Quality of Work life on Career Dimensions, Pondicherry

Dr. D. Elamparathy

*Asst. Professor, Business Administration Wing, DDE. Annamalai University,
Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, India*

Abstract

Quality of work life (QWL) contain progressively more gained gratitude, at the same time as employees want to be aware of esteemed at work for what they do and who they are. Literature on QWL is limited and several studies usually correlates by means of job satisfaction but the study on Quality of work life has associated with career connected factors. This experiential study was done to predict QWL in relation to career-related dimensions. The sample consists of 100 managers from the free Industrial zones in Pondicherry for both the multinational corporations (MNCs) and the small-medium industries (SMIs). The consequence indicates that three exogenous variables are significant: career satisfaction, career achievement, and career balance with in QWL.

Key Words: *Career satisfaction, Career balance, Career achievement, multinational corporations (MNCs), small-medium industries (SMIs) and QWL.*

Introduction: Rice (1985) emphasized the correlation between job fulfillment and quality of people's lives. The research contended with the intention of work experiences and outcomes can affect a person's wide-ranging quality of life, in cooperation directly and indirectly from beginning to end their effects on family interactions, free time activities, and levels of health and energy. Kaye and Sutton (1985) suggested a strong connection that exists between productivity and quality of working life for office principals with particular attention being paid to job satisfaction

In its broadest intellect, QWL means the addition total of values, both material and non-material, attained by means of a worker right through his career life. QWL includes aspects of work-related life such as wages and hours, work environment, payback and services, career forecast and human relations, which is perhaps relevant to worker satisfaction and motivation. In detail the notion of QWL is directly related to the quality of life concept. Similar notion such as humanization of work is also used. The usual expression is improvement of working conditions, working environment, democratization of workplace while in the socialist countries, the term is workers protection and in the case of Japan.

To a large extent, the rise in working hours has been greatest among members of dual-earner and dual-career families where both husbands and wives work. Increases in the mean number of hours people work, the growing number of women in the work force, and the increased participation of women with preschool children in the work force have contributed to concern about balancing the demands of work and family settings. Accordingly, the rising number of two-income households is heightening the concern for employees' quality of work life (QWL) as is the changing element of the meaning of success and the changing expectations regarding self-fulfillment. The quality of life for the working population has been conceptualized as derived from satisfactions experienced through having a good job and a good life.

A Broad View of Qwl and Career: Danna & Griffin (1999) argues that Quality of work life is a wider idea that incorporates not no more than work based factors as pay and relations at work but also reflects on life satisfaction and general feeling of well being. QWL is much broader and more diverse than organizational development, in ensuring adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunities for personal growth and development, satisfaction of community needs at work, defense of employee rights, compatibility connecting work and non-work responsibilities and the social relevance of work-life (Walton, 1975; Davis & Cherns, (Eds.) 1975).

Important and satisfying work is said to comprise: (1) an opportunity to exercise one's talents and capacities, to face challenges and situations that require independent initiative and self-direction (and which therefore is not boring and repetitive work); (2) During an movement attention to be of worth by the individual involved; (3) In which one understands the role one's activity plays in the accomplishment of some overall goal and (4) take pride in what one's doing and in doing it well. This subject having an important effect and satisfying work is frequently merged with discussions of job satisfaction, however, the author believed this favorable estimate to QWL instead.

There are three characteristic essentials of QWL connected interventions: (1) a concern resting on the subject of the effect of work on people as well as organizational effectiveness, (2) the idea of worker participation in organizational problem solving and decision making, and (3) the conception of recompense structures in the workplace which consider the inventive ways of rewarding employee input into the work process such as gain sharing, etc (Lawler, 1982). QWL is reemerging someplace employees are seeking out more import where rising educational levels and work-related aspirations in today's slow economic growth and condensed opportunities for advancement, naturally, there are rising concerns for QWL and for career and personal life planning. QWL encompasses the career development practices used within the organization such as placing clear expectations on employees on their expectations and succession plans. QWL is linked to career development and career is evolving from such interaction of individuals within the organizations.

Hypothesis 1: The total tenure years in career and years with the current employer are positively related to QWL.

Hypothesis 2: Career achievement is positively related to QWL.

Hypothesis 3: Career satisfaction is positively related to QWL. Hypothesis 4: Career balance is positively related to QWL.

Careers are naturally defined as a 'progression of work roles (Morrison & Holzbach, 1980) or a progression of a person's work experiences over time (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). The Research suggests that career tenure and total tenure in one's occupation are completely related to career achievement (Judge & Bretz, 1994) which is the level of success in their job and career. Considerable research work also supports the relationship between the number of hours worked per week and salary and ascendancy (Cox & Cooper, 1989; Judge & Bretz, 1994). The wish to spend time at work predicts career achievement. In an attempt to determine the motivation behind successful long work hours, found that the executives enjoyed working long hours. It was found that objective or the desire to get ahead was one of the best predictors of development in their study of managers. A positive relationship between objective and career achievement has been found in several other studies of managers and executives (Cannings, 1991; Cooper, 1989).

Conventionally, career progress and success have been defined in terms of occupational advancement, which is also interrelated to psychological success meaning the feeling of pride and personal success that comes from achieving one's most important goals in the life. Most employees are determined for achievement, recognition, and personal growth, in their upward mobility. On the other hand, high salary does not ensure a motivated workforce and a higher level of QWL. According to Cascio (2003) the critical factor is not how much a company pays its workers but more importantly, how the pay system is designed, communicated and managed. When the interests of employees and their organizations are associated, then employees are likely to fit into the place in behavior that goes above and beyond the call of duty and that contributes to organizational effectiveness. This improves both QWL and productivity.

Based on Judge, & Bretz (1995), career accomplishment is defined as the positive psychological outcomes or achievements one has accumulated as a result of experiences over the span of working life. According to Gattiker & Larwood, (1988), the frequency of encouragement is an expensive indicator for assessing career mobility and success, since it is important for an individual's ascent in a corporate chain of command. As career achievement is accumulated over the years of working life, the level of achievement and the desire to achieve their objective in the hierarchy, thus, it is hypothesized.

Career fulfillment is defined as the satisfaction of individuals draw from intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of their career, including pay, advancement, and developmental opportunities (Greenhaus, & Worley, 1990; Rice, & McFarlin, 1990; Berry, 1998). This is in difference to job satisfaction defined as a enjoyable or positive emotional state resulting from an evaluation of one's job or job experiences. Career satisfaction is largely a substance

of an individual comparing his/her career and life expectations with those being offered. In shaping such career expectations, there are economic considerations (e.g. compensation and retirement benefits) and occupational and family considerations (e.g. professional satisfaction, job satisfaction, advancement opportunities, relocation, etc) (Hill, & Sanders, 1998). Whereby a career is more satisfying if it is higher in prestige, income, and power as evaluated upon by managers, it is hypothesized.

The quantity of time and energy dedicated to work needs to sense of balance the time and energy devoted to life. Cascio (2003) mentioned the focus is on inspiring the overall quality of life and reframing the focus from work to life and from balance to quality. In deference to career balance, Herriot (1992) recognizes that sometimes there is a conflict between personal life and work and differences in perceptions of achievement in life. Two important central points of adult life are family and work. On the other hand, the role opportunities of these two domains are not always well-matched, creating conflicts between work and family life (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Due to the conflicting roles between work and family, and commitment, it is hypothesized that a higher conflict in the work role will result in the lower quality of family life, meaning that a higher conflict will result in the lower level of QWL, in other words, having a balance between work and family will result in the higher level of QWL.

Methodology:

Sample and Procedure: This research reported in this article involved in two stages. The first stage involved the initial design and pilot testing of a preliminary measure of QWL and job performance with a sample of managers ($n = 19$). The second stage involved administering revised measures to a stratified sample ($n = 475$) of managerial staff in 37 manufacturing companies to provide evidence of the extent to which managerial QWL scores are predictive of managerial performance based on self-rating. A stratified random design was attempted through the high-tech manufacturing industry.

Measures: The scale reflects the respondents' perceptions of QWL in terms of developing their capacities, safe and healthy working environment, opportunity for growth, job security, communication, rules and procedures, satisfaction with salary increases, fairly paid for the job, and income, fringe and benefits package.

The career satisfaction items were adapted from literature review and research reports developed by Leitschuh (2003) and nine items had been selected for their suitability. For example, one item includes "My job is an excellent source of income".

The career achievement scale was adapted from Stephens, Szajna and Broome, (1998); and Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley, (1990) as measure of expectations of success or achievement in career with 13 items. Example includes "I have many possibilities for development and learning at work".

The career balance scale was adapted from various sources derived from work-family (Kirchmeyer, 1992; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Sumer & Knight, 2001). The measure of work-family linkages was developed with the purpose of measuring relative

amounts of spillover, compensation, and segmentation with 15 items. Example includes “I keep my work and non-work life completely separate”.

A ten-point response scale is used with 10 being the highest and 1 the lowest for both scales as this multipoint scale yields more data variability and are recommended in model development with increased variance and better chances of demonstrating covariance among key variables. Internal consistency reliabilities for both, reported to range from a high of .86 to a low of .79 and it implied that the items making up the scale were relatively consistent. Regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between the variables and an F test was performed to determine the significance of variance in R².

Convergent validity and discriminate validity were conducted for the variables. The high degree of convergence between the QWL scale and the career related variables supported the scale’s construct validity. The confirmatory factor analysis model yielded a $\chi^2 = 1655.603$, $p < .001$, for a chi T square/degree of freedom ratio of 2.816. Confirmatory factor analysis of the items provided evidence of the empirically distinct constructs that were moderately interred correlated.

Results and Analysis

Figure No-1: Descriptive Statistics for the Sample

| Descriptive Statistics | Y ₁ (QWL) | X ₁ Career Satisfaction | X ₁ Career Achievement | X ₁ Career Balance |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mean | 6.39 | 6.39 | 6.68 | 5.86 |
| Median | 6.50 | 6.40 | 6.85 | 5.60 |
| Std. Deviation | 1.54 | 1.11 | 1.14 | 1.15 |
| Minimum | 2.60 | 2.40 | 2.08 | 1.93 |
| Maximum | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Inter quartile range (IQR) | 2.00 | 1.50 | 1.77 | 1.53 |
| Skewness | -.209 | -.242 | -.570 | .112 |
| Percentile | | | | |
| 25 th | 5.20 | 5.70 | 5.85 | 4.93 |
| 50 th | 6.80 | 6.40 | 6.85 | 5.60 |
| 75 th | 7.04 | 7.20 | 7.62 | 6.47 |
| 90 th | 8.20 | 7.80 | 8.39 | 7.13 |

Interpretation:

1. The average respondent was 35 years, 76.6% were married, and 74.6% worked about 40-50 hours per week and the rest is more than 50 hours.
2. The Respondents had worked an average of 12.0 years (SD = 6.854) in their career with a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 35 years with an average tenure of 9.5 years (SD = 6.216) with a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 32 years with the current employer.

3. The majority of respondents 65.3% were male and 57.6% of the respondents were from multi-national companies and 44.8% from small-medium industries.
4. Based on the ten-point scale used, it shows the minimum QWL rating was 2.30 and a maximum of 10.00 and this gives a range of 7.70. The median QWL rating value was 6.80 with a standard deviation of 1.54.
5. The mean QWL rating was 6.93 implying that overall the level of QWL is good. The 25th percentile of the QWL is 5.20 and the 75th percentile is 7.04 and thus the inter quartile range (IQR) is 2.00. The 90th percentile of the QWL is 8.24, which mean that 90% of the respondents have a QWL reading of 8.20 or less.
6. The findings indicate that the mean ratings for the independent variables in descending order of high to low are career achievement (M=6.6766, SD=1.1423), career satisfaction (M=6.3905, SD=1.1148), and career balance (M=5.8649, SD=1.4199).

Figure No-2: Pearson Correlation Co-efficient

| Descriptive Statistics | Total Career Tenure | Tenure with current employer | QWL Y ₁ |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Total career tenure | 1 | .698 ^{**} .000 | .120 ^{**} .009 |
| Tenure with current employer | .698 ^{**} .000 | 1 | .135 ^{**} .003 |

^a Pearson correlation , ^b Sig. (2-tailed), n= 100. ^{**} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on Figure - 2, the total tenure years in career and years with the current employer are positively related to QWL and statistically significant. Thus, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

2. This means that total career tenure and career years with the current employer will determine the level of QWL as level of accomplishment will increase with time and years in career.

3. The longer, the executives work with the current employer, the better their QWL as their potential are recognized by their current employer and where seniority in their career is taken into consideration for promotion and salary increase and materialistic approach is also represented (Korman, 1981; Judge, 1995).

4. The respondents had worked an average of 12.0 years in their total career tenure with a maximum of 35 years whilst the tenure with the current employer averaged 9.5 years with a maximum of 32 years.

5. The respondents were 44.2% had less than 10 years of career tenure, 43.6% in the 11-20 years of career tenure, and 11.2% in the 21-30 years of total career tenure.

6. The Research also suggests that career tenure and total tenure in one’s occupation are positively related to career achievement (Judge, 1994 and Cooper, 1989).

7. Further the longer the tenure, these executives become more powerful in terms of knowledge power, expert power, informal power, and networking power (Krackhardt, 1990 and Cooper, 1989).

Figure-3: Descriptive Statistics, zero-order correlations and Cronbach’s alpha of QWL and the predictor variables

| Variable | \bar{X} | S | Y_1 | X_1 | X_2 | X_3 |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Y_1 QWL(10) | 6.4982 | 1.45784 | 0.75 | | | |
| X_1 Career satisfaction(9) | 5.9905 | 1.11479 | 0.60 | 0.77 | | |
| X_2 Career achievement(13) | 6.7766 | 1.41228 | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.75 | |
| X_3 Career balance(15) | 5.5740 | 1.14991 | 0.14 | 0.34 | 0.25 | 0.83 |

Notes: Figures in parentheses are the number of items measuring each construct: figures in bolded italics are cronbachs alpha ; zero – order co-efficients, $p < 0.01$.

Figure - 3 shows that the coefficients were in the predicted direction and significant for all instances. The strongest relationship was found to exist between career achievement and QWL.

The positive correlation coefficient of career achievement ($r = .71, p = .0001$) indicates that as career achievement increases, As level of career satisfaction increases, so does the level of QWL and the same goes for career achievement, and career balance. However, the linear relationship between QWL and career balance is not strong as compared with the others.

This study has empirically demonstrated that QWL will increase when the employees are satisfied with their level of career achievement, career satisfaction and career balance. Thus, hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 are supported.

Figure-4: Estimates of coefficients for QWL model

| Independent Variable of QWL | B(Unstandardized Co-efficients) | Std. Error | Beta(Standardized Co-efficients) | t – value | P - value |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Constant | 1.160 | 0.320 | - | 3.605 | 0.0001 |
| Career Satisfaction(X_1) | 0.188 | 0.058 | 0.135 | 3.252 | 0.001 |
| Career Achievement(X_2) | 1.365 | 0.042 | 0.364 | 7.780 | 0.0001 |
| Career Balance(X_3) | 0.144 | 0.044 | 0.078 | 3.123 | 0.002 |

Notes: $R = 0.791; R^2 = 0.626; Adj. R^2 = 0.622, F = 157.126, p = 0.0001$

Figure - 4, shows that the largest beta coefficient is 0.364 which is for career achievement. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable (QWL), when the variance explained by all other predictor variable in the model is controlled for. The beta value for career balance is the smallest indicating that it made the least contribution. Thus the model is equated accordingly below:

$$Y_1 (\text{QWL}) = 1.160 + 0.188 (X_1) + 1.365 (X_2) + 0.144 (X_3) + e$$

The value of R^2 of .0626 suggests that the three factors explained 62.6% of the variance in the QWL. The model causes R^2 to change from zero to 0.626 and this change in the amount of variance explained gives rise to an F-ratio of 157.126, which is significant with a probability less than 0.0001. These points to the fact that the estimated regression line is not equal to zero and that there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable QWL and all the predictor variables in the model. The standard error of the estimate of 0.89607 is lesser than the standard deviation of 1.15.

None of the model dimensions has condition index above the threshold value of 30.0, none of tolerance value smaller than 0.10 and VIF statistics are less than 10.0. This indicated that there is no serious multi co linearity problem among the predictor variables of the model. Since there is no multi co linearity problem between the predictors included in the final model and the assumptions of normality, equality of variance and linearity are all met, hence, it is reasonable to conclude that the estimated multiple regression models to explain QWL is valid.

Conclusion: In predicting Quality of work life (QWL), the implication of career scope is recognized. The results of this study have indicated that career achievement, career satisfaction and career balance have significant collision on QWL. These findings could further develop the construct of QWL, more particularly in relation to career development aspects. The degree to which the individual believes his or her QWL criteria have been met, more so if the individual places paramount importance on pay, personal growth and opportunity and a balance between work and family are deemed to be good indicators. This study has shown the relevance of career-related variables in relation to QWL. Where research involving the constructs of QWL is limited. In terms of practical implications, this knowledge will be valuable to the top management attempting to attain a career fit between the needs of the employee and the organization.

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