A Conceptual Paper on Quality of Work Life

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ABSTRACT

Quality of Work Life develops desirable motives and attitudes on the part of both management and employees. Growing competition, fast changing business environment and change in composition of workforce, makes imperative for the organisations to focus on quality of work life of employees to gain leverage in hiring and retaining valuable employees. QWL has been well recognized as a multi-dimensional construct and specifically related to the level of happiness a person derives from job. QWL programs are gateway through which organizations recognize their responsibility to enrich jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for economic health of the organization ensured through open communications, justified reward systems, a concern for employee job security and satisfying careers and participation in decision making. It is assumed that if employees have more positive attitudes towards organization and their productivity increases, everything else being equal, the organization should be more effective. This paper aims at describing about the QWL concept and variable/factors determining quality of work life. The paper concludes the various obstacles to implement QWL programme and strategies to improve QWL.

Keywords**: -** *Quality of Work Life, Organization, Workforce,*

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1. INTRODUCTION:

In the fast changing environment, quality of work life considered as the effectiveness of work environment that transmit to the meaningful organizational and personal needs in shaping the values of the employees that support and promote better health and well-being, job security, job satisfaction, competency development and balance between work and non-work life. This definition states the Quality of work life aims at gaining leverage in recruiting, motivating and retaining valuable employees.

The elements that are relevant to an individual's quality of work life include the task, physical work enviro nment, social environment within the organization, administrative system and relationship between life on and off the job. Quality of work life consists opportunities for active involvement in group working arrangements or problem solving that are of mutual benefit to employees or employers, based on labour management cooperation. Any disturbance on the personal front will affect both professional life and work life. Therefore, organizations have started to concentrate on the overall development and well-being of the employees and reducing their stress levels without jeopardizing the economic health of the company.

2. Objective of Study:

The objective of the present study is
1. To identify the variables to measure Quality Work Life
2. To study the problems in implementing QWL programmes and to give suggestion over it

3. Importance of the study:

Improved QWL was considered as important factor in India because of important impending factors like resource deficiency, environmental threats and some services of financial problems. QWL program has become important in work place for the following reasons:

1 Increase demands at work
2 Loss of long term employment guarantees
3 The need for enhanced work place skills
4 Greater competitions for talent
5 Increased women in work force.

Good QWL ensures good impersonal relations and highly motivated employees who strive for their development. Though monetary benefits still occupy the first place in the cost of elements like physical working conditions, job restructuring and job re-designing, career development, promotional opportunities, etc., are gaining importance rapidly. As such, workers expect the management to improve all these facilities which thereby improve QWL. If provided with good QWL, employees concentrate more on both individual as well as group development which in turn leads to overall development of the organisation.

4. Variables to measure QWL:

Sr. No.	QWL Parameters
1	Adequate and Fair Compensation
2	Safe and healthy working conditions
3	Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacity
4	Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security
5	Social Integration in the Work Organisation
6	Social Relevance of Work Life
7	Work and the Total Life Space
8	Constitutionalization in the work Organisation
9	Superior Subordinate Relationship
10	Welfare Facilities

i. Adequate and Fair Compensation: It means that the compensation should be adequate and fair enough to meet the physical needs of employees. When adequate and fair compensation is denied displeasure among employees arises leading to industrial unrest. They want, desires, ambitions, standard of living, etc are unlimited, irrespective of age group and salary requirement varies with age. Gradually employees' expect better remuneration for maintaining decent standard of living. So, the company should be in a position to satisfy employees' with better remuneration for better return.

ii. **Safe and healthy working conditions:** Organizations provide safe and healthy working conditions due to humanitarian requirements and/or legal requirements. In fact, these conditions are a matter or enlightened self interest. As individuals become matured, they lose their much of their vigour and interest and become the victims of many diseases. So it becomes responsibility of the organisation to provide safe and congenial work environment.

iii. Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacity: Contrary to the traditional assumptions, quality of work life is improved… "To the extent that the worker can exercise more control over his or her work, and the degree to which the job embraces and entire meaningful task" … but not a part of it. Further, quality of work life provides for opportunities like autonomy in work, providing immediate feedback for the work done, appreciation for better performance by superior, highlighting outstanding individual contribution and participation in planning in order to use human capabilities. Training and development actually required for bridging the gap between Standard performance and actual performance.

iv. Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security: Opportunities for promotions are limited in case of all categories of employees either due to educational barriers or due to limited openings at the higher level. Quality of work life provides future opportunity for continued growth and security by expanding one's capabilities, knowledge and qualifications through career development programmes, promotional perspectives, chances of promotion, long term employment guarantee. Employees tend to drift from that work which does not promise career growth for them.

v. Social Integration in the Work Organisation: Social integration in the work force can be ensured by creating freedom from prejudice, supporting primary work groups, a sense of community and inter-personnel openness, egalitarianism and upward mobility. Employees expect recognition in the organisation, formal and informal

interaction between workers and managers', respect from the work place, representation in decision making. Participative management always help in establishing industrial democracy and peace in the organization which in turn ensured social integration in the organization and improves quality of work life.

vi. Social Relevance of Work Life: A business organization having greater concern for social issues such as pollution, consumer protection, national integration, employment, etc. can improve the quality of working life. Quality of work life is concerned about the establishment of social relevance to work in a socially beneficial manner. The worker's self esteem would be high if his work is useful to the society and the vice versa is also true. Quality of work life basically talks about the methods in which an organization can ensure the holistic well-being of an employee instead of just focusing on work-related aspects.

vii. Work and the Total Life Space: Quality of work life always focusing on 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, vacations, frequent business travel, and quick transfers are both psychologically and socially very costly and detoriate quality of work life.

viii. Constitutionalism in the Work Organization: Even after establishment of different laws to ensure fair treatment at the workplace, workers are often treated in an unethical manner. Quality of work life provides constitutional protection to the employees only to the level of desirability as it hampers workers. It happens because the management's action is challenged in every action and bureaucratic procedures need to be followed that level. Constitutional protection is provided to employees on such matters as privacy, free speech, equity and due process. There should be environment of free expression of views in the organisation without any fear, restrictions with respect to personal privacy, compensation for injuries, sufficient knowledge regarding organisational rules, strategies and regulations.

ix. Superior Subordinate Relationship: Quality of work life improved when healthy relationship exists between superior and workers ensuring a sense of social association, belongingness, achievement of work results between workers. Bitterness in relations lead to decline in productivity of employees. Excessive supervision and control create unreasonable pressure on employees to attain the scheduled target without considering their health and ability constraints. An equitable treatment to all workers within the organization and sound cooperation among co-workers and supervisors will help in shaping better quality of work life.

x. Welfare facilities: Welfare means physical, mental, moral and emotional well being of an individual. Welfare facility includes medical facility, recreational facilities, canteen facilities, regarding newsletters and house magazines, education of employees' children and first aid facilities. A welfare officer must be appointed in every industrial establishment if the number of employees is 500 or more according to The Factories Act, 1948.

5. Some Obstacles to Implement QWL Programme:
Implementation of QWL programme in business organisation faces many hurdles from time to time explained as-
Managerial Attitudes: QWL demands democratization in work place means managers must be willing to share decision making with employees but managers may be reluctant to give a part of decision making power.
Union's Attitude: Union may have a genuine feeling that QWL programme speed up work performance & achieve productivity without offering adequate returns to workers.
Heavy Cost: The capital cost & day-to-day operational expenses of QWL programmes seem to be quite phenomenal beyond the reach of organization.
Focus on quick fix: Management is under constant pressure to find and fix problems quickly, with immediate results. This leads to treating symptoms instead of solving problems. Management must provide a long-term focus and look towards the future.

6.   Strategies for improvement of Quality of Work Life:
In order to improve Quality of work life management should develop various strategies such as payment of fair and equitable compensation; self managed work teams, job redesign and enrichment, effective leadership and supervision, alternative work schedules, career development, job security, administrative justice, participation in management, effective grievances handling system and improved working conditions. These strategies will help organizations to cope up with workers' needs and improve job satisfaction, employee commitment, and organizational performance.

7. CONCLUSION
The quality of work life considers human as 'asset' to the business organization rather than 'costs'. Workers should love their work and love the place they work with the quality of work life. Improved quality of work life helps in achieving human dignity and growth, group work, compatibility of people, organizational goals, etc. Only when the

right ambience is provided to the employees, they will be able to deliver their goods effectively and efficiently. As a result, employees become satisfied, motivated, involved and committed individuals with respect to their lives at work.

8. REFERENCES

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