

Quality of work life of arts and science colleges teachers, Chennai

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Abstract

Human Resources are the most valuable assets of an organization. They are considered 'energy' to an institution. People are the key factor that any institution has to keep in mind if it has to survive in this global village. Even though there are various factors which determine organizational excellence, the most significant factor which influences other factors is 'employee related factors'. In the present-day competitive environment emphasis is being laid more on intrinsic motivational factors and, empowerment is one of the most important factors that any successful organization needs to give importance for its effectiveness. Quality of Work Life is an approach concerned with the overall climate of work and the impact that the work has on people as well as on organizational effectiveness. Quality of Work Life represents the overall satisfaction derived by the people from their work. Improvements in human satisfaction and increase in performance are the functions of dynamic interaction between the nature of work system and content of work organization and work technology, management practices, knowledge, skill and employee attitudes.

Keywords: Work Environment, Job Analysis, Organizational Culture, Educational climate, Welfare Measures

Human Resources are the most valuable assets of an organization. They are considered 'energy' to an institution. People are the key factor that any institution has to keep in mind if it has to survive in this global village. Even though there are various factors which determine organizational excellence, the most significant factor which influences other factors is 'employee related factors'. (Havolovic.S.J, 1991). Hence it becomes mandatory to get them to be motivated, which in turn ultimately adds more value to the organization.

Organizations have been trying to increase the individual and organizational effectiveness by unleashing the creative and innovative energies of employees, by motivating the employees to cater to their needs for self-determination and be in control. Empowerment is seen as a process that results in individual employees enjoying autonomy while performing their jobs. (Venkatachalam. A & Veera Shanmugha Moni. M 2006).

In the present-day competitive environment emphasis is being laid more on intrinsic motivational factors and, empowerment is one of the most important factors that any successful organization needs to give importance for its effectiveness. (Thomas.K.W &Velhouse B.A, 1990).

Empowerment can be undertaken on individual basis or on group basis. However, recent emphasis is on groups or in teams in the form of Quality of Work Life (Prasad L.M, 2006). These benefits to the individuals and to the organization arise when Quality of Work Life in an organization is high. (Uma Sekaran, 2004).

Definition of Quality of Work Life

The American Centre for the Quality of Work Life defines QWL as “any activity which takes place at every level of an organization which seeks greater organizational effectiveness through the enhancement of human dignity and growth.... A process through which the stakeholders in the organization-management, unions, and employees-learn how to work together better....to determine for themselves what actions, changes and improvements are desirable and workable in order to achieve the twin and simultaneous goals of an improved quality of life at work for all members of the organization and greater effectiveness for both the company and the unions.”

Synthesis of Quality of Work Life

Quality of Work Life is described as ‘democratization of the work place’. (Efraty. D & Sirgy M.J, 1990). ‘Corporate excellence’ has become the current issue and has been keenly watched by many organizations. Beyond earnings, workers expect to gain benefits from their jobs such as challenge and achievement, career development and growth, balance between work and family life, a harmonious organizational climate and a supportive managerial style. (Tung-Chun Huang, John Lawler, Ching-Yi Lei, 2007). The companies offering better quality of Work Life and supportive working environments are likely to gain leverage in hiring and retaining valuable people. (May, Lau &Johnson, 1999).

Quality of Work Life has different connotations to different persons. The factors contributing to QWL are also varied. (Hossain, Mosharaff and Islam, Tariqul, 1999). To a worker on the assembly line it may mean a fair day’s work, safe working conditions, and a supervisor who treats him with dignity. To the young professional it may mean opportunity for advancement, career growth, being able to utilize one’s talents etc. The Quality of work Life for an academician mainly leans upon five important aspects namely Work Environment, Job Analysis, Organizational Culture, Educational Climate and Welfare measures.

Job Atmosphere

It is generally accepted that a good working environment is one of the key elements for establishing and maintaining employee’s commitment and loyalty to the company. (Magnus Stenbeck & Gudrun Persson, 2006). Any organization that aspires to create a good work environment that enhances job satisfaction needs to incorporate the following:

- ◆ Flexible work arrangements possible including telecommuting
- ◆ Training and other professional growth opportunities
- ◆ Opportunities to use one’s talents and to be creative
- ◆ Opportunities to take responsibility and direct one’s own work

Work Analysis

Job analysis refers to various methodologies for analyzing the requirements of a job. It is a statement mentioning who will do what. (Khanka S.S, 2002). The general purpose of job analysis is to document the requirements of a job and the work performed.

Institutional Culture

Organizational culture or corporate culture comprises, the attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values of an organization. It has been defined as “the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with students in the institution”. The contemporary study of organizational culture relies upon bringing to life the richness and the vitality of people living and working together. (William G.Ouchi, Alan L.Wilkins, 1985).

Educational Environment

College plays a critical role in the development of academic abilities of young people. College also serves as a place that assists students in developing an understanding of society and commitment to political and civil engagement. A positive educational climate is crucial for the development of competent, responsible and capable citizens. (Ishwara. P & V. Murugaiah, 2009) Along with the creation of pathways for academic development, positive classroom climate has the potential to assist in citizenship development to ensure continuation of a strong and healthy democratic society.

Welfare Measures

The term ‘welfare’ suggests the state of wellbeing and implies wholesomeness of the human being. It is a desirable state of existence involving the mental, physical, moral and emotional factor of a person.

Steps need to be taken on a larger scale than before to improve the QWL of the unorganized workers, including women workers. To sustain and maintain the happiness of labor force is the challenge of the day, which could effectively be dealt through one of the weapons such as social security and welfare measures. (Anjali Ganesh and Vijayi D’Souza, 2008).

The Role of Teachers in the Students’ Life

‘I owe my birth to my parents, but life to my teacher’

—Alexander the Great.

Poet Kabir is of the opinion, “the efficiency of a system of education rests on the quality of teachers. Without good teachers, even the best of the system is bound to fail. With good teachers, even the defects of the system can be largely overcome”. The ideal teacher is supposed to be the builder of man and of the nation, a foundation stone of the educational system. The teacher’s level of competence determines the quality of intellectual process which mostly governs the abilities of the learners. (Haseen Taj, 2003).

The task to be accomplished by a teacher is to facilitate the young minds and support them in:

- ◆ Forming an initial self-image
- ◆ establishing a sense of relative independence

- ◆ assuming increasing levels of responsibility
- ◆ developing the social skills needed for social interaction.

The changing values of the workforce indicate that current employees in an educational institution are more interested in elevating their quality of life. Beyond earnings, teachers expect to gain benefits from their jobs such as challenge and achievement, career development and growth, balance between work and family life, a harmonious organizational climate and a supportive managerial style. (Cosenza, 1998). Better QWL like better job characteristics and work environments positively relate to organizational commitment, which in turn reduces the intention of turnover. (Steers & Mowday, 1981). The teachers with high quality of work life enjoy exceptional growth and in turn can produce students with high value and culture.

Need for the Study

“The purpose of education is to bring out the best in individual”

This is a period of social transformation. Transformation has taken place everywhere—from economies based on different transportation to the dependence on networks and computers. Now-a-days creation of wealth purely depends upon application of new knowledge. This era is an era of knowledge. Knowledge can be created, absorbed and applied only by well educated minds.

Core competencies required for college teachers to bring in knowledge, to face the competitive global environment are:

- ◆ Professional competencies
- ◆ Knowledge of information access
- ◆ Personal and Career Development
- ◆ Self motivation
- ◆ Willingness to adapt and accept change
- ◆ Leadership etc.,

Students who pursue higher education require few competencies like effective communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking and technology skills. (Alison Cook, 2003). Hence it is very clear that competency identification, development, evaluation and feedback are important to the student community and it becomes important for the teachers to facilitate the same.

Brief Literature Review

This section is an attempt to analyze the various research literature works which is crucially pertaining to the study. It also sketches the path of emergence of research gaps that have induced the current research. (Christopher Higgins, 2005) in his study has investigated as an extension of John Dewey’s account what constitutes an educative environment for teachers of vocation in Democracy and Education. When on-the-job stress decreased, job satisfaction, perceived empowerment and professionalism increased. The study also revealed that autonomy does not differ in different teaching levels. (Carolyn Pearson and William Moomaw, 2005). Another study reveals that in spite of overall work life conditions provided by their respective organization being average, the level of satisfaction of women employees in their respective

organizations was quite high. The author also stressed the role of trade union towards women employees in involving them in the participation of union activities. (Rama J Joshi, 2007).

After exploring the Quality of Work Life researches it is justified that in educational climate the nature of job decides the fruitful atmosphere.

(Filiz Bilge, 2006) in her study examines the relationship between 'burnout and job satisfaction of academics' and its related factors. A comparative study on job differentials among African American faculty at 2-year and 4-year institutions, reveals that 2-year institutions are more satisfied than 4-year institutions with respect to opportunity for advancement, decision making authority, leadership, salary, student faculty relationship and job benefits. (Lamont A Flowers, 2005). When the impact of Quality of Work Life on auditors' Career and Organizational commitment was analyzed, it was found that the different dimensions of Quality of Work Life may result in different kinds of human resource outcomes. While perception of work/life balance reduced auditors' intention of turnover, in contrast, creative and meaningful job characteristics encourage their leaving intentions. (Tung-Chun Huang, John Lawler, and Ching-Yi Lei, 2007 et.al.). A multi-level structural equation model was brought by (Johnshrud and Rosser, 2002) on the quality of faculty work life around professional priorities and rewards, administrative relations and support, and the quality of benefits and services. The model so framed tried to ascertain the impact of faculty work life and morale on their desire to leave and to probe on the reasons whether it is individual's impact on institutional perceptions.

The above researches disclose that internal and external non-monetary motivators play a predominant role on the Quality of Work Life of academicians.

(Sarang S. Bhola, 2005) has carried out his research with objectives to qualify QWL in selected industry and to develop a model, to implement QWL in an organization. The primary aim of his research is to develop a model to implement QWL in an organization, where a comprehensive attempt was not made. Proper measures should be taken to make the working climate more positive to put up higher levels of OCB. (Pooja Garg and Renu Rastogi, 2006). An empirical study reveals that work life and satisfaction were constant with respect to number of factors, item loading and factor interconnections. Findings also reveal that there are individual characteristics which affect the perceptions of their work life and satisfaction. (Vicki J. Rosser, 2005). The structure of teacher work is an all-too-often ignored factor on effective schools and schooling and it is overlooked by National and State reform efforts. They mainly focus on standards, curriculum and instructional practices. It is also concluded that QWL measures are strongly associated with two variables, commitment and sense of efficacy. (Karen Seashore Louis, 2008).

Analyses on the above literature works expose that policies, rules and regulations of government/management plays a vital role on educational climate.

Gaps in the Literature

This review concludes that Quality of Work Life is an emergence of Work Environment, Job Analysis, Organizational Culture, Educational Climate and Welfare Measures, both at schools and higher learning institutions. The suitable educational climate pre-dominates the Quality of Work Life and its various determinants. The researcher identified a wide lacuna in national and international literature that influences work life and educational climate on productivity of the organization. It is indispensable to estimate the influence of these determinants to decide the variations in Quality of Work Life of college teachers.

Objectives of the Study

Primary Objective

- ◆ The main objective of the study is to identify QWL of college teachers and its influence over the climate in educational institutions.

Specific Objectives

- ◆ To identify the factors influencing quality of work life among the college teachers.
- ◆ To study professional competencies, skill and knowledge management, among the college teachers.

Hypothesis

- ◆ There is no significant difference among various elements of QWL among teachers.
- ◆ College teachers do not differ in their professional competencies, skill and knowledge.

Research Methodology

This study employs both analytical and descriptive type of methodology. The study is conducted in two stages format, with a preliminary pilot study followed by the main study.

Study Area

The survey is conducted among Arts and Science Colleges in Chennai.

Selection of Colleges

The following table presents the number of government colleges, government aided colleges, self-financing colleges and self-financing colleges in Chennai.

Respondents were selected on the basis of willingness and availability.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Table

Measure	Items	Range	Factors	Variance	Mean	SD	Alph.
Work environment	16	1-5	4	57.819	3.64	1.11	.863
Job analysis	17	1-5	3	58.481	3.83	1.07	.899
Organizational culture	15	1-5	3	50.281	3.85	.988	.885
Educational climate	11	1-5	3	60.861	3.77	.899	.970
Welfare measure	14	1-5	3	65.190	3.50	.905	.988
Outcome of Quality of Work Life	10	1-5	2	48.549	3.14	.902	.814

Data Collection

The sample size was determined by considering the number of college teachers in Chennai. Out of 610 questionnaires circulated, only 507 questionnaires were returned by the college teachers. The author contacted the remaining 93 college teachers repeatedly but there were no encouraging responses.

Secondary Data

The secondary data are collected from journals, magazines, publications, reports, books, dailies, periodicals, articles, research papers, websites, company publications, manuals, booklets etc.

Data Analysis

All data analysis was conducted using SPSS V-15. Sample means, standard deviation and N are presented in the analysis chapter for all the variables of the study. The data were screened in order to obtain the variance between various factors of Quality of Work Life. Factor analysis, cluster analysis, one way analysis of variance, are discussed here.

- ◆ Factor Analysis
- ◆ Frequency Distribution
- ◆ Cluster Analysis
- ◆ Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Work Environment

One sample t-test on the variables of Work Environment

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
WE 3	507	3.2939	1.07726	.04784	6.143	.000
WE 4	507	4.0296	.87855	.03902	26.388	.000
WE 5	507	3.1381	1.01796	.04521	3.054	.002

Job Analysis

The following table depicts the perception of the teachers with the help of the tool one sample t-test on the variables of Job Analysis.

One sample t-test on the variables of Job Analysis

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
JA 1	507	3.7988	.94668	.04204	19.000	.000
JA 2	507	2.1677	1.03568	.04600	-18.096	.000
JA 3	507	3.8462	.98807	.04388	19.283	.000

Organizational Culture

One-sample t-test was applied on the factor Organizational Culture. The following table shows the result.

One-sample t-test on the variables of Organizational Culture

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
OC 1	507	3.8185	1.02277	.04542	18.020	.000
OC 2	507	3.7377	.94942	.04217	17.495	.000
OC 3	507	3.5897	.97262	.04320	13.653	.000

Educational Climate

The following one sample t-test illustrates the perception of the teachers on the variables of Educational Climate.

One sample t-test on the variables of Educational Climate

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
EC 1	507	1.8639	1.32743	.05895	-19.271	.000
EC 2	507	1.4162	.87022	.03865	-40.981	.000
EC 3	507	3.9270	.77294	.03433	27.005	.000

Welfare Measures

One-sample t-test was applied on the factor Welfare Measures and the following results are obtained.

One sample t-test on the variables of Welfare Measures

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
WM 1	507	4.4024	.93875	.04169	33.637	.000
WM 2	507	2.7357	1.05256	.04675	-5.654	.000
WM 3	507	3.2564	.86507	.03842	6.674	.000

The number of factors determined and the total variance revealed out of 10 variables of outcome of quality of work life is depicted in the following table.

Number of factors for variables of Outcome of QWL

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.015	30.152	30.152	2.688	26.883	26.883
2	1.840	18.397	48.549	2.167	21.665	48.549
3	.978	9.781	58.330			
4	.906	9.061	67.390			
5	.854	8.536	75.926			
6	.582	5.816	81.742			
7	.562	5.621	87.363			
8	.496	4.958	92.320			
9	.407	4.074	96.395			
10	.361	3.605	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Frequency table showing the Impact of Orientation/Refresher course on teaching

Opinion		Frequency	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	239	47.1	47.1
	Yes	268	52.9	100.0
Total		507	100.0	

Frequency table showing the perception of Teachers on Management’s encouragement to attend such courses

Opinion		Frequency	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	No	423	83.4	83.4
	Yes	84	16.6	100.0
Total		507	100.0	

Frequency table showing the number of Teachers who attended National/International seminars

Opinion		Frequency	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	No	110	21.7	21.7
	Yes	397	78.3	100.0
Total		507	100.0	

Chi-Square Test for Association between Work Environment and Organizational Culture

Statistics	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.460(a)	4	.002
Likelihood Ratio	16.705	4	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.149	1	.023
N of Valid Cases	507		

Major Findings

Factors influencing QWL of College Teachers

- ◆ The teachers had given a positive opinion about their role in motivating, and grooming the students. But they feel that the physical working environment need to be altered and also feel that government should extend their support in developing self-financing colleges.
- ◆ As regards work load, allocation of PG & UG courses, spread out work schedule, teachers do not give positive opinion. They also feel that they are not involved in incorporating ideas in the curriculum, as they are in the hands of ‘Board of Studies’. Hence they do not agree about their participation in improving the climate of the college.

Professional Competencies, Skill and Knowledge Management of College Teachers

The frequency distribution test reveals that about 72.2% of the samples are coordinators or officers of NSS or NCC. Also the maximum of 81.9% are coordinators of various clubs like Enviro club, Rotaract, Road Safety Club, Entrepreneurial Club etc. About 53.6% have attended Orientation/Refresher courses.

Frequency Distribution of the Sample Unit

Out of total 507 samples, 88% were male and 12% were female respondents. The considerable percentage of male and female has impact on their perception on QWL. Out of the total samples 21.5% of teachers were in the age group of 20-30 years and about 41.2% teachers were in the age group of 31-40 and 25.6% comprises of 41-50 age group. About 93.3% were post graduates, about 5.7% were M.Phil holders.

Association among QWL Factors

- ◆ The cluster analysis and non-parametric Chi-square analysis revealed that the Work Environment in colleges in Chennai influences the nature of job, and prevailing culture in the educational institutions. It was also found that the educational climate and welfare measures provided to the college teachers predict an environment which is conducive in all educational institutions.

Conclusion

- ◆ Teachers are highly involved in imparting knowledge, learning new ideas, integrating technology, teaching values, ethics and improvising the skills of the students. Each and every elements of QWL is directly related to each other.
- ◆ There exists significant relationship among the various variables of the factors of QWL of college teachers. Congenial environment with reasonable work load, appropriate student-teacher ratio, non-discriminatory salary structure, involvement in research activities, using technology in teaching, non-monetary welfare measures are inter-related. When management/government do not concentrate on any of these factors, it affects QWL and creates unfavorable environment.
- ◆ The teachers do have passion in imparting knowledge, improving skills of the students, but they perceive that the resources are not sufficient to carry out their job effectively. This develops a feel of dissatisfaction among the teachers with respect to internal (lack of understanding among colleagues) and external environment.

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