



QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

*Quality of Work Life (QWL) has gained increasing scholarly and practical attention as a critical determinant of employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness. In industrial organizations, employees are often exposed to demanding physical conditions, work pressure, and limited career mobility, making QWL a crucial organizational concern. The present study examines the Quality of Work Life among industrial employees in a manufacturing organization in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from **110 employees** using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to examine employees' perceptions across dimensions such as working environment, personal development, work culture, interpersonal relations, compensation, job security, and welfare facilities. The findings indicate that employees experience a generally satisfactory level of Quality of Work Life, particularly with respect to physical working conditions and interpersonal relations, while moderate satisfaction is observed in compensation fairness, welfare provisions, and career development opportunities. The study concludes that systematic enhancement of Quality of Work Life is essential for improving employee well-being, productivity, and sustainable industrial performance.*

Keywords: *Quality of Work Life, Industrial Employees, Employee Well-being, Job Satisfaction, Manufacturing Sector.*

1. Introduction

Quality of Work Life (QWL) refers to the extent to which employees are able to satisfy important personal, psychological, and social needs through their participation in the workplace (Walton, 1975). The concept emphasizes the humanization of work and recognizes employees as central stakeholders in organizational success rather than mere inputs in the production process. In contemporary organizations, where work occupies a substantial portion of adult life, the quality of the work environment significantly shapes employees' overall quality of life, mental health, and social functioning (Sirgy et al., 2001).

Industrial organizations present a distinctive context for examining Quality of Work Life due to the nature of work involved. Employees in manufacturing settings are frequently exposed to physical strain, occupational hazards, shift work, production pressures, and rigid supervisory structures (ILO, 2019). These conditions often contribute to fatigue, stress, job dissatisfaction, and reduced organizational commitment if not adequately addressed. Consequently, Quality of Work Life has emerged as a critical variable linking employee well-being with productivity, efficiency, and organizational sustainability (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Lawler, 1982).

Quality of Work Life is a multidimensional construct encompassing safe and healthy working conditions, adequate and fair compensation, opportunities for growth and development, job security, social integration, work–life balance, and employee participation in decision-making (Walton, 1975; Mirvis & Lawler, 1984). Empirical research consistently demonstrates that organizations with higher



levels of QWL report lower absenteeism, reduced turnover, higher job satisfaction, and improved performance outcomes (Danna & Griffin, 1999; Cascio, 2015).

In the Indian industrial context, rapid industrialization, technological change, and evolving workforce expectations have intensified the relevance of Quality of Work Life. Despite economic growth, concerns related to wage adequacy, job security, occupational safety, and career stagnation persist among industrial workers (Budhwar & Varma, 2011; Sharma & Goyal, 2020). Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to empirically examine the Quality of Work Life among industrial employees and identify areas requiring organizational intervention.

2. Review of Literature

Walton (1975) provided one of the earliest and most influential frameworks for Quality of Work Life, identifying eight core dimensions, including adequate compensation, safe working conditions, opportunities for growth, constitutionalism, social integration, work–life balance, social relevance of work, and development of human capabilities. This framework has been widely applied across sectors and cultural contexts.

Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Model emphasized the role of task identity, skill variety, autonomy, and feedback in enhancing intrinsic motivation and work satisfaction, thereby contributing to Quality of Work Life. Lawler (1982) argued that employee participation and reward systems are central to improving QWL and organizational effectiveness.

Mirvis and Lawler (1984) highlighted that satisfaction with wages, job security, and working conditions forms the foundation of Quality of Work Life. Sirgy et al. (2001) proposed a needs-based model of QWL, linking workplace satisfaction with overall life satisfaction. Danna and Griffin (1999) emphasized the relationship between QWL, health outcomes, and organizational performance.

Indian studies have consistently highlighted the relevance of QWL in industrial settings. Vaarmathi and Hema Dhalakridhnan (2013) found that compensation, job security, and welfare facilities significantly influence employee satisfaction in textile industries. Rethinam and Ismail (2008) observed that interpersonal relations and organizational support play a crucial role in shaping QWL among industrial workers. Jeyaratham and Malarvizhi (2020) reported that improved Quality of Work Life leads to enhanced productivity and reduced occupational stress among manufacturing employees. More recent studies emphasize the importance of psychosocial factors, work–life balance, and employee empowerment in contemporary industrial environments (Guest, 2017; Deery & Jago, 2015). Collectively, the literature underscores that Quality of Work Life is a multidimensional and context-specific construct that requires continuous organizational attention.

3. Aim and Objectives

Aim: To examine the Quality of Work Life among industrial employees.

Objectives

1. To assess employees' perceptions of working environment, work culture, and interpersonal relations.
2. To examine the level of satisfaction with compensation, job security, and welfare facilities.
3. To analyze opportunities for personal and career development available to employees.
4. To suggest measures for enhancing Quality of Work Life in industrial organizations.



4. Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The sample comprised **110 employees** working in a manufacturing organization in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure multiple dimensions of Quality of Work Life. Simple percentage analysis was employed to analyze the data and interpret employees' perceptions.

5. Results

The analysis of data collected from 110 industrial employees reveals significant patterns in their perceptions of Quality of Work Life. The demographic profile indicates that **90% (n = 99)** of the respondents were male and **10% (n = 11)** were female, reflecting the male-dominated nature of employment in manufacturing industries. In terms of educational qualification, **35.5% (n = 39)** of the respondents had education below SSLC, **23.6% (n = 26)** had completed SSLC, and **27.3% (n = 30)** possessed undergraduate or postgraduate qualifications, indicating a workforce comprising both semi-skilled and skilled employees.

With regard to the working environment, **83.0% (n = 91)** of the respondents reported that the workplace environment was pleasant, **80.0% (n = 88)** expressed satisfaction with infrastructural facilities, and **73.0% (n = 80)** agreed that the workplace was safe and clean. These results suggest that the organization provides relatively favorable physical working conditions.

In the area of personal development, **72.0% (n = 79)** of respondents agreed that their skills were recognized by the organization, and an equal proportion (**72.0%, n = 79**) reported satisfaction with training programs. However, only **55.0% (n = 61)** felt that their skills were fully utilized, indicating moderate satisfaction with opportunities for career growth.

The analysis of work culture shows that **78.0% (n = 86)** of respondents were satisfied with working hours, while **61.0% (n = 67)** reported manageable stress levels. Satisfaction with welfare facilities was comparatively lower, with only **49.0% (n = 54)** expressing satisfaction.

Regarding compensation and job security, **67.0% (n = 74)** of respondents reported satisfaction with their income, while only **48.0% (n = 53)** perceived their pay as fair. Job security emerged as a relatively strong factor, with **71.0% (n = 78)** expressing satisfaction.

Overall, the findings indicate a generally satisfactory level of Quality of Work Life, with notable scope for improvement in compensation fairness, welfare facilities, and career development opportunities.

6. Discussion

The findings of the present study reinforce the multidimensional nature of Quality of Work Life as conceptualized by Walton (1975) and later scholars. High levels of satisfaction with physical working conditions are consistent with Mirvis and Lawler's (1984) assertion that safe and healthy workplaces form the foundation of employee well-being. Similar findings have been reported in industrial studies conducted in developing economies, where infrastructural improvements significantly enhance employee morale (Rethinam & Ismail, 2008; Sharma & Goyal, 2020). The moderate satisfaction observed in personal development and skill utilization aligns with Hackman and Oldham's (1980) argument that lack of autonomy and limited opportunities for growth reduce intrinsic motivation. In the



Indian industrial context, hierarchical structures and limited career pathways often constrain employee development, particularly for shop-floor workers (Budhwar & Varma, 2011).

Compensation fairness emerged as a relatively weak dimension of Quality of Work Life, despite moderate satisfaction with income levels. This finding supports equity theory-based research suggesting that perceptions of fairness, rather than absolute pay, significantly influence job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Adams, 1965; Colquitt et al., 2013). Similarly, lower satisfaction with welfare facilities reflects broader concerns in industrial employment regarding employee support systems and work–life balance (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Overall, the results suggest that while organizations may succeed in providing adequate physical working conditions, sustained improvements in Quality of Work Life require greater attention to psychosocial factors, equitable reward systems, and long-term career development.

7. Suggestions

Based on the findings and discussion, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. **Strengthening Compensation Fairness:** Organizations should periodically review wage structures and ensure transparency in compensation policies to enhance perceptions of fairness and equity.
2. **Enhancing Career Development Opportunities:** Structured training, skill-upgradation programs, and clear promotion pathways should be introduced to improve long-term employee growth and motivation.
3. **Improving Welfare Facilities:** Greater investment in welfare measures such as health services, transport, and recreational facilities can enhance employee satisfaction and well-being.
4. **Promoting Participative Work Culture:** Encouraging employee participation in decision-making can improve autonomy, ownership, and organizational commitment.
5. **Regular QWL Assessment:** Organizations should conduct periodic Quality of Work Life assessments to identify emerging issues and design evidence-based interventions.

8. Conclusion

The present study demonstrates that Quality of Work Life among industrial employees is generally satisfactory, particularly in terms of physical working conditions and interpersonal relations. However, moderate satisfaction with compensation fairness, welfare facilities, and career development opportunities highlights the need for sustained organizational intervention. Enhancing Quality of Work Life is not merely a welfare initiative but a strategic imperative that contributes to employee well-being, productivity, and organizational sustainability. Future research may adopt longitudinal and inferential approaches to further examine causal relationships between QWL and organizational outcomes.

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