

Quality of Working Life – A Discriminant Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the idea of the term humanization of work or quality of working life (QWL). "The term humanization of work or quality of working life (QWL), refer specifically to changes that enhance the human experience at work or, on the other hand, decrease the social and psychological costs incurred in producing goods and services. Quality of work life is the extent to which workers can satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. 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. The paper further discusses the criteria of QWL and the effect the implementation of such a concept has on the workplace.

Keywords: *Quality of Work Life, Job Security, Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, Work-Motivation.*

INTRODUCTION

Quality of Working Life (QWL) represents blending of very real concerns for human values into their society and creates awareness that all the individuals devote greater of their mature life to the work, spending time and energy (Physical and Mental) to this endeavour. It recognizes, moreover, that work is the chief determinant of an individual's freedom, growth and self-respect as well as his/her standard of Living. However, it requires that work should provide opportunity for their growth as well as human dignity to their lives. A person who fulfills needs values and expectations at his/her work place will have favorable effect on attitude toward working life. (Jain 91).

Human resource departments are involved with efforts to improve productivity through changes in employee relations. QWL means having good supervision, good working conditions, good pay and benefits and an interesting, challenging and rewarding job. High QWL is sought through an employee relations philosophy that encourages the use of QWL efforts, which are systematic attempts by an organisation to give workers greater opportunities to affect their jobs and their contributions to the organisation's overall effectiveness. That is, a proactive human resource department finds ways to empower employees so that they draw on their "brains and wits," usually by getting the employees more involved in the decision-making process.

Looking at the working life, more specifically throughout history, employers have been challenged by the task of attracting, retaining and motivating employees. Job Satisfaction, Job Redesign etc. are recognized as significant factors in motivation and professional development. A little investigation has taken place into job satisfaction within the teaching profession. Many teachers have minimal material or intellectual support, salary is often insufficient to maintain

them and their teachers, but teachers still work under often very difficult conditions. Increased resources and training are not necessarily the solution. Teachers' social environment, attitudes and working conditions are inter-related in a complex manner that needs to be understood better.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Literature, the researchers to sort out the measure of Quality of Working Life, factor influencing QWL etc, have done extensive work. However, a very scant attention has been paid by the researchers to analyse QWL differentials between the various working classes. To the best of our knowledge, no work has been undertaken to analyse QWL differential and its determinants among school teachers categorised on the basis of urban and rural locations. The present study is an endeavour in this direction and aims to analyse the factor influencing QWL differentials among urban and rural school teachers and, thus, targets to enrich the existing literature relating to QWL.

Sayeed and Sinha (1981) examined the relationship between QWL, job stress and performance. The results indicate that higher QWL leads to greater job satisfaction. Rahman (1984) in his study on the industrial workers of India found that subjects having low educational background and lower income had better perception of QWL than those having higher education and higher income. Haque (1992) in his study found that QWL is positively related to performance and negatively correlated to absenteeism. But he found no relationship between perceived QWL and workers' age, education and job experience. Wadud (1996) in a study found that QWL was significantly higher among the private sector women employees than their counterparts in the public sector. It also showed that younger group and higher experienced groups had significantly higher perception of QWL than the older and the lower experienced groups.

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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 favourable to QWL.

The foregoing review of existing literature on the subject reveals that though many researchers have directed their efforts to investigate the QWL related to various sectors, yet there has been no comprehensive study devoted to QWL among urban and rural school teachers. Accordingly, the present study is an attempt to analyse the different dimensions of QWL among urban and rural school teachers in Punjab.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims at enquiring into Quality of working life differentials among teachers with a view to bring to the surface some of the conditions in context of job satisfaction categorically.

More specifically, following are the objectives of this study.

1. To analyse Quality of Working Life differentials among urban and rural school teachers;
2. To compare the urban and rural teaching environment on the basis of job satisfaction criteria like teaching and welfare facilities, job characteristics and leave welfare policies etc;

METHODOLOGY

The research has been conducted in government schools. It was planned to have two samples of 200 teachers each from the urban and the rural area. For the selection of 200 teachers from the urban and rural area, the convenient sampling method was adopted and an attempt has been made to include all the young as well as the senior teachers. Similarly in case of rural area an effort has been made to include the teachers from the wider range of the border area schools.

DATA COLLECTION

Keeping in mind the objectives of the study, the data were collected from primary sources. A questionnaire was formulated for the study, which was subjected to pilot testing and re-drafted. The questionnaire was of structured type. The questionnaire contained questions relating to different dimensions of QWL such as level of happiness or fulfillment in different aspects of life, satisfaction from the various job factors and job facilities, behaviour of boss, perceived growth, present pay, opportunities for promotion, working conditions, some common statements relating to factors affecting QWL and the determinants of QWL etc. The questions included in the questionnaire were open-ended, dichotomous and offering multiple choices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Discriminant analysis is used to discriminate between the groups on the basis of some set of characteristics and tell which characteristics are most powerful discriminators. Thus, it is used to know the relative contribution of each indicator in itself in explaining the discrimination between the two groups.

The teachers are divided into 2 groups: Rural and Urban Teachers; and discriminant analysis was applied.

Table 1 shows the discriminant function coefficients, difference in group mean and percentage share in total difference. The Wilks' Lambda was 0.454 and was highly significant. The p value is 0.001, thus the null hypothesis of insignificance difference between the two samples is rejected. Hence, the difference between the two groups is significant. This indicates that the selected indicators significantly discriminate between the level of satisfaction between two groups of teachers.

Out of the 140 variables, the 28 important variables responsible for difference are: Q11_5, Q12_2, Q13_10, Q13_17, Q13_9, Q2_1, Q2_16, Q5_DD, Q5_FF, Q5_H, Q6_27, Q6_28, Q6_7, Q8A_1 (the Wavelength of all these variables is same in both the groups), Q01, Q1, Q10_2_1, Q10_4, Q2_6, Q4_1, Q5_AA, Q5_EE, Q6_10, Q6_12, Q6_20, Q6_29, Q6_31, Q7_A (Wavelength of these variables is opposite in both the groups).

Column 4 of the Table 1 shows the percentage share in total difference. The variables 'well-equipped class-rooms' (Q8A_1) and 'canteen facilities' (Q11_5) have very high percentage share in total difference; thus, these two variables emerged as the most important variables in explaining the difference between the two groups. Similarly, the variables Q6_27, Q13_9 and Q1 are also major variables discriminating between the two groups of teachers. Also, Q12_2, Q5_DD, Q5_FF, Q01, Q6_31, Q6_7, Q5_H and Q6_29 are other variables in order of their importance. It was also seen that the variables Q5_EE and Q2_16 are the least important variables in discriminating between the two groups because of their negative sign in percentage share in total difference.

Table 1 depicts that the variable of Well-equipped Classrooms causes the highest difference between two groups. A positive discriminant function coefficient explains that the teachers in rural areas are less satisfied as compared to the teachers in the urban areas. The reason may be that the classrooms in the rural areas are not equipped with the ultra modern technology, which is the common feature of urban schools. Further, the canteen facilities is another variable causing more than 50 percent share in total difference between the rural and urban groups. The direct connotation of this result is that the availability of better quality of edibles in the canteens of the schools in urban areas satisfies more as compared to the rural areas.

Three variables i.e., 'the provision adequate facilities by management', 'complaints of fellow teachers against each other', and 'recruitment policy of management' contributes more than 40 percent share in total difference. Out of these three variables, recruitment of policies of management is satisfying more to the teachers belonging to the rural areas (Proved by negative coefficient of discriminant function). However, the results pertaining to the other two above mentioned variables are in consonance of the first two highest important variables.

Further, four variables viz. social security benefits, participation of teachers in decision making, proper information to the teachers regarding the policies of authority and aspiration to join the profession contributes 20 to 40 percent of share in total difference. Due to the more availability of social security benefits in the schools of urban areas, the level of satisfaction is more in urban teachers, whereas, in the teachers belonging to rural class less availability of such benefits reduces the satisfaction level. Alternatively, the involvement of teachers in the decision making of the Principal is more in the urban areas and thus providing more satisfaction to the teachers belonging to that area. The information of the policies to the teachers has also been identified more in case of urban schools. The positive coefficient of this variable confirms this fact and thus proves more level of satisfaction in urban school teachers and less in rural teachers. However, a negative discriminant coefficient has been observed that the variable 'aspiration to join teaching profession'. In the rural class, the level of satisfaction caused by this particular variable is more whereas, in the urban class this level is comparatively low. The reasons may be that the school teachers in urban areas want more promotions as compared to their rural counterparts.

The rest of the variables included in table 1 are causing less than 20 percent difference in two groups and therefore need not to be discussed in detail.

CONCLUSION

It is observed that quality of work is not equal to that of quality of life. Overall conclusion from the analysis emerges that in urban areas, availability of ultra-modern equipments, effective management, involvement of teachers in decision making etc. enhance the satisfaction among the

school teachers in urban areas, whereas, the teachers belonging to rural areas are less satisfied in scant of such facilities.

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Reference # Envision - C -3



TABLE 1
Discriminate Analysis

S.No.	Variable Code	Variable Name	Discriminant Function Coefficient	Difference in Group Mean	% share in total difference
1	Q8A_1	Well equipped Classrooms	0.340	0.915	68.524
2	Q11_5	Canteen Facilities	0.242	0.945	50.372
3	Q6_27	School Management provides adequate facilities	0.348	0.610	46.758
4	Q13_9	Fellow teachers complain against each other	0.414	0.455	41.491
5	Q1	Recruitment policy of management	-0.357	-0.525	41.283
6	Q12_2	Benefits (Medical Insurance, Sick or Maternity Leave etc.)	0.262	0.590	34.048
7	Q5_DD	Participation of teachers in Principal's decision	0.319	0.410	28.808
8	Q5_FF	Does Principal informs the circulars regarding authority policies	0.195	0.570	24.482
9	Q01	Reason of joining Teaching Profession	-0.277	-0.370	22.575
10	Q6_31	There are Inefficient personnels for tasks we are involved in	-0.289	-0.270	17.187
11	Q6_7	Uses a wide range of abilities at work	0.278	0.240	14.696
12	Q5_H	Do the authorities make effort to solve problems of teachers?	0.301	0.210	13.923
13	Q6_29	The school management expects too much	-0.279	-0.210	12.905
14	Q6_12	Most important things that happen to me involve my work	-0.334	-0.130	9.564
15	Q6_20	Most of my activities at work are routine and boring	-0.205	-0.190	8.579
16	Q2_6	The teaching profession is "Creative"	-0.339	-0.110	8.214
17	Q7_A	Are there Refresher/ Training courses from management side?	-0.213	-0.160	7.507
18	Q13_17	My present work is important to students and society	0.345	0.095	7.219
19	Q4_1	Teaching profession is a good opportunity for advancement	-0.222	-0.120	5.868
20	Q13_10	Does Society provides much to the Teachers?	0.147	0.160	5.181
21	Q6_10	Given choice of what responsibilities to take	-0.307	-0.070	4.733
22	Q10_4	Principal is reluctant to sanction the leave in time of need	-0.180	-0.110	4.361
23	Q5_AA	Does Principal acts as Friend and as a Guide?	-0.259	-0.075	4.279
24	Q2_1	The teaching profession is "Fascinating"	0.263	0.040	2.317
25	Q10_2_1	Satisfaction with Medical leave provided	-0.176	-0.050	1.938
26	Q6_28	Over-Burdened with unrelated work	0.236	0.015	0.780
27	Q2_16	The teaching profession gives a sense of Accomplishment	0.193	-0.025	-1.063
28	Q5_EE	Principal insist on getting things done according to his opinion	-0.340	0.215	-16.101

Reference # Envision -C -03

Wilks' Lambda: 0.454

p value : 0.001