Quality of Work Life and its Impact on Job Satisfaction in Small Scale Industrial Units: Employees Perspectives

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Abstract

The presence of Quality of work life (QWL) in organisation, leads to numerous positive outcomes. There are many studies on QWL in large scale industrial units but there is not much of studies on QWL in small scale industrial units in the Indian context. The aim of the study was to determine the level and relationship between Quality of work life (QWL) with job satisfaction related variables in Small scale industrial units. The sample consists of 317 units of various Small Scale Industrial units in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai cities in Tamil Nadu. The list of industrial units was acquired from District Industrial Centre of these cities and units were chosen at random. The Questionnaire was designed based on the attributes and variables of QWL reviews and questionnaire from previous studies. The constituted variables of the questionnaire were subjected to construct validity and discriminant validity. The study reveals the important QWL factors and employees perception on variables in job satisfaction in three major cities of Tamilnadu. The study found out the influencing QWL factors on job satisfaction. The level of perception of employees on Job satisfaction is higher in Coimbatore than in Chennai and Madurai cities.

Keywords

Quality of Work Life (QWL), Job Satisfaction, Employees, Quality of work life factors (QWLF), Small Scale Industrial Units (SSI units), The India.

Introduction

A new era has dawned in the relationship between organization and their employees. People are the primary source for company's competitive advantage and organizational prosperity and survival depends on how the employees are treated (Lawler 2005). Due to the changing trends and increasing demands of the society, two-income household is on the increase. It has heightened the pressure on both male and female employees as they have to manage their personal and work life individually (Lewis and Cooper, 1999). Their work experiences, positive or negative, will have an impact on the happiness at their household and the experience at the house hold would have an impact in the organisation. So, the satisfaction at work and personal life is very important. Job satisfaction is the degree to which people like their jobs. Some people enjoy work and find it to be a central part of life. Others hate to work and do so only because they must (Paul 1997). It is more of an attitude, an internal state. It is affected by a wide range of variables relating to individual, social, cultural, organisational and environmental factors (Mullins 2005).

Different people have different perspectives on what constitutes Quality of work life (Davis and Cherns, 1975). There is no single, commonly accepted definition of QWL, by academicians and practitioners. (Klatt, Murdick and Schuster, 1985). Definitions of QWL have changed focus and have been used at different times to refer to different variables (Nadler and Lawler 1983) and also mean

different things to different people in different roles(Sashkin and Burke 1987). Quality of work life is a philosophy and a set of principles, that considers people as the important resource in the organisation (Straw and Heckscher 1984). It is the degree to which members of the organisation are able to satisfy their important personal needs through their experiences in the organisation (Suttle 1977). QWL is also regarded as an individuals reaction to work and the personal consequences of the work experience. (Saklani, 2003)

Need for the study

The presence of QWL in organisation, benefits both the employer and employee. It leads to improvement in job satisfaction of employees and contributes to the overall performance of the organisation. The present study attempts to examine the impact of QWL on job satisfaction of the employees in Small scale industrial units. The contribution of small scale industrial units to the economy of our nation (India) is tremendous. The contribution of Small Scale Industrial Units in total industrial output is 39.42 percent, 35 percent share in exports, 6.71 percent in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provides employment to about 27.14 million percents (Ministry of SSI, 2004—05). Most of the studies on QWL tend to focus more on large scale industrial units than the small scale industrial units. The study of QWL in small scale industrial units are also equally important considering its contribution to our country (India) and as well as its significance in most developing economies of the world. Taking into consideration, the importance of QWL to the organization and contribution of SSI units to India and other developing economies ,there is a need for this type of study.

Literature Review

QWL has been defined as the workplace strategies, operations and environment that promote and maintain employee satisfaction aimed at improving working condition for employees and organizational effectiveness (Lau and Bruce 1998).A variety of job and organizational factors can contribute to QWL (Carayon and Smith 2000) and individual characteristics and circumstances can have an impact on the QWL experiences of the employees (Hannif et al 2008).The level of QWL is found to be associated with the high level of job satisfaction on various aspects of working life. (Wilcock and Wright, 1991). Implementation of QWL programmes results in improved worker satisfaction, commitment and performance. (Nadler and Lawler, 1983a) The participation of workers in organisational decisions lead to increased job satisfaction, thereby reducing absenteeism and voluntary turnover. Business leaders also have acknowledged people as a unique source of competitive advantage than any other competitive strategies (Pfeffer, 1994). The success of the companys' will be decided by all members of the workforce. (Wong and Kleiner, 1996). So, there is a clear shift on part of the management from capital, technology and product to high-quality personnel (Caudron, 1994).

The product of work is people. People are the utmost important resources in the organisation (Herbst, 1974). QWL takes on different meanings for different segments of the working population (Taylor 1978). It is a comprehensive construct that includes individuals job related well being and the extent to which work experiences are rewarding, fulfilling and devoid of stress and other negative personal consequences (Shamir and Salomon, 1985). In this context improving the employees Quality of work life will have positive influence on employees perception of their job satisfaction and organisation commitment (Brewer, 1996; Bruce and Blackburn, 1992; Fields and Thacker, 1992; Molander and Winterton, 1994; Mullins, 1996: Stum, 1998: Werther and Davis, 1996 and Yousef, 2001).

Job satisfaction may affect quality of service and organisational commitment of employees (Mac Robert et al, 1993; Beall et al, 1994; Alpander, 1990; Joseph and Despande, 1997; Frank and Jos, 1995). QWL programmes can lead to a greater self esteem and improved job satisfaction(Suttle,1977a). Satisfied employees are more likely to work harder and provide better services. Employee satisfaction leads to superior performance and retention of best employees, thereby enhancing the ability of the organisation to deliver high quality services. (Berry, 1981).

Purani and Sahadev (2008) revealed that industry experiences of employees influenced the Job satisfaction and disinclination to quit relationship among the sales persons in the pharmaceutical company in India. Ballou and Godwin (2007) identified that the employees overall satisfaction is an important tool, to build an intellectual capital base that can provide a company with a competitive advantage. It is high time that organization are learning to respect the employees individuality and concern for their personal growth, which in turn increases the employees loyalty and affective commitment to work more effectively and efficiently.

Proposed Research Model

The proposed research model attempts to find out the existence of QWL factors in Small scale industrial units and also to bring out the impact of QWL factors on job satisfaction of employees at Small scale industrial units.

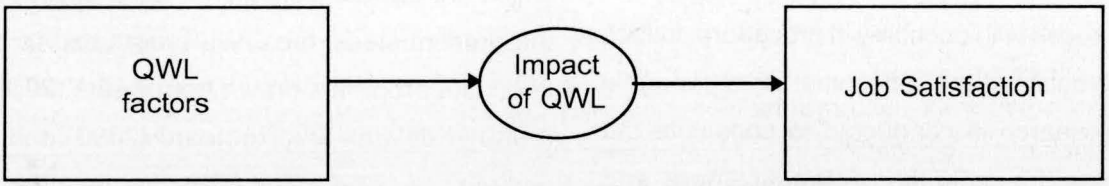

Figure 1: Impact of QWL factors on Job satisfaction

Objectives of the Study

Based on the proposed research model, the objectives of the study are confined to:

1. To measure the Job Satisfaction among the employees.
2. To evaluate the impact of QWL on Job satisfaction among the employees.

Conceptual Framework

QWL has become a umbrella term for a host of activities that includes personal and professional development, work redesign, team building, work scheduling and total organisational change. Quality of work life has been defined as better jobs and more balanced ways of combining work life with personal life (Eurofound, 2011). On the examination of definition of QWL, there are narrow concept and broader concept. The narrow concept of QWL explains workers participation in management or support localized activities and experiments to increase employees participation etc, where as broader concepts explain QWL in conceptual categories like adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunity to use and develop human capacities, future opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in workplace, social relevance of work, balanced role of work in the total life space etc. The definition of QWL is observed in different economic scenario. (Sarang Shankar Bhola, 2006). Quality of work life is a dynamic multi dimensional construct that includes concepts such as job security, reward systems, training and career advancements opportunities, and participation in decision making (Saraji and Dargahi, 2006).

Quality of work life includes job security, reward system, pay and opportunity for growth among other factors (Rossi et al., 2006). Ashok kumar et al.,

(2003) used certain dimensions to measure the QWL. These are professional management, peoples organization, basic amenities, welfare measures, interpersonal relation, job satisfaction, training and compensation.

Research Methodology

A research design is the overall plan or program of research. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to contribute relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted to constitute the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. The research design for the present study is descriptive in nature. Since the present study has made an attempt to identify the existence of QWL in SSI units and also the impact of QWL factors on job satisfaction of employees in SSI units, it is descriptive in nature.

Sampling Procedure

The total sample size of the present study is arbitrarily assigned as one percent of the population. Hence, the sampled SSI units in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai came to 321, 504 and 202 units respectively. The address of the above said units had been collected from the respective District Industrial Centres. The questionnaire had been sent to all SSI units. The response from the SSI units at Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai were 176,136 and 124 units respectively. Since the study focuses on the employees' perspective on QWL at SSI units, the SSI units who had completed the questionnaire (employee) had been included for further analysis. Hence, the included employee from each SSI units in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai came to 107, 100 and 110 SSI units respectively. Hence, the applied sampling procedure is purposive sampling.

Construct Development

In the present study, attributes were generated from the previous studies related to QWL. The generated attributes were consolidated, the repetition in attributes, similar attributes and unclear attributes were deleted from the list of attributes. The attributes which are mutually exclusive were consolidated. In the present study, the QWL programs are confined to certain programs drawn from Beers (2000), Clark (2000), Edwards and Rothbard (2000) and Sullivan and Lussier (1995). The QWL factors in the present study are identified from the variables listed by saklani (2003a). A pre-test was conducted among 30 employers and 30 employees. Based on the feed back from pretest, certain modifications and additions and deletions have been carried out. The final draft of the questionnaire has been used to collect the primary data. The collected data has been processed with the help of appropriate statistical tools.

Results and Discussion

Important QWL factors in SSI Units:

The executed Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) results in ten QWL factors. The Eigen value and percent of variation explained by each QWL factor have been computed. The variables included in each QWL factor have been identified with the help of its factor loading in the factor compared to factor loading with other factors. The resulted QWL factors, its eigen value and percent of variation explained by each factor are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Important QWL Factors (QWLFs) in the SSI Units

Sl. No.	QWL Fs	Number Variable in	Eigen Value	Percent Variance explained	Cumulative of Variance explained
1	Social Support	8	3.651	9.362	9.362
2	Inter – Personal Relationship	6	3.522	9.029	18.391
3	Recognition	5	2.573	6.598	24.990
4	Autonomy	6	2.258	5.788	30.778
5	Working Environment	2	2.152	5.518	36.296
6	Relationship with boss	3	1.866	4.785	41.082
7	Working hours	3	1.851	4.746	45.827
8	Governance by Rule of law	2	1.781	4.566	50.393
9	Role clarity	2	1.769	4.536	54.929
10	Fringe benefits	2	1.280	3.282	58.211

The most important QWL factor is social support since its eigen value and the percent of variation explained by it are 3.651 and 9.362 percent respectively. The next three important QWL factors are inter personal relationship, recognition and autonomy since its eigen values are 3.522, 2.573 and 2.258 respectively. The percent of variation explained by these QWL factors are 9.029, 6.598 and 5.788 respectively. The next three QWL factors identified by the EFA are working environment, relationship with boss and working hours since its eigen values are 2.152, 1.866 and 1.851 respectively. The percent of variation explained by these QWL factors are 5.518, 4.785 and 4.746 respectively.

The last three QWL factors identified by the EFA are governance by rule of law, role clarity and fringe benefits since their respective eigen values are 1.781, 1.769 and 1.280. The percent of variation explained by the above three QWL factors are 4.566, 4.536 and 3.282 percent respectively. In total, the narrated 10 QWL factors explain the QWL variables to the extent of 58.211 percent.

Discriminant QWL factors among employees in 3 cities.

It is essential to analyse the significant difference among employees in three cities namely Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai regarding their perception on QWL factors. The level of perception on QWL factors among the employees in three major cities are shown in figure 2.

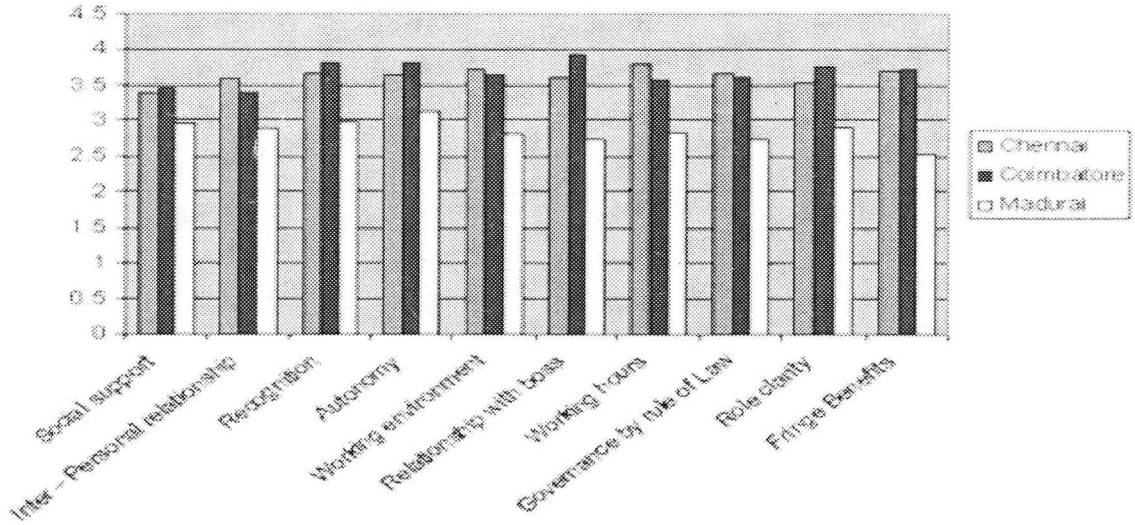

Figure 2: Level of Perception on Existence of QWL Factors by Employees in Three Cities

The identification of important discriminant QWL factors among the three group of employees for some policy implications. The one way analysis of variance and multiple discriminant analysis have been applied for this purpose. The results are given in table 2.

Table 2: Discriminant QWL Factors among Employees in Major cities

Sl. No.	QWLF	Mean Score among Employees in Major cities			F-statistics	Standardised discriminant coefficient
		Chennai	Coimbatore	Madurai		
1	Social support	3.3839	3.4589	2.9692	2.3341	0.0996
2	Inter – Personal relationship	3.5902	3.3881	2.8817	3.0142*	0.1039
3	Recognition	3.6713	3.8082	2.9798	3.1776*	0.2606*
4	Autonomy	3.6511	3.8144	3.1173	2.7336	0.1144
5	Working environment	3.7372	3.6564	2.8017	3.3045*	0.2308*
6	Relationship with boss	3.6227	3.9247	2.7336	3.4511*	0.1243
7	Working hours	3.8016	3.5806	2.8334	3.7317*	0.2611*
8	Governance by rule of Law	3.6671	3.6082	2.7331	3.3099*	0.1033
9	Role clarity	3.5441	3.7606	2.9097	2.7317	0.0961
10	Fringe Benefits	3.7082	3.7241	2.5441	3.7877	0.1658*
	Cluster Size (in percentage)	33.75	31.55	34.70		
	Eigen value	5.0873				
	Percent of variation explained	94.07				
	Canonical correlation	0.8702				

* Significant at five percent level

The significant difference among the three group of employees have been noticed in the perception on interpersonal relationship, recognition, working environment, relationship with boss, working hours and governance by rule of law since their respective f statistics are significant at five percent level. The significant discriminators among the employees in the three cities are their perception on recognition, working environment, working hours and fringe benefits since their discriminant coefficients are significant at five percent level. The powerful discriminators are working hours and recognition since their discriminant coefficients are higher. The estimated multi discriminant analysis justifies its validity since their eigen values, percent of variation explained and canonical correlation are greater than its respective minimum threshold.

Job Satisfaction among Employees

Job satisfaction is very important factor in overall quality of working life. Satisfied employees are productive employees in the organization. There are many variables contributing to the satisfaction of employees. The days are gone, when employers regarded employees as machines. The perspective of employer has changed considerably towards employees. Work in the organization is the main means by which employee can fulfill his needs. Work means so much to an employee that he has to be kept satisfied in the organization, for both personal and organizational development. Employee satisfaction can be best achieved by implementation of QWL programmes.

The job satisfaction among employees in SSI units have been measured with the help of ten variables namely wages and salary, fringe benefits, work load, work schedule, system of HR at the unit, inter – personal relationship, recognition, scope for promotion, job content and job security in the present study. The employees are asked to rate the above said ten variables at 5 point scale according to the level of existence at their units. The assigned scores are from 5 to 1 respectively. The mean score of each variable in job satisfaction among the employees in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai have been computed separately, in order to exhibit the level of job satisfaction in SSI units at Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai as per employees view. The one way analysis of variance have been extracted to analyse the significant difference among employees in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai city, regarding the level of job satisfaction. The results are given in table 3.

H_o: There is no significant difference in the perception of variables among employees in major cities.

Table 3: Variables in Job Satisfaction among Employees in Major cities

S. No	Variables	Mean Score among employees in			'F' statistics
		Chennai	Coimbatore	Madurai	
1	Wages and Salary	3.3456	3.8458	3.0869	3.1446*
2	Fringe Benefits	3.2991	3.9117	3.2445	3.0467*
3	Work Load	3.4541	3.6562	3.0141	2.5884
4	Work Schedule	3.3309	3.5108	2.9942	1.7336
5	System of HR at the Unit	3.6568	3.7173	3.0422	2.3861
6	Inter – Personal relationship	3.4502	3.8188	3.1773	3.1703*
7	Recognition	3.4117	3.9099	3.2665	3.2664*
8	Scope for promotion	3.8188	3.4542	3.0899	2.5082
9	Job content	3.8902	3.5041	3.2667	2.8141
10	Job Security	3.3088	3.7667	2.8441	3.3969*

* Significant at Five percent level

The significant difference among the three group of employees have been observed in the perception of wages and salary, fringe benefits, interpersonal relationship, recognition and job security, since their respective 'F' statistics are significant at five percent level. The highly rated variables in job satisfaction among employees in Chennai are job content and scope for promotion since their respective mean scores are 3.8902 and 3.8188, where as among employees in Coimbatore, these are fringe benefits and recognition since their respective mean scores are 3.9117 and 3.9099 respectively. The highly rated variables among employees in Madurai are job content and recognition since their respective mean scores are 3.2667 and 3.2665 respectively.

Impact of Quality of Work Life Factors (QWLF) on Job Satisfaction among Employees

The presence of quality of work life factors in the organization leads to numerous outcomes. The main outcome of QWL presence, is the job satisfaction of the employees. Job satisfaction is referred to as positive aspect of employees towards their job and job situation. Job satisfaction is the general attitude of employees towards their work. The QWL in organization positively influence the attitude of the employees. As employees are the important resource of the organization, their job satisfaction is crucial for the success of the organization.

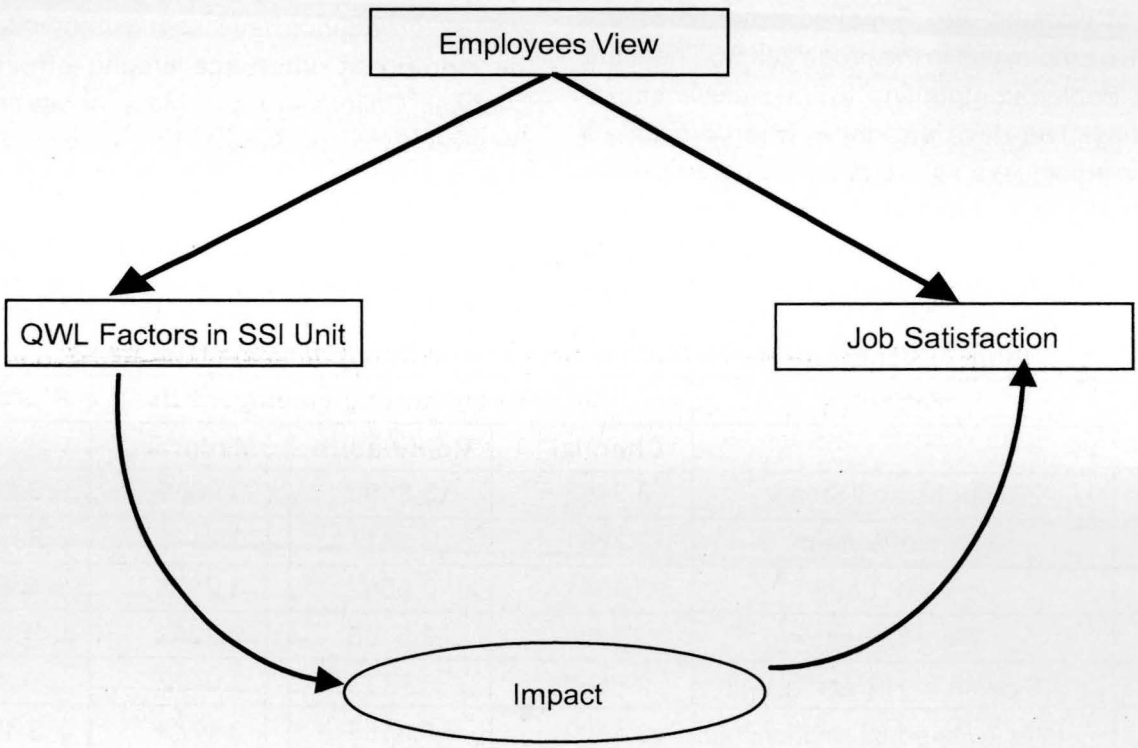

Figure 3: Impact of Quality of Work Life Factors (QWLF) on Job Satisfaction among Employees

The impact of QWL factors on the job satisfaction may have its own influence on the score on Job Satisfaction at the units. The present study has made an attempt to analyse the impact with the help of multiple regression analysis. The fitted regression model is

$Y = a+b1x1 + b2x2 + b3x3 + b4x4 + b5x5 + b6x6 + b7x7 + b8x8 + b9x9 + b10x10+e$

Y – Score on Job satisfaction among the employees.
x1 – Score on QWLF 'Social Support' among the employees.
x2 – Score on QWLF 'Inter Personal relationship' among the employees.
x3 – Score on QWLF 'Recognition' among the employees.
x4 – Score on QWLF 'Autonomy' among the employees.
x5 – Score on QWLF 'Working environment' among the employees.
x6 – Score on QWLF 'Relationship with boss' among the employees.
x7 – Score on QWLF 'Working hours' among the employees.
x8 – Score on QWLF 'Governance by rule of law' among the employees.
x9 – Score on QWLF 'Role Clarity' among the employees.
x10 – Score on QWLF 'Fringe benefits' among the employees.
a – y intercept and
e – error term
bi – Slope

H_o: There is no significant impact of QWL factors on Job satisfaction among employees.

Table 4: Impact of QWL Factors on Job Satisfaction among the Employees

S. No	QWLF	Regression Co efficient among employees in			
		Chennai	Coimbatore	Madurai	Pooled Data
1	Social Support	0.1844*	0.1917*	0.0969	0.1518*
2	Inter Personal Relationship	0.2099*	0.2664*	0.1144	0.2142*
3	Recognition	0.1904*	0.1542*	0.1629*	0.1607*
4	Autonomy	0.1071	0.1733*	0.0913	0.1019
5	Working Environment	0.1406*	0.1024	0.1517*	0.1338*
6	Relationship with boss	0.0911	0.1149	0.1067	0.1172
7	Working hours	0.1447*	0.1202	0.1331*	0.1279*
8	Governance by rule of Law	0.0442	–0.0559	0.0426	0.0451
9	Role Clarity	0.0969	0.1011	0.0775	0.0842
10	Fringe Benefits	0.0776	0.0917	0.2106*	0.1011
	Constant	0.8912	0.9969	0.7317	0.8545
	R^2	0.7402	0.7648	0.7049	0.8149
	F-statistics	8.3319*	8.9464*	8.0076*	10.2408*

* Significant at five percent level.

The Significantly and positively influencing QWL factor on the score on job satisfaction among the employees in Chennai are social support, interpersonal relationship. Recognition, working environment and working hours since their regression coefficients are significant at five percent level. A unit increase in the level of the above said QWL factor would result in an increase in score on job satisfaction at the ssi units among the employees by 0.1844, 0.2099, 0.1904, 0.1406 and 0.1447 units respectively. The R2 represents the changes in the QWL factors, explaining the changes in score on job satisfaction to the extent of 74.02 percent.

The significantly and positively influencing qwl factor on the score on job satisfaction among the employees in Coimbatore are social support, interpersonal relationship, recognition and autonomy since their regression coefficients are significant at five percent level. A unit increase in the level of above said QWL factor would result in an increase in score on job satisfaction at SSI units among the employees by 0.1917, 0.2664, 0.1542 and 0.1733 units respectively. The R2 represents the changes in the QWL factors, explaining the changes in score on job satisfaction to the extent of 76.48 percent.

The significantly and positively influencing QWL factor on the Score on job satisfaction among the employees in Madurai are recognition, working environment, working hours and fringe benefits since their regression coefficients are significant at five percent level. A unit increase in the level of above said QWL factor would result in an increase in score on job satisfaction at SSI units among the employees by 0.1629, 0.1517, 0.1331 and 0.2106 units respectively. The R2 represents the changes in the QWL factors, explaining the changes in score on job satisfaction to the extent of 70.49 percent.

The significantly and positively influencing QWL factor on the score on job satisfaction among the employees in pooled data are social support, interpersonal relationship, recognition, working environment and working hours since their regression coefficients are significant at five percent level. A unit increase in the level of above said QWL factors would result in an increase in score on job satisfaction at SSI units among the pooled data by 0.1518, 0.2142, 0.1607, 0.1338 and 0.1279 units respectively. The R2 represents the changes in the QWL factors, explaining the changes in score on job satisfaction in pooled data to the extent of 81.49 percent.

Research Implications:

The QWL factors identified in the present study positively and significantly influences job satisfaction of employees in industrial units. The same results are also echoed in the findings of study conducted by Havlovic, (1991), Cohen et al, (1997), King and Erhard, (1997). Social support is one of the important QWL factors contributing to job satisfaction of employees. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bookman (2004). The result of positive and significant influence of QWL on factors on job satisfaction in the present study, is similar to the findings of Islam and Siengthai (2009).

The result of the present study strike a similarity with findings of Martin and David (1985), that states the impact of QWL process creating a favourable effect on job satisfaction, product/service Quality, productivity and the relationship between union and management.

The Present study reveals a strong correlation between QWL and job satisfaction of the employees in Industrial units, is consistent with the findings of Haque (1992) and Carayon, Hoonakker, Marchand and Schwarz (2003).

Managerial Implication

The result of this study was intended to assist policy makers, decision makers in identifying key work place issues, as perceived be employers and employees, in order to develop strategies to address and develop quality of work life conditions for the employees.

Ten important QWL factors have emerged as a result of analysis in the present study. The most important QWL factor is social support, followed by

interpersonal relationship and recognition. The presence of these QWL factors in organisation, enhances employees job satisfaction, which are positively related to organisational performance. People are the prime source of any organisation and whatever the input fed to the organisation, in terms of technology, system, money, it is through the people, tasks are accomplished. So the management need to take sustained effort in people development.

The significant discriminators among employees in three cities are recognition, working environment, working hours and Fringe benefits. These are found higher in Chennai city than in Coimbatore and Madurai city. It shows the employees have high expectations with regard to the benefits. Management may provide free and subsidized canteen services, conveyance facilities, medical facilities, children education and housing facilities etc, as these are likely to have positive impact on their motivation and subsequently will lead to Job satisfaction of employees.

Many organisations spend huge sum of money on process improvement and reorganization. But they fail to spend on hidden value in a company, that is usually thought of as soft, against hard assets. Company's value is increasingly driven by employees and their ideas, as opposed to hard assets. So, it is worth spending on human assets, to create sustained growth of organisation.

Conclusion

The present study examined the existence of Quality of work life among employees in SSI units. The presence of QWL among employees are not highly prevalent. The presence of job satisfaction of employees were measured with the help of 10 variables and the impact of QWL factors on job satisfaction is ascertained. The management and policy makers should take steadfast initiatives to improve further the job satisfaction of employees, as it leads to numerous gains. The individual, organisation and the society benefits out of QWL efforts, thereby creating better people and better society to live and prosper.

Scope for Future Research

The present study examined level of job satisfaction among employees in SSI Units. It also evaluated the impact of QWL factors on Job satisfaction of employees. Further study may examine the level of Job satisfaction among employees in Small scale industrial units across different sectors in Tamilnadu. The study on individual performance, absenteeism and turnover ratio among employees, across Small scale industrial sectors may be undertaken. The impact of these variables on job satisfaction could be explored. Such initiative would contribute to a better understanding of employees, which facilitates management and policy makers to draw an effective plan and strategic formulation for the betterment of people, organisation and the nation.

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