
Reflections and Contemporary Experiences of Quality of Work Life and Performance in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines various parameters regarding work life quality among the academic staff of higher educational institutions. This research study mainly focused on the two most important parameters of quality of work life which include 1. Work and total life space and 2. Social relevance and importance at work, both the dimensions were studied on various items and the perception of staff were measured towards the quality of life at their respective work places. The data were collected from teaching staff of various universities. The collected data were analyzed by using different statistical tools like Minitab and statistical package for social sciences research (SPSS) and suitable statistical tests were applied. The final results revealed that there is no significant difference between the quality of work life and its various dimensions

INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life of academicians, predominantly in the Private Technical Institute, is not showing good results. A number of factors have been pointed out which are negatively affecting the association between administration and academicians. Some of the factors responsible for low Quality of work life are salary and wage bias between equally qualified employees, low advancement opportunity for growth, salary and job security issues, dissatisfaction regarding leaves, flexibility etc (Vishwakarma, Lakhawat & Poonam, 2013). Mukherjee (2010) found a positive association between job satisfaction and Quality of work life dimensions on a study conducted on University employees. It was found that Quality of work life has shown significant contribution in increasing job satisfaction or dissatisfaction depending upon employee's negative or positive perception of Quality of work life dimensions. Positive job satisfaction was indicated by faculty members. The staff also indicated that they would stay in the same job if provided with growth opportunities, advancements, organizational prestige and factors related to finance. The foremost reason of displeasure was found to be opportunities for development, organizational prestige and financial factors. It has thus been argued that administration should provide suitable weightage to these factors as respondents have assigned these factors as most important for retaining them in present jobs (Shariq Abbas, Premi & Jyoti, 2010). Ho, Cheng and Lin (2001) in their study explored management and performance of engineering educational systems through establishing a performance evaluation model for engineering educational systems.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Adhikari & Gautam (2010) defined that Quality of work life dimensions include adequate pay and benefits, job security, safe and healthy working conditions, meaningful job and autonomy in the job. The concept of Quality of work life first emerged in U.S and U.K and eventually spread to Norway, the Netherlands, India and Japan (Davis & Trist 1974). A variation has been observed among change processes, perspectives & practices of Quality of work life between countries. Norway emphasizes its "industrial democracy" program; Sweden emphasizes "the democratization of the institutions within the framework of employer-employee-union", UK has its emphasis on theoretical area (Kaymaz, 2003). Huzzard, (2003) observes that in France, Quality of work life is associated with the

enhancement of working conditions, work humanization in Germany and with employee protection in Eastern European Countries. Wyatt & Wah, (2001) observe that in regions like North America, Europe and Japan Quality of work life is not only considered as a tool of efficiency but also democracy and humanization of the working environment. Subbu Rethina Bharathi (2010) opines that the most important issue in developing and developed nation is quality of work life; it's not just concerned about employee satisfaction but also focuses on increasing productivity, flexibility and effectiveness of an organization. As per the research of Hejazi and Behravan (2010) which was carried out in Tehran, the study was based on the faculty members of Agriculture University and the findings of study concluded that there are no significant relationship between personal factors and research productivity in agriculture departments of the university. Similarly the research study of Yavari, Amirtash and Tondnevis (2009) compared quality of work life among faculty members of physical education departments and educational departments. The result findings shows that there was no significant difference in quality of work life among two groups, except for one dimension that is development of human and personal skills Furthermore the study shows no significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried respondents regarding the quality of work life aspects. Mehdizadeh ASharafi and Ilka (2012) Conducted research on the relationship between quality of work life and employees' performance based on Walton's Model in Islamic Azad University - Firouzkoh branch of Islamic Azad University. The results showed that there is an interrelationship between quality of work life and work performance. There is also significant relationship between various dimensions of quality of work life model. According to the views of Stoenhuis & De Bruijn (2006) the better working conditions like flexible work hours, efficient and appropriate technology; economical conditions of work like compensation/salary/wages increases the level of efficiency of employees and in turn increases the organizational productivity. Similarly Ahmadi's (2009) studied the effect of various factors of quality of work life and found the positive effects of Quality of work life factors on productivity of employees. Inconsistent to this Pekka Kess et.al (2009) studied the factors of quality of work life and its impact on quality of work life.

Dimensions of Quality of Work Life

The European Commission (EC) suggested ten key dimensions for quality of work life, which include (1) intrinsic job factors, (2) skills, (3) life-long learning and career development, (4) gender equality (5) health and safety at work, (6) flexibility and security, (7) inclusion and access to the labour market, (8) social dialogue and worker involvement, (9) diversity and non-discrimination, and (10) overall work performance (Royuela, Tamayo and surinach, 2007 as cited in tabassum, Rahman and jahan, 2012). According to the research of Swapna & Gomathi, (2013) there are six indicators by which Quality of Work Life can be measured which include 1. Job & career satisfaction 2. Working conditions 3. General Well-being 4. Home work interface/Work life balance 5. Career prospects & compensation 6. Training & Development. Farideh, (2012) defined Quality of work life as a philosophy or a set of principles, which holds that employees are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making a valuable contribution towards the organization. Quality of work life is defined as an individual's evaluation of the outcome of the work relationship (Katzell et. al 1975). The researchers observed that those employees enjoy a good quality of work life who have positive attitude towards his/her job, are motivated to settle on the job, have good performance and maintain balance between work life and private life.

Research Objective

1. To measure the quality of work life in higher educational institutions.
2. To suggest suitable measures to improve the quality of work life in higher educational institutions.

Research Methodology

Data was collected from the respondents by distributing questionnaires among the academic staff of the four sample universities of Jammu and Kashmir State. The data was collected as per the requirements of the study. The objectives of the study were kept in mind and the contents of the questionnaire were very specific and according to the needs of the study. Questionnaires received from the respondents were scrutinized carefully to detect errors caused by inconsistent information provided by the respondent. The errors were rectified by resorting to filling of questionnaires afresh. The present study was conducted on a sample of 350 teaching faculty of different universities of

Jammu And Kashmir State. The sample selected was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size (refer to annexure 1). Questionnaires were distributed personally used for data collection, 307 questionnaires were received back with a response rate of 87%.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1: work and total life space at work place as a dimension of Quality of Work Life (QWL) is significantly poor in higher education.

Work and Total Life Space

Table 1 shows the overall mean value of 3.462 for work and total life space. The finding implies the moderate level of satisfaction of the respondents on the dimension work and total life space. Moreover the mean score of the dimension has ranged between 3.28 to 3.5 with the variable working hours affect the possibility of leisure scoring highest and no effect of official timing on personal life scoring least. Therefore it can be concluded from the descriptive analysis that the academic staff on an average is enjoying a good quality of work life, on variable working hours and time schedules. Furthermore the statistical Analysis of ANOVA indicates that ‘p’ value for dimension, work and total life space (0.661) is greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance , with F-value of 0.532, therefore alternate hypothesis is rejected, which depicts that quality of work life is not significantly poor with respect work and total life space.

Table1. Parametric statistics-testing of hypothesis of dimension, work and total life space by using Anova

S. No	DIMENSION	OVERALL		ANOVA		Hypothesis testing
		M	S.D	F	Sig	Status
1.	Timings do not affect personal life.	3.56	1.047	0.621	0.602	H0 accepted
2.	Working hours affect the possibilities of leisure.	3.28	1.069	1.785	0.150	H0 accepted
3.	Comfortable time schedules for work and rest.	3.55	1.038	1.279	0.282	H0 accepted
	Overall	3.4625	0.6982	0.532	0.661	H0 accepted

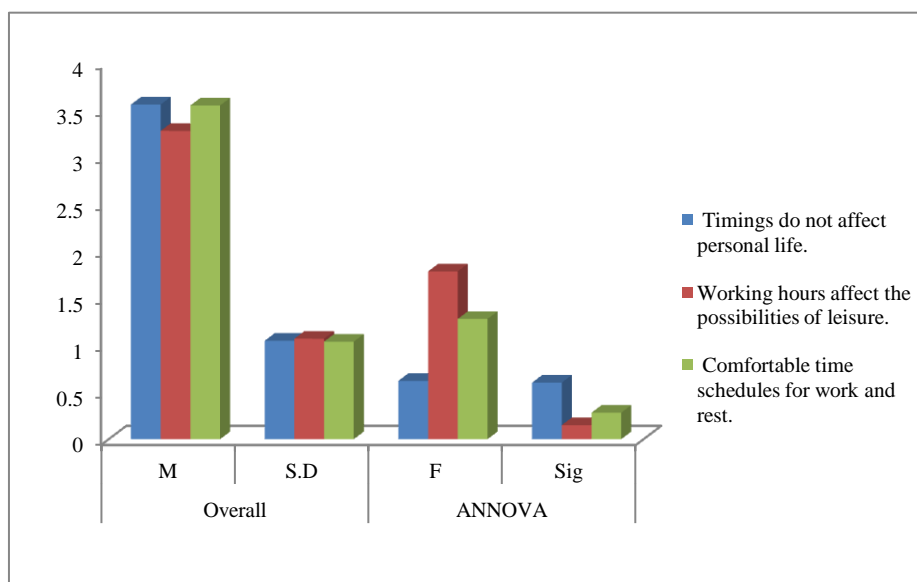


Fig1. Parametric statistics-testing of hypothesis of dimension, work and total life space by using Anova

Hypothesis 2: Relevance and importance at work place as a dimension of Quality of Work Life (QWL) is significantly poor in Higher Education.

Social Relevance and Importance at Work Place

The overall mean score for the dimension social relevance and importance (4.02) from the table 2 depicts that the faculty of all the sample universities has enjoying good quality of work life regarding above mentioned dimension. Moreover the variable wise descriptive statistics from the table shows that the mean score ranged between 3.76 to 4.21 with the variable respect to employees and contribution to the state scoring the least and highest. Therefore it can be concluded that academic staff of different institutions enjoy good reputation, respect, best quality services and institutions have

good contribution towards state development. The mean value for the dimension has been 4.0298, which shows a high level of satisfaction among the respondent of sample universities. Furthermore on the bases of statistical analysis from the table 2, quality of work life in higher educational institutions is significantly poor, as the significance for social relevance and importance at work has been observed as 0.000 at 5% level of significance with F-value of 16.698. therefore the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table2. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis for dimension, social relevance and importance at work by using Anova

S. No	DIMENSION	OVERALL		ANOVA		Hypothesis testing status
		M	S.D	F	Sig	
	Social relevance and importance					
1.	Treated as a noble institution among the people.	4.17	0.805	1.037	0.377	H0 accepted
2.	Best quality of services.	3.82	0.900	10.916	0.000	H1 accepted
3.	Respects to employees and treatment in a better way.	3.76	0.892	15.219	0.000	H1 accepted
4.	Contribution to the state.	4.21	0.711	11.842	0.000	H1 accepted
5.	Employees feel proud to be in the university.	4.19	0.685	7.019	0.000	H1 accepted
	Overall	4.0293	0.5657	16.698	0.000	H1 accepted

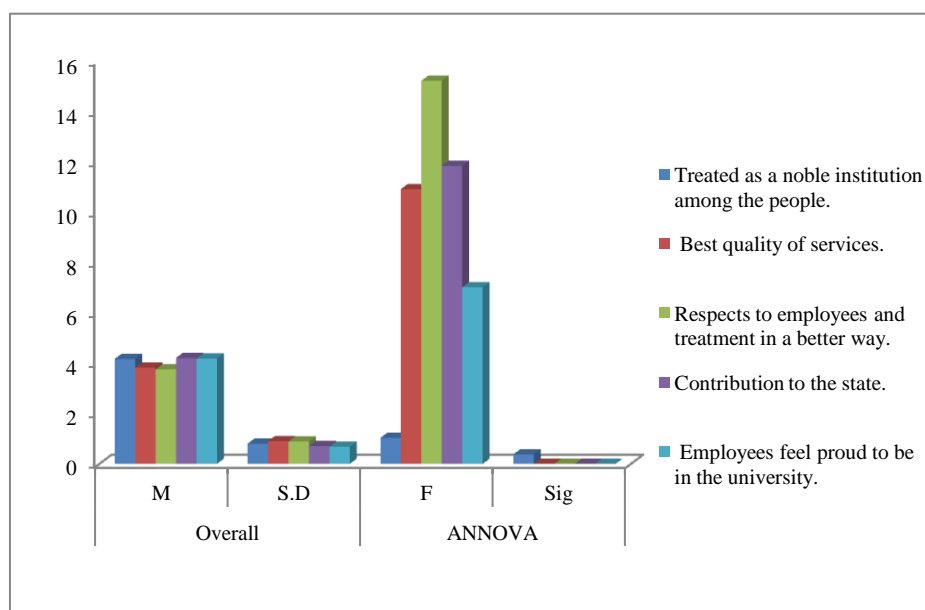


Fig2. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis for dimension, social relevance and importance at work by using ANOVA

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Working hours should not be long so that they may infer with possibility of leisure time of the employee. The sample universities has been at moderate level of satisfaction as depicted by findings, the mean score for Kashmir university(KU) has been 3.46 and the satisfaction level is at average as compared to other sample universities. Moreover, Sher-e-Kashmir university of Agriculture sciences and technology Jammu (SKAUST-J) and Sher-e-Kashmir university of Agriculture sciences and technology of Kashmir (SKUAST- K) is at lowest mean value of 3.21 and 3.09 respectively, which also shows an average level of satisfaction. The working hours affect the respondents on the possibility of leisure time provided by the university. The finding implies the moderate level of satisfaction of the respondents on the dimension work and total life space. Moreover the mean score of the dimension has ranged between 3.28 to 3.5 with the variable working hours affect the possibility of leisure scoring highest and no effect of official timing on personal life scoring least. The overall mean score for the dimension social relevance and importance (4.02) from the table 2 depicts that the faculty of all the sample universities has enjoying good quality of work life regarding above mentioned dimension. Moreover the variable wise descriptive statistics from the table shows that the mean score ranged between 3.76 to 4.21 with the variable respect to employees and contribution to

the state, scoring the least and highest. Therefore it can be concluded that academic staff of different institutions enjoy good reputation, respect, best quality services and institutions have good contribution towards state development.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

The study has concentrated only on the Quality of work life of academic staff of various universities therefore generalization of findings is not possible. More research is needed before generalizing implications for non-academic staff. Future research can focus on the perception of quality of work life from stakeholders other than academic staff such as administrative staff, clerical staff and supporting staff of the institutions in order to get an overall view of work life quality in higher educational institutions. The study was focused only on public sector universities, Therefore future study may take all the public and private institutions of higher education into consideration in the State to establish competitive benchmarks, track student defections to other institutions caused by poor service delivery and to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

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