

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH WORK PERFORMANCE - A STUDY OF EMPLOYEES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

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Abstract: *The concept of Quality of Work Life (QWL) has become inevitable for an organization's survival and growth in the present era of competition, complexity and rapid advancements. QWL is of paramount importance in improving the morale and motivation of employees, and hence their performance. Thus, it has become immensely important to measure and enhance the QWL of employees in order to ensure that they are satisfied and perform better.*

Keeping this in view, the present study has been conducted to study the Quality of Work Life of employees and its relationship with their Work Performance. A sample of 250 employees of Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (HPPCL) was selected by using convenience sampling technique.

Results of the present study reveal that there is a positive and strong relationship between Overall QWL and Overall Work Performance of HPPCL employees. All eight QWL dimensions taken in the study have been found to contribute to enhance the Overall QWL. The QWL dimensions have also been found to have a positive, and either a strong or a moderate relationship with Overall Work Performance.

Keywords: *Quality of Work Life, Work Performance, HPPCL, Working Conditions, Compensation*

INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work Life has become inevitable for the present day organizations to successfully grow and gain a competitive edge. It enables the organizations to function smoothly by ensuring that the employees are motivated to perform better (Aarthy & Nandhini, 2016). This study, thus, focuses on assessing the Quality of Work Life of HPPCL employees, and understanding the relationship of QWL and its various dimensions with Work Performance of these employees.

A good QWL ensures that the employees are happy and healthy, enabling them to take sound decisions which improve turnover and lead to successful goal accomplishment. An improved QWL also helps attract competent and proficient talent and to retain the existing experienced talent.

It is important to assess QWL in an organization at regular intervals as it provides the information regarding working conditions and physical work environment, salary and other benefits, career growth opportunities, inter-personal relationships, work and rest schedules etc.; and helps to enhance QWL for further improvement in employee morale, motivation and performance.

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

It was during the 1960s-70s when Quality of Work Life became an important HR intervention in the USA and Scandinavia. It was discussed for the first time in 1972 in an international labor relations conference, and became more popular after United Auto Workers and General Motors started a QWL program for work reforms (Gayathiri & Ramakrishnan, 2013).

According to Robbins (1989) an organization can successfully cater to the needs of its employees by evolving such systems which encourage employees to participate in making decisions which influence their work life, and this entire process has been referred to as Quality of Work Life. Quality of Work Life also refers to the relationship which exists between a worker and his work environment (which can be further segregated into various dimensions like the socio-technical and economic) in which the work is generally seen and designed (Gayathiri & Ramakrishnan, 2013). QWL can also be understood as those working conditions which are conducive to create a favourable and purposeful organization, and cater to the personal needs of employees by moulding their values, improving their health and well-being, ensuring job satisfaction and security, developing their competencies, and maintaining work-life balance. (Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). QWL is also defined as the quality of human experience as they interact in employees-organization relationship (Saklani, 2004). Management must, therefore, pay attention to employees' well-being as a strong workforce will be beneficial for the organization. Furthermore, Greenhaus (1987) suggested that Quality of Work Life is related to employees' satisfaction and work-related behaviors. Employees who are satisfied and happy with their work are often more committed to their work and perform better.

QWL is of immense importance for both the employees and employers. It has become increasingly important in the present era due to bottleneck competition, increased stress at work, rapid technological advancements, deskilling of jobs, artificial intelligence (AI), and emerging challenges like VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity). These and numerous other factors have necessitated the improvement in QWL of employees so that they have a good and healthy experience at work. Every organization must, therefore, strive to provide a work environment which is propitious to the human resources of that organization. Various measures can be adopted to ensure a better QWL in an organization. Fair and adequate remuneration, fringe benefits, bonus and other incentives, proper working conditions, balance between work and personal life, no discrimination among employees on the grounds of caste, colour, creed, race, religion or sex; ample opportunities for professional growth, employee autonomy, better interpersonal relationships, effective performance appraisal system etc. can help improve QWL of employees. QWL is a term which encompasses most of the relevant aspects affecting employees and their work.

In the present study, eight dimensions have been used to measure QWL of employees. These are: Adequate and Fair Compensation, Safe and Healthy Working

Conditions, Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities, Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security, Social Integration in the Work Organization, Constitutionalism in the Work Organization, Work and Total Life Space, and Social Relevance of Work Life. Overall QWL has been derived by taking an average of the sum of these eight dimensions of QWL.

WORK PERFORMANCE

The measurement of employee/work performance at regular intervals is of paramount importance for the employees as well as organizations. Every organization is interested in knowing how well its employees are performing, and how can their performance be further improved. It helps to keep a track of their available skill pool, achievements and potential for further growth. This also enables an organization to take the requisite corrective measures for improving the performance of those employees who did not perform well. The employees can also get a fair idea of their strengths, capabilities, competencies, skills and weaknesses; and can further improve their strengths and mitigate the weaknesses to improve their performance.

Employee performance refers to the actions and behaviors of people in an organization, which are directed at the achievement of the goals and targets set by an organization, and the results or outcomes of such actions and behaviors of the individuals. According to Viswesvaran and Ones (2000), Work Performance can also be defined as: "scalable actions, behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals." Thus, performance of employees can also be understood as the actions, reactions and responses of individuals that are changeable and/or measurable; their behaviors, and the resultant outcomes of such actions and behaviors, which eventually are connected with, and lead to the successful accomplishment of the organizational goals. Robbins (2001) pointed out that when employees are contented with the work-related tasks, then their performance improves significantly and they perform better. So, it can be inferred from this definition that employees who are happy and contented with their work are better performers in contrast to the employees who are unhappy and dissatisfied with their work. Employee Performance has also been defined by Cascio (2006) as the degree of accomplishment of the mission and targets of an organization by its employees. So, the extent to which the employees of an organization are able to attain the mission, goals and targets set for them by the organization can be referred to as employee performance. Prasetya and Kato (2011) have described performance as the results achieved

by skilled workers in some specific situations. They have limited the term performance merely to the outcomes of the work done by skilled workers in specific situations.

These definitions of work performance indicate that regular assessment of work performance helps in identifying those areas where an employee excels (successfully accomplishes the set goals and objectives) as well as those areas where an employee needs to improve. The reasons for poor performance can be then traced and corrective measures be taken. The success and failure of an organization depends a lot on its human resources and their performance. So, for ensuring smooth functioning, every organization must regularly assess the performance of its employees. This helps in getting a clear picture of the goals and objectives achieved by the employees, as well as in checking any deviations from the set standards.

In the present study, Work Performance has been measured with the help of three dimensions- Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance (CP), and Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB). Overall Work Performance has been derived by averaging the sum of these three Work Performance dimensions. The present study emphasizes on determining and understanding QWL of employees of HPPCL, and identifying the dimensions of QWL which are more relevant in comparison to the others in improving QWL. The study also focuses on understanding the relationship of QWL as well as its various dimensions with Overall Work Performance of the employees of HPPCL.

HPPCL is an upcoming power-generating utility in the state of Himachal Pradesh. It was incorporated in December, 2006. It has grown remarkably since its inception by adding many new projects to its list. Himachal Pradesh has many hydro-power projects run by other renowned power-generating organizations like NTPC, NHPC, SJVNL etc. which pose a great competition to HPPCL- a nascent organization. It has been found that very limited research has been conducted on the relationship between QWL and work performance in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) like HPPCL in the state of Himachal Pradesh. A need was, thus, felt to understand the quality of work life experienced by the employees in HPPCL, and also to understand the relationship between QWL and work performance of the employees.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Quality of Work Life is a philosophy, a set of principles, which states that people are the most vital resource in an organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making a valuable contribution, and they should be treated with dignity and respect (Straw & Heckscher,

1984; Tabassum et. al, 2011, p. 17; Rose et. al, 2006, p. 61). Quality of Work Life is fundamentally a complex, generic and multidimensional concept, and is a way of understanding people, work and organization in a rational and logical manner (Hsu & Kernohan, 2006, p. 120). QWL is of immense importance to effective organizational performance and it is a crucial factor for motivating employees at work (Gupta & Sharma, 2011, p. 80).

Initially, in early 1970s, the Quality of Work Life Movement was a leisurely organized network of a few academics. QWL and its importance gained momentum in the 1980s and the QWL Movement grew into a global grouping of various trade union officials, personnel (human resource) managers and social scientists (Jayakumar & Kalaiselvi, 2012, p.140).

Researchers have different perceptions about performance, but most of them relate performance with measurement of transactional efficiency and effectiveness towards organizational goals (Stannack, 1996; Barney, 1991). There are certain researchers who have identified different attitudes, beliefs and thoughts about performance as it helps in the measurement of input and output efficiency measures that lead to transactional association (Stannack, 1996).

A significant and positive relationship exists between Quality of Work Life and employee job performance which also influences the organizational performance (Rai & Tripathi, 2015). Shahbazi, et al (2011) also found that Quality of Work Life was positively related to performance. They used Walton's model for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Walton, 1975). The present study also uses an adaptation from Walton's QWL model. The results of Shahbazi, et al's (2011) study also reveals that four dimensions of Walton's QWL model (developing human capabilities, constitutionalism in the work organization, total life space and social integration in the work organization) are better in predicting performance, as compared to the other four QWL dimensions (adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunity for continued growth and security, and the social relevance of work life). Results of this study show that "Social integration in the work organization" has the strongest relationship with overall work performance.

There is a positive and meaningful relationship between the Quality of Work Life components and manager's performance. Components of QWL are, thus, valuable factors to enhance performance (Kaighobadi, Esteghlal & Mohebbi, 2014). Quality of Work Life and its dimensions have a positive relationship with Work Performance (Thakur & Sharma, 2018). A felicitous Quality of Work Life is of paramount importance for the organizations to hire and retain competent, experienced and proficient personnel.

Past studies also show that a high QWL results in better employee performance and also provides ample career growth opportunities to the employees (Sheel, et al., 2012).

Job aid and physical work environment are strongly related to employee performance, and they have a great impact on it, whereas supervisor support has no relationship with employee performance (Naharuddin & Sadeqi, 2013). Various QWL dimensions, namely; work environment, occupational stress, opportunities for development, social support, compensation and rewards, and work-life balance have a significant influence on Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance (Nayak & Sahoo, 2015).

Quality of Work Life has a positive and significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). QWL dimensions, viz. fair and sufficient payment, safe and healthy work place, the opportunity of growth and constant security, rule of law in the school, social dependence of work life, the general atmosphere of work life, integrity and coherence in the school, and development of human capacities are also positively related to OCB (Papi & Nuralizadeh, 2014). In the present study, OCB has been merged with Contextual Performance dimension of Work Performance.

In some cases, there can be a moderating or a mediating variable which can influence the relationship between QWL and work performance. Employee Commitment is one such mediating variable. It has been found to affect the relationship between Quality of Work Life and Organizational Performance partially and significantly (Nayak & Sahoo, 2015).

Quality of Work Life is usually related to work performance positively. However, it has also been found to have a negative but insignificant relationship with organizational performance. This was a consequence of the fact that the study was carried out on non-managerial and operational workers for whom better wages and financial benefits for meeting the basic needs was more important than QWL (Islam & Siengthai, 2009).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To determine the Quality of Work Life of the employees of Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (HPPCL).

To understand the relationship of various dimensions of QWL with overall work performance of the employees of HPPCL.

To understand the relationship between overall QWL and overall work performance of the employees of HPPCL.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H₀₁ - There is no significant relationship between “adequate and fair compensation” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₂ - There is no significant relationship between “safe and healthy working conditions” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₃ - There is no significant relationship between “immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₄ - There is no significant relationship between “opportunity for continued growth and security” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₅ - There is no significant relationship between “social integration in the work organization” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₆ - There is no significant relationship between “constitutionalism in the work organization” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₇ - There is no significant relationship between “work and total life space” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₈ - There is no significant relationship between “social relevance of work life” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

H₀₉ - There is no significant relationship between “overall Quality of Work Life” and “overall work performance” of the employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study uses an empirical research design. A sample of 250 employees of HPPCL working at the Corporate Office (Shimla), Design Office (Sundernagar) and different projects in the state of Himachal Pradesh was selected for this study by using convenience sampling technique.

Data was collected by using both primary and secondary data collection sources. Primary data was collected from the employees of HPPCL through a pen and paper survey. A questionnaire developed by Timossi, et al (2008) in their research study on “Evaluation of Quality of Work Life: An Adaptation from the Walton’s Quality of Work Life model,” was used for collecting data related to the QWL of employees

and a questionnaire developed by Koopmans (2014) in her study on "Measuring Individual Work Performance" was used for collecting data related to the work performance of the employees of HPPCL. Both the questionnaires used 5-point Likert scales to measure the responses. Secondary data was obtained from books, journals, internet etc.

Pearson Correlation and descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the data with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 21 software.

Psychometric Properties of the Scale

Face validity of the QWL and IWP questionnaires was established by the experts in order to ascertain that the questionnaires measure only the constructs of QWL and IWP respectively. Reliability of the questionnaires was checked by using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha was .940 for Quality of Work Life (QWL) questionnaire, .733 for Individual Work Performance (IWP) questionnaire, and .938 for the final questionnaire (QWL and IWP questionnaires taken together).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of descriptive statistics are presented in the following table:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Quality of Work Life (QWL) Dimension	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Adequate and Fair Compensation	250	3.66	.68
Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	250	3.77	.46
Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities	250	3.90	.48
Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security	250	3.47	.65
Social Integration in the Work Organization	250	4.00	.48
Constitutionalism in the Work Organization	250	3.61	.67
Work and Total Life Space	250	3.91	.50
Social Relevance of Work Life	250	3.91	.59
Overall QWL	250	3.78	.44
Valid N (listwise)	250		

Source: Primary/field data.

Results of descriptive statistics in Table 1 reveal that mean scores of all the Quality of Work Life dimensions

are either equal to 3.5 (Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security having a mean score of 3.47 which is equal to 3.5 when rounded off) or more than 3.5 (all the other QWL dimensions, except Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security), which signifies that the employees are satisfied with the various QWL dimensions and that all the eight QWL dimensions taken in the present study make a contribution to the enhancement of overall QWL of the employees. "Social integration in the work organization" had the highest mean score (4.00), whereas "Opportunity for continued growth and security" was found to have the lowest mean (3.47). The means of other QWL dimensions lied between these two (Work and Total Life Space= 3.91, Social Relevance of Work Life= 3.91, Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities= 3.90, Safe and Healthy Working Conditions= 3.77, Adequate and Fair Compensation= 3.66, and Constitutionalism in the Work Organization= 3.61). Standard deviation lies between 0.4 and 0.7, which shows that the employees did not have much difference in their opinions regarding the various QWL dimensions.

Also, the mean score for Overall QWL has been found to be 3.78, which means that the employees are satisfied with the overall quality of life they experience while working in HPPCL.

Results of Correlation analysis of QWL dimensions and Overall QWL with Overall Work Performance of employees of HPPCL are displayed in the following table:

Table 2: Correlation Analysis of QWL Dimensions and Overall QWL with Overall Work Performance of employees of HPPCL

Quality of Work Life (QWL) Dimension	Overall Work Performance	
	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adequate and Fair Compensation	.539**	.000
Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	.617**	.000
Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities	.621**	.000
Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security	.543**	.000
Social Integration in the Work Organization	.516**	.000
Constitutionalism in the Work Organization	.529**	.000
Work and Total Life Space	.499**	.000
Social Relevance of Work Life	.569**	.000
Overall Quality of Work Life	.711**	.000

** - Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary/field data.

Pearson correlation has been used to understand the relationship of various Quality of Work Life dimensions with overall work performance of the employees, as well as to understand the relationship between overall QWL and overall work performance of the employees of HPPCL. Results of the Pearson correlation analysis are displayed in Table 2.

Results in this table reveal that the p-value for correlation between “Adequate and Fair Compensation” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000, which is less than .01 (one percent) level of significance, hence H_{01} is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between QWL dimension of “Adequate and Fair Compensation” and “Overall Work Performance.” The value of Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is .539 in this case, which means that there is a moderate, positive relationship between these two.

The p-value for correlation between “Safe and Healthy Working Conditions” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000, which is less than .01 (or one percent) level of significance, hence H_{02} is rejected. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two. The value of r is .617 in this case, which reveals a positive and quite strong relationship between “Safe and Healthy Working Conditions” and “Overall Work Performance.”

The p-value is .000 for correlation between “Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities” and “Overall Work Performance.” In this case, $p < .01$, hence H_{03} is rejected, which means that there is a statistically significant relationship between these two. The value of r (.621) further shows that the relationship between “Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities” and “Overall Work Performance” is positive and quite strong in nature.

The p-value for correlation between “Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000 which is less than .01, hence, H_{04} is **rejected**. This shows that the relationship between “Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security” and “Overall Work Performance” is statistically significant. Also, the value of r for this relationship is .543, which signifies a moderate relationship between these two.

The value of r is .516 for the correlation between “Social Integration in the Work Organization” and “Overall Work Performance,” with a p-value of .000 which is less than .01, hence H_{05} is rejected. Thus, a statistically significant, positive, and moderate relationship has been found between “Social Integration in the Work Organization” and “Overall Work Performance.”

The p-value is .000 for correlation between “Constitutionalism in the Work Organization” and “Overall Work Performance.” In this case, $p < .01$, hence H_{06} is **rejected**, and it can be inferred that there is a statistically significant relationship between “Constitutionalism in the Work Organization” and “Overall Work Performance.” The value of Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is .529 in this case, which further reveals a positive and moderate relationship between these two.

The p-value for correlation between “Work and Total Life Space” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000, which is less than .01 (or one percent) level of significance; hence H_{07} is rejected, which means that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two. The value of r is .499 in this case, which shows that the relationship between “Work and Total Life Space” and “Overall Work Performance” is positive, and moderate in nature.

The p-value for correlation between “Social Relevance of Work Life” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000, which is less than one percent level of significance, hence H_{08} is **rejected**. Thus, an inference can be drawn that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two. The value of r in this case is .569, which means that “Social Relevance of Work Life” and “Overall Work Performance” are positively related to one another, and the relationship is moderate in nature.

These results reveal that the QWL dimension of “Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities” has the strongest, positive, and statistically significant relationship with “Overall Work Performance,” whereas the dimension of “Work and Total Life Space” has the weakest, positive, and statistically significant relationship with “Overall Work Performance.”

The relationship between “Overall Quality of Work Life” and “Overall Work Performance” was also understood with the help of Pearson correlation. The p-value for correlation between “Overall Quality of Work Life” and “Overall Work Performance” is .000, which is less than one percent level of significance, hence H_{09} is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between these two. The value of r in this case is .711, which implies a strong and positive relationship between “Overall Quality of Work Life” and “Overall Work Performance.”

Hence, an inference can be drawn about the relevance of Quality of Work Life for employees and employers in the present scenario which is characterized by rapid advancements, cut-throat competition, and enormous challenges like VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) as QWL has been found to have a positive,

statistically significant and strong relationship with work performance of the employees. Thus, a good QWL would result in better employee performance, and the organization can benefit from this.

A strongly positive relationship between Overall QWL and Overall Work Performance has been found among HPPCL employees. This result is in consonance with the findings of some studies conducted in past (Shahbazi, et al, 2011; Sheel, 2012; Papi & Nuralizadeh, 2014; Thakur & Sharma, 2018). This result was, however, inconsistent with a previous study (Islam & Siengthai, 2009).

All eight QWL dimensions (adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in the work organization, constitutionalism in the work organization, work and total life space, and social relevance of work life) taken in the present study have been found to have a positive, and either a strong or moderate relationship with the Overall Work Performance. This result is in tune with the results of some studies conducted in the past (Naharuddin & Sadeqi, 2013; Kaighobadi, Esteghlal & Mohebbi, 2014; Papi & Nuralizadeh, 2014; Nayak & Sahoo, 2015; Rai & Tripathi, 2015; Thakur & Sharma, 2018).

All eight of the QWL dimensions taken in the study have also been found to be important for enhancing the overall QWL, and QWL was found to have a positive and strong relationship with the performance of employees, and hence, important for the organization. This was consistent with the findings of some other studies (Geetha & Mani, 2016; Phan & Vo, 2016).

It signifies that the organization must strive to improve the QWL of employees by providing a fair remuneration, favourable work environment, ample opportunities for skill development, opportunities for professional growth, job security, proper work and rest schedules, healthy interpersonal relationships, and safeguarding employee's rights and interests. By doing so, the organization can ensure that its employees have a pleasant and satisfactory experience of working in the organization, and hence, perform better.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

A conclusion can be drawn on the basis of findings of this study that QWL is a very crucial factor for improving the performance of employees. QWL has been found to have a strong and positive relationship with work performance which implies that by enhancing QWL of employees, the

organization can ensure better employee performance. All the eight QWL dimensions taken in the present study have also been found to have either a moderately or a strongly positive relationship with work performance. The dimensions of "safe and healthy working conditions" and "immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities" have been found to be strongly and positively related to work performance.

HPPCL must, therefore, emphasize on enhancing QWL to improve the work performance of employees. This can be done by ensuring that there is employee autonomy, effective performance appraisal mechanism (with proper feedback system), and delegation of authority and responsibility to make the employees feel responsible and to make them realize the importance of their work which gives them a sense of achievement. The physical work environment or working conditions must be conducive to the employees, and care must be taken to ensure the establishment of proper and adequate security equipment. Proper emphasis must be laid on the workload and work schedules of the employees to ascertain that they experience a better QWL. "Adequate and fair compensation," "opportunity for continued growth and security," "social integration in the work organization," "constitutionalism in the work organization," "work and total life space," and "social relevance of work life" have been found to have a moderate and positive relationship with work performance. Therefore, HPPCL can further improve the performance of employees by giving due consideration to these aspects of their work life.

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