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How can we prepare our graduates for the Banking Sector

Dr. R Shanker Narayan, Principal, Edurite College of Management Studies,
Shimoga, Karnataka

Training and its Implications on the Performance of Organizations – A Literature Review

Prof. Shashank M Hiremath, Research Student,, Assistant Professor,
Karnatak Law Society's, Institute of Management Education and Research,
Belgaum, Karnataka

Dr. T Manjunatha, Research Guide, Professor,, Bapuji Institute of Engineering and
Technology, Davangere, Karnataka

MGNREG Scheme in Belgaum District: An appraisal of its performance

Dr.M.M.Munshi, Professor, Dept. of Management Studies and Research,
GIT-MBA, Belgaum

Dr.P.M.Kulkarni, Associate Professor & Head, Dept. of Management Studies and
Research, GIT-MBA, Belgaum

Product Gender Perception and Gender Similarities in Generation Y-A Study

Ravi Kumar Goriparthi, Associate Professor in Alluri Institute of Management
Sciences, Hunter Road, Warangal

Srinivas M, Research Scholar, S.V University

A Study of Quality of Work Life of IT Units in Rural Satara

Dr. Sarang S. Bhole, Associate Professor, Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil Institute of
Management Studies and Research, Varye, Satara – Maharashtra

Anjali M. Jadhav, Research Scholar, Satara – 415 002 Maharashtra

Book Review 'Reinventing India' Authored by Raghunath Mashelkar

Dr.M.M.Munshi, Professor, Dept. of Management Studies and Research,
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A Study of Quality of Work Life of IT Units in Rural Satara

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Abstract

Abstract

Quality of Work Life (QWL) of employees is the degree to which employee's value relationship between other employees working culture and concern for welfare of others. Working conditions do play important role in HR attrition in IT field. IT industry is featured by high employment rate and insecure working environment as well. Present research is an effort to bring afloat satisfaction of employees towards QWL in IT units in rural Satara. The study carried out with the help of 5 samples IT units. Primary data from Executives, Managers and Employees was collected by using structured schedule. Data is analyzed with the help of Weighted Average, Rank and Standard deviation while hypotheses are tested by using Spearman Rank Co-relation technique. Present study found that samples are highly satisfied with balanced role of work in total life space and Social Relevance of Work while dissatisfied with Adequate and fair Compensation as well as Quality Awards. The executives are suffered from work life imbalance while managers and employees in sample units feel that there are limited opportunities for career growth and security. Research paper concludes that there is little difference between QWL of different sample units but overall QWL in IT industry of rural Satara is satisfactory.

Introduction:

Quality of work life (QWL) is a philosophy, a set of principles, which holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution. The elements that are relevant to an individual's quality of work life include the task, physical work environment, social environment within the organization, administrative system and relationship between on and off the job which are common for all types of industries. Now a day's employee gives first priority to the better working environment. IT industry is characterized by higher HR attrition rate, reasons may be different. Destination Satara is not an IT hub, so it is imperative to review QWL programs implemented by IT units in Satara but also the awareness and satisfaction of IT professionals towards their QWL. Present research is an effort to bring afloat the satisfaction of IT professionals towards parameters of QWL in rural Satara.

Review of Literature:

Till time many researchers have studied this concept from different perspectives. For present study researchers attempted contextual review with reference to application of QWL variables, the perceptions of employees dealing in information technology, software development and the like in the developing economic scenario. The main elements of the QWL, such as health and well-being, job security, job satisfaction, competence development, balance between work and non-work life are expected to help human resource practitioners as adult educators to co-design the IT work with humanistic factors (Martinson's and Cheung (2001). It is very important since the employees nowadays seem to value the QWL more than amount of salary they get (Buddhapriya, 2009). There are direct and indirect effect of computerization on employees' health and well-being (Asakura and Fugigaki (1993). The issue becomes very severe especially for IT professionals since computer is the main instrument of their work and their jobs have been associated with repetitive strain as well as problems related to excessive exposure to video display terminals (Ng and Munroka, 1994; Duxbury, Higgins and Johnson, 1999). Continuous changes in work related factors directly or indirectly affected the IT professionals. Therefore, one of the ongoing concerns among the IT industries is to mitigate the effects of changes in work environment on job satisfaction, work performance, reliability, health and comfort. Health and well-being of QWL refer to physical and psychological aspects of an individual in any working environment (Martinsons and Cheung (2001). Work within the high technology and continuously facing uncertainty is potentially more stressful than others (Bagnara, Mariani and Parlangei (2001). Higher job demand of this profession leads to higher strain work environment; hence, it affects employee's health and well-being. The nature of IT professions reflect a similar situation that continuously demanding and monotonous work environment that affects the brains resulting in exhaustion and decreasing in some of IT professionals' cognitive abilities (Iacovides, Fountoulakis and Kaprins (2003). Working environment exposes the IT professionals to high task complexity that possibly leads them to high strain, uncertainty, and lack of proper personal development opportunities as well as a greater imbalance at work with non-work activities (Maimunah, 2008). Routine work, badly designed instruments such as computers and furniture have significantly increased work related disorders (Blatter and Bangers, 2002) such as musculoskeletal problems (Cardosa and Wan Fauziah, 1994). Though the provision of various basic and essential working conditions are

made as compulsory by enacting various acts, still there is a gap in provision of a conducive working environment. Due to bad working environment or conditions employees get frustrated leading to illness, work stress, absenteeism, poor industrial and interpersonal relations, etc. While the existence of better working environment in an organization encourages creativity, reduces anxiety, build a positive attitude and increase job satisfaction which contributes significantly towards improved performance and efficiency of human resource. (Vijaykumar, 2008)

A better understanding of job satisfaction will ensure a sustainable development of IT workforce (Traut, Larsen and Feimen (2000). Poor fit between employee's abilities and demands of their positions leads not only to dissatisfaction and turnover but also to poor physical and mental health (Glenn, 1994). IT professionals subjectively experience stress and dissatisfaction at work (Korunka et al. (1997). The insufficient compensation and poor promotion prospects were key sources of dissatisfaction. The nature of IT related jobs are expected to stimulate growth in skills and knowledge. This is seen as an important aspect of competency development that enhances QWL. (Martinsons and Cheung (2001). Technical skills are very important in IT professionals because they are related to creativity, flexibility and the ability to work as part of a team. Therefore, lack of career progression and professional's development in such a working environment may cause IT professionals to experience poor QWL. (Martinson's and Cheung (2001)

Research Methodology:

Present research is diagnostic in nature, and used inferential approach to collect required data. It aims to evaluate Quality of Work Life present in IT units in rural Satara. Present research is set to test following hypotheses.

H0:1: QWL of IT units in rural Satara is satisfactory.

H0:2: There is no significant difference between QWL of different IT units situated in rural Satara.

Researchers have selected 5 IT units dealing in Software Development and IT related business by using census method since the population of IT units in said geography is very small. Sample employees are also selected by census method. They are stratified in three stratum viz. Executives, Managers, Employees. Primary data has collected with the help of structured schedule to evaluate the criteria of QWL. The parameters imperative for QWL in IT industry has collected using primary sources.

Data is classified and tabulated with the help of MS Excel and analyzed using Weighted Average, Rank method. The statistical package SPSS brought in use. Spearman Rank Co-relation has been used for hypotheses testing.

Data Analysis:

For measuring opinions of employees in sample IT units in rural Satara, 94 closed ended questions were brought in use to assess the status of QWL in sample units. The interviews of employees have taken, to know their opinions about QWL aspects in the IT industry.

Table 1: Sample units wise satisfaction of entire samples towards QWL.8

Sr.	Name of Unit*	Weight	Weight Avg.	Rank
1	A	14.98	1.01	5
2	B	17.62	1.18	4
3	C	18.26	1.22	3
4	D	23.64	1.58	2
5	E	16.49	1.10	1
		S.D. = 3.29	S.D. = 0.22	
		MAX = 23.64	MAX = 1.58	
		MIN = 14.98	MIN = 1.01	

Source : (Compiled by Researcher)

*Name of the unit is coded to hide their identity.

Table 1 reveals satisfaction of executives, managers, employees towards QWL in sample IT units. Unit D stands number one in the Industry with weight 23.64 whereas A stands at the last number i.e. 5 with weight 14.98. There is extreme difference between weightage of satisfaction towards QWL of two units i.e. 23.64 for maximum and 14.98 for minimum with standard deviation 3.29 which shows significant inconsistency in the opinions of samples. It is concluded that the level of QWL in sample organization differs considerably since standard deviation is 3.29.

Table 2: Satisfaction of executives towards QWL in sample units.

Following table highlights Satisfaction of executives towards QWL in sample units (n = 5)

Sr.	Categories	Executives	
		Weighted Avg.	Rank
1	Quality Award	0.30	11
2	Adequate and fair Compensation	0.90	10
3	Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	1.00	8
4	Immediate Opportunity to use and develop human Capability	1.19	3
5	Future Opportunity for continued Growth and Security	1.02	7
6	Social Integration in the Work Organization	1.24	2
7	Constitution in the Work Organization	1.10	5
8	Balanced role of Work in the total Life Space	1.13	4
9	Social Relevance of Work	1.28	1
10	Management Perception	1.03	6
11	Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work	0.91	9
		S.D. = 0.27	
		MAX = 1.28	
		MIN = 0.30	

Source: (Compiled by Researcher)

Table 2 depicts that, opinions of executives on QWL in sample organizations located in rural Satara. Social Relevance of Work has been ranked first by executive respondents from rural companies followed by Social Integration in the Work Organization ranked second whereas Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work, Adequate and fair Compensation and Quality Award are ranked 9, 10, and 11 respectively by executive respondents of rural companies in Satara .

Table 3: Satisfaction of managers towards QWL in sample rural units.

Following table highlights Satisfaction of managers towards QWL in sample units.(n = 5)

Sr.	Categories	Managers	
		Weighted Avg.	Rank
1	Quality Award	0.30	11
2	Adequate and fair Compensation	0.73	10
3	Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	0.89	8
4	Immediate Opportunity to use and develop human Capability	1.04	3
5	Future Opportunity for continued Growth and Security	0.90	7
6	Social Integration in the Work Organization	1.01	4
7	Constitution in the Work Organization	0.98	5
8	Balanced role of Work in the total Life Space	1.10	1
9	Social Relevance of Work	1.05	2
10	Management Perception	0.93	6
11	Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work	0.84	9
		S.D. = 0.22	
		MAX = 1.10	
		MIN = 0.30	

Source : (Compiled by Researcher)

From table 3 it is seen that sample managers are highly satisfied with balanced role of Work in the total Life Space followed by Social Relevance of Work ranked second whereas Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work, Adequate and fair Compensation and Quality Award are ranked 9, 10, and 11 respectively by manager respondents of rural companies in Satara. Immediate Opportunity to use and develop human Capability, Social Integration in the Work Organization and Constitution in the Work Organization has been considered fairly important by manager respondents of companies in Rural Satara. The least standard deviation i.e. 0.22 highlights more consistency in opinions of samples.

Table 4: Satisfaction of employees towards QWL in sample rural Units.

Following table shows Satisfaction of sample employees towards QWL in sample units. (n = 28)

Sr.	Categories	Employees	
		Weighted Avg.	Rank
1	Quality Award	1.90	11
2	Adequate and fair Compensation	3.40	10
3	Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	4.55	6
4	Immediate Opportunity to use and develop human Capability	5.18	2
5	Future Opportunity for continued Growth and Security	3.87	8
6	Social Integration in the Work Organization	4.70	3
7	Constitution in the Work Organization	4.54	7
8	Balanced role of Work in the total Life Space	4.58	5
9	Social Relevance of Work	5.58	1
10	Management Perception	4.65	4
11	Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work	3.58	9
		S.D. = 1.01	
		MAX = 5.58	
		MIN = 1.90	

Source : (Compiled by Researcher)

Table 4 depicts that Social Relevance of Work has been ranked first by sample employees about their satisfaction followed by Immediate Opportunity to use and develop human Capability. While they are not happy with Collective Agreement Signed on Terms of Work, Adequate and fair Compensation and Quality Award are ranked 9, 10, and 11 respectively by employee respondents of rural companies in Satara. Social Integration in the Work Organization, Management Perception and Balanced role of Work in the total Life Space has been considered fairly important by employee respondents of companies in Rural Satara.

Hypotheses Testing:

Present research is diagnostic in nature, and inferential approach is used.

It aims to evaluate Quality of Work Life of IT units present in rural area of Satara District. For the present research following hypotheses are framed.

H0:1: QWL of IT units in rural Satara is satisfactory.

Researchers have tested these hypotheses with the help of Spearman's Rank Co-relation.

H0:1: QWL in software industries is satisfactory, is tested with the help of following tabulation.

Table 5 shows QWL analysis of sample rural units category wise and company wise.

It depicts Weighted Average and ranks corresponding to QWL categories in sample rural units. Apparently it is observed that the categories Social Relevance of Work has been ranked first by 4 of the 5 companies located in rural Satara followed by Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capability by 3 of the 5 companies located in rural Satara. Adequate and Fair Compensation is ranked ten by 3 of the 5 companies and ranked nine by 2 of the 5 companies. Quality Award is ranked eleven by all the respondents from rural Satara. The deviation is found in the weighted averages of sample rural units. From above tabulation it is clear that software units located at rural Satara is good though there is ample scope to improve in QWL.

Hence, the H0: 1 that is QWL of IT units in rural Satara are satisfactory is accepted.

Second hypothesis set to test in this research is:

H0:2: There is no significant difference between QWL of different IT units in rural Satara.

While testing this hypothesis researchers have used Spearman's Rank Co- relation between different sample rural units is calculated.

Table 5: QWL analysis of sample rural units category wise and company wise.

Sr.	Sample Units	A		B		C		D		E	
		Weight Avg.	Rank	Weight Avg.	Rank	Weight Avg.	Rank	Weight Avg.	Rank	Weight Avg.	Rank
1	Quality Award	0.50	11	0.50	11	0.50	11	0.60	11	0.50	11
2	Adequate and Fair Compensation.	0.85	9	0.86	10	1.03	10	1.43	9	0.86	10
3	Safe and Healthy Working Conditions.	1.05	5	1.09	7	1.34	3	1.55	8	1.14	6
4	Immediate Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capability.	1.18	3	1.33	5	1.37	2	1.92	2	1.34	2
5	Future Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security	0.98	6	1.07	9	1.17	8	1.57	7	1.02	8
6	Social Integration in the Work Organization.	0.96	7	1.44	2	1.29	5	2.01	1	1.26	4
7	Constitution In the Work Organization.	1.14	4	1.41	3	1.26	6	1.78	3	1.03	7
8	Balance Role of Work In the Total Life Space.	1.33	2	1.25	6	1.30	4	1.78	3	1.18	5
9	Social Relevance of Work	1.38	1	1.55	1	1.80	1	1.70	6	1.50	1
10	Management Perception	0.88	8	1.40	4	1.25	7	1.73	5	1.30	3
11	Collective Agreement Signed On Terms of Work.	0.84	10	1.08	8	1.12	9	1.27	10	1.01	9
12	Std. Dev.	0.25		0.30		0.31		0.39		0.27	

Source: (Compiled by Researcher)

Table 6: Spearman's Rank Co-relation between sample IT units about satisfaction of QWL.
Spearman's Rank Co-relation between sample IT units in rural Satara towards satisfaction of QWL is shown below for H0:2 hypothesis testing.

	A	B	C	D	E
A	Nil	0.636**	0.891*	0.620**	0.727**
B	0.636**	Nil	0.736*	0.761*	0.845*
C	0.891*	0.736*	Nil	0.638**	0.873*
D	0.620**	0.761*	0.638**	Nil	0.729**
E	0.727**	0.845*	0.873*	0.729**	Nil

Source: (Compiled by Researcher)

Note: * - Spearman's co-relation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)

** - Spearman's co-relation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed)

Table 6 is evident that there is high positive co-relation between the opinions of samples from sample IT units.

Two rural sample units found to have moderate co-relation that is D and A.

It is concluded that there is little difference between QWL of different IT units.

Hence, H0:2 i.e. there is no significant difference between QWL of different IT units situated in rural Satara has not significant difference is accepted. Peculiar aspect is that uniformity is found in the level of QWL amongst rural sample units.

Findings and Suggestions:

Findings:

The sample units of this research are IT organizations and executives, managers and employees working in those organizations. Findings are presented into findings of sample rural organizations.

Findings of Sample Rural Organizations:

1. It has found that, D has good working conditions and carries number one rank amongst sample rural units. C carries rank second.

A carries last rank with total weight of 14.98 which is lowest in the weight range band i.e. 23.64 to 14.98. Variation is found in the level of QWL since the standard deviation of weight is 3.29 (Table 1).

2. Opinions of executives on QWL in sample rural units have been assessed. Executives has rated Social relevance of work, Social integration in the work organization, Immediate opportunity to use and develop human capability, Balanced role of work in the total life space and constitution in the work organization are found rated high. (Table 2)

3. Opinions of managers on QWL in sample rural units are assessed. Balanced role of work in the total life space, Social relevance of work, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capability are rated high. (Table 3)

4. Employees in sample rural units has opined on QWL. Social relevance of work, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capability, Social integration in the work organization is rated high. The factor adequate and fair compensation are rated lowest in scale. The opinions of employees have consistency since standard deviation is 1.01 (Table 4)

5. From the detailed analysis of organizations category wise it has found that sample units in rural area are ranked better in social relevance of work, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capability, and Social integration in the work organization.

Adequate and fair compensation is ranked low and the category 'Quality Award' is found absence. (Table 2)

6. Entire samples in rural organizations have reported the very low consideration to adequate and fair compensation.

7. Sample units in rural area has overlooked the quality certification like ISO 9000 or ISO 9001 or any designated and accepted quality award at national or international level.

Other Findings:

1. It is found that there is positive co-relation in the level of QWL of sample rural organizations.

2. Only two sample rural units found to have moderate co-relation that is D and A (Table 6)

3. Two organizations found to have moderate co-relation those are B and D (Table 6)

Suggestions:

1. Units in rural area have ample scope for the improvement in QWL. The factor like adequate compensation should take care of which has impact on labor turnover, loyalty and commitment. It can be said that units has taken care of motivational factors and overlooked maintenance factors as per Herzberg's two factor theory.

2. Units in IT should go for quality awards like ISO 9000 OS 9000 or any designated awards in IT. This may help them to get them desired positioning in market and also help to launch themselves in international market.

3. Employees should give opportunity for collective agreements. This may help to improve QWL in organization and which may result in overall positive output.

4. Decision makers should bring in use the quantification of work life model to assess prevailing QWL in organization. This is an introspection tool which will convey flaws in present working condition and an opportunity to work on these lacunas in prevailing QWL.

5. Improvement in quality is unending process. The existing model of QWL would be applicable for short period. When the quality of work life parameters would be rated high on this model, new model is going to require which may focus on micro parameters of every category of QWL depicted in this report.

Conclusion:

Improvement in quality is an unending process. There is ample scope for the improvement in QWL for sample IT units in rural Satara. The only one factor which affect HR attrition, employee loyalty and commitment in sample IT units is inadequate compensation, for which management must have to show serious concern. Though there is little difference between QWL of different sample units, overall QWL in IT units of rural Satara is satisfactory.

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