

Original Article

Quality of Work Life: An Overview

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Abstract:

The study is conducted with the objective to know the objectives of the QWL, the factors contributing the growing importance of QWL, Factors Affecting QWL, Advantages and Disadvantages of QWL and Strategies to Improve QWL. The study is an exploratory by nature as it aims reviewing the literature available on the quality of work life. It is concluded that quality of work life is an emerging concept, gained significant importance due to modern day working conditions and shift in the social structure and it is affected different organizational factors and factors related employee's expectations. Quality of work life has significant benefits to both organization and employees and it can be implemented in the organization by adopting suitable strategies that suites the organization.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life (QWL), Scope of QWL, Factors Affecting QWL, Advantages and Disadvantages of QWL and Strategies to Improve QWL.

Introduction:

The modern highly automated business organizations are exposed to high degree of competition in the each and every industry. In order to compete with the huge competitors in the industry, modern organizations are more concentrated on their products and their quality. To produce quality products, organizations need good quality human resource in the organization. In recent days, organizations are facing the challenge of retaining the good quality human resource in the organization. Quality human resource will be retained in the organization if the organizations offer equitable pay, good working environment, career opportunities and development capabilities, proper ways and means to resolve the grievances, social integrity and relevance and offers provisions to balance their personal and professional life and all these elements constitute the quality of work life. The success of any modern business depends to a greater extent on the organizations decision of how it attracts, recruits motivates and retains its quality human resource in the organization. To achieve the organizational goals, organizations needs to the flexible and needs to adopt different strategies to attract, recruit and motivate human resource of the organizations to enjoy their commitment towards the organizational goals by satisfying their individual needs and the organizations success depends to a greater extent on organization environment within which its human resource works for the achieving individual and organizational goals. Hence the success of the organization depends on Quality of Work Life. The term Quality of Work Life refers to the favorable or unfavorable work experience of an employee in the organizational environment. Generally the experience of the employees constitute the different elements like compensation, method, job security, career opportunities, proper ways and means to resolve the grievances, good working conditions and other.

Objectives Of The Study

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To know the objectives of the QWL
2. To know the factors contributing the growing importance of QWL.
3. To know the Factors Affecting QWL,
4. To know the Advantages and Disadvantages of QWL and
5. To know the Strategies to Improve QWL.



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Methodology:

The present study is an exploratory by nature and it aims at reviewing the literature available from different sources like published and unpublished sources. For the present study, literature is reviewed from books, Journals and websites and other reliable sources for the present study entitled “QUALITY OF WORK LIFE: AN OVERVIEW”.

Analysis and Discussion

Objectives of Quality of Work Life

1. To attract and retain the employees with better skills and potentials.
2. To improve working conditions to improve physical and psychological health of employees.
3. To bring down the stress level of the employees.
4. To enhance the productivity through proper balancing of personal life and professional life.
5. To promote job satisfaction among the employees.
6. To build image of the organization with respect to its HR Practices.
7. To utilize the potentiality of employees by providing career opportunities to employees.

Factors Contributing the Growing Importance of Quality of Work Life

The following are the factors contributing the growing importance of QWL in recent days:

1. **Trade unions:** Recent involvement of trade unions in protecting the interest of workers and their constant pressure for fare wages and better working conditions has enhanced the importance for quality of work life.
2. **Better exposure:** The increased awareness about the safe work environment and fare and equitable wage among the modern employees, enhanced the importance for quality of work life.
3. **Career opportunities:** recent day employees are multitasking and they have acquired multiple skills and capabilities which motivate them to take more challenging works. Hence they are always looking for good career opportunities. This enhanced the importance for quality of work life.
4. **Value of employee:** in recent days the value of employees has increased due to legal provisions and recent developments in HR Practices. Employer can not hire and fire the employees as per his wish because of increased importance for human asset in the industry has enhanced the importance for quality of work life.
5. **Legislative framework:** The has initiated many welfare measures to employees in the form of Acts like, Minimum Wage Act, The Payment Of Gratuity Act, Equal Remuneration, Act, The Employees Provided Fund Act And Trade Union Act and other Acts have enhanced the importance for quality of work life.
6. **Greater exposure of rights:** Present day employees are very much aware of their rights and role in the organization, rights and role of trade unions in protecting their interest because the employees are gaining knowledge from media and other educational institutions and enhanced the importance for quality of work life.

Scope of Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life is the multi-dimensional aspect and its scope is:

1. **Compensation:** The compensation for the work should be over and above the minimum standard of life and compensation should be equitable in accordance with the efforts of the employees. So, the organization just has to maintain proper balance between the compensation and efforts of employees.
2. **Health and Safety:** The work environment in the organization should be free from hazards that affect the health and safety of employees. The prime elements of good working environment are reasonable working hours, risk free work, pollution free environment cleanliness and others.
3. **Job security:** The organization should provide job security to its employees. During the employment, employees should not have to think of their future, stability of work and stability of their income.
4. **Job design:** The job design should be in such a way that employees are capable of meeting the needs of the organization and at the same time employees individual needs are satisfied and that makes jobs more interesting. Quality of work life can be improved, if job allows the employees to work in free environment and recognition for the use of the wide range of skills and capabilities of the employees.
5. **Social integration:** The employees should be able to feel a sense of belongingness towards the organization and organizations have to develop the feeling of self esteem among the employees. This includes, elimination of individual differences and discriminations, individualism and encourage employees to build teams and social groups to assist employer.
6. **Social relevance of work:** Work is not a single source of mental and psychological satisfaction among the employees but it also includes social welfare. An organization which largely focuses on social causes will improve the quality of work life.
7. **Scope for career opportunities:** The management of every organization should provide scope for the development their employee’s skills and capabilities by academic and other means. The management should always prefer to use internal human recourse for its future expansion and development.

Factors Affecting Quality of Work Life

The following are the factors which explain the quality of work life in the organization.

- 1. Adequate Compensation and Job Security:** The compensation paid to employees should be in accordance with the employees experience, skills and knowledge that they possess and the performance of the employee. The compensation paid to employees in accordance with the present cost of living. Organizations should offer job security to its employees through fair amount of salary and other allowances and these will improve the QWL of its employees.
- 2. Safe and Healthy Working Conditions:** To enlighten the self interest among the employees most of the organizations provide safe and healthy working conditions to its employees and also to meet the legal requirements and humanitarian requirements.
- 3. Personal and Career Growth Opportunities:** Organizations should offer good number of opportunities to its employees for personal and career development and growth. The organizations should organize proper training and development programmes to enhance the skills and capabilities of employees in order to perform present job in a better way and to make them capable of accepting higher responsibilities of the organization.
- 4. Nature of Job:** If the job allocated to the employees is routine dull and monotonous than it may lead to boredom and decline in the QWL. It may be due to the educational barriers or limited scope of higher jobs. If the nature of job is such that it offers recognition, growth and opportunities for career advancement based on the skills capabilities, knowledge and qualification than it leads to enhance the QWL.
- 5. Social Integration in the Workforce:** The work environment in the organization should provide an opportunity to its employees for preserving their identity by creating freedom from prejudice, interpersonal openness and legalitarianism and upward mobility.
- 6. Constitutionalism in the Work Organization:** Constitutionalism in the organization provides protection to its employees on the matters like privacy, free speech, equitable treatment in the organization and due process. Organizations should take necessary precautionary steps to implement rights policies, rules and regulations in the organization.
- 7. Work and Quality Life:** An employees work should not be strain his / her work life, family life, and social life due to working conditions like over time, inconvenient working hours, transfer, and business travel and so on.
- 8. Social relevance of work life:** The commitment of the organization towards the society can influence an employee value system. The employee's perception towards the organizations social responsibility in its business practices like production, marketing, human resource practices and so on will enhance the self esteem of employees.

Advantages of Quality of Work Life

By the adoption of quality of work life strategies in the organization will offer the following advantages to the organization and its employees:

1. It assists in individual growth of employees.
2. It assists in better job satisfaction among the employees.
3. It assists in better mental and physical health and productivity of employees.
4. It enhances the self esteem of employees.
5. It assists in optimum utilization of potentialities of employees.
6. It reduces the absenteeism, accidents and turnover of employees.
7. It enhances the interpersonal communication in the organization.
8. It offers intrinsically motivated employees to the organization.
9. It assists in production of high quality products at optimum level of output.
10. Optimum utilization of human resource of the society.

Disadvantages of Quality of Work Life

The following are the disadvantages of QWL:

1. It may increase the gap between the management and employees.
2. Organization and employees may resistance to adopt changes in the work environment.
3. It may lead to greater empowerment of trade unions.
4. Financial restrictions of the management may limit the organization to adopt the QWL.

Strategies to Improve Quality of Work Life

Organizations may adopt the following strategies to improve the QWL of employees in the organization:

1. Offer sufficient career development opportunities to employees.
2. Offer flexible working hours to employees.
3. Implement better reward system.
4. Implement job rotation, job enrichment and job enlargement tools to motivate employees.
5. Implement stress management tools in the organization.
6. Adopt employee wellness programmes in the organization.
7. Adopt feedback and reinforcement system.
8. Adopt complaints resolution system.
9. Allow employees to participate in decision making process.



Conclusion:

The present study entitled "QUALITY OF WORK LIFE: AN OVERVIEW" is concluded as quality of work life is an emerging concept it has gained significant importance due to modern day working conditions and shift in the social structure and it is affected different organizational factors and factors related employees expectations. Quality of work life has significant benefits to both organization and employees and it can be implemented in the organization by adopting suitable strategies that suites the organization.

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