

Quality of Work Life of School Teachers

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Abstract:

Quality of work life (QWL) is an important aspect in human resource management. The scope of QWL is so vast that it covers almost all areas of human resource management. The term QWL has been defined and interpreted by various authors differently. Many researchers and authors relate QWL with the feelings of employees on various work aspects. QWL is an employee's index of happiness. Education has paramount importance in development of the nation. Teacher is a key human resource in education system. The quality of education largely depends on the quality of teachers. QWL of a teacher is the amount of satisfaction that a teachers derived through his services at educational institution. Several research studies have found that higher QWL of teachers leads to higher satisfaction, higher motivation, higher commitment and higher performance. Hence study of QWL of school teachers is most essential. The aim of the present paper is to explain the term quality of work life (QWL) in education context, the determinants of QWL of schools teachers and its significance. In the paper several definitions of the QWL have been analysed. For that purposed various earlier studies relating to QWL have been reviewed. Paper is based on the secondary data.

Keywords: quality of work life (QWL), education, school teachers, human resource management, definitions.

Introduction

Education has paramount importance in development of the nation. The quality of human resources in the country is largely depends on the quality of education. Human resources is the sum of knowledge, skills, competencies, qualities, talents that the citizens possesses. Development of any nation largely depends on the quality of human resources in

that country. Education system in the country is primly responsible to create and develop human resources in the country. Education system is a factory of human resources in the country. ‘Good quality education is the foundation of new discoveries, new knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship that trigger growth and prosperity of individual as well as that of a nation’ⁱ.

Teacher is a key aspect in education system. The quality of education largely depends on the quality of teachers. The entire education system revolves around teachers and the students. Teachers are the architectures where and the students are their creation. Teacher is the main force in the education system. ‘The American Commission on Higher Education remarked that the quality of nation depends on the quality of its citizens. The quality of its citizens depends upon the quality of their education. The quality of their education depends to a great extent to a single factor, upon the quality of teachers. It is said that teaching has been the oldest and noblest profession. The destiny of a nation is made in classrooms’ⁱⁱ. The great Indian leader in Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam says ‘teachers are the backbone of any country, the pillar upon which the aspirations of students are reconverted into realities. The teachers must be perpetual seekers of intellectual integrity and universal compassion’ⁱⁱⁱ. Quality of work life (QWL) of a teacher can be defined as “the amount of satisfaction that a teachers derived through his services at educational institution”. It is teacher’s satisfaction level on various work aspects such as economic rewards, working conditions, nature of work and job satisfaction, organisational and interpersonal relations, job security, opportunities for self-development and career growth, constitutionalism in work organisation and social and family life. If a teachers is highly satisfied with these work aspects he is said to have the highest quality of work life and visa-versa. Several research studies found that higher QWL of teachers leads to higher satisfaction, higher motivation, higher commitment and higher performance. Hence an efforts must be made to know QWL of teachers in the country and its improvement. The present paper explain the concept of QWL, the determinants of WL of school teachers and to discuss the importance of QWL of school teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMEN: I am thankful to the Shivaji University, Kolhapur for sanctioning my research project under its Research Initiation Scheme. The present research paper is written based on the study undertaken under Research Initiation Scheme, Shivaji University Kolhapur.

Objectives

The objectives of the present paper are

1. To explain the concept of Quality of Work Life (QWL)
2. To explain the QWL of school teachers and its determinants.
3. To discuss importance of QWL of school teachers.

Research Methodology

The present research paper is based on the secondary data. The data have been collected from various books, journals, research articles and web-sites form internet. The inferences are based on the analysis of the secondary data.

Quality of Work Life (QWL)

The term “Quality of Work Life” appeared in research journal only in 1970s. Since then it is been area of research. The scope of QWL is so vast that it covers almost all areas of human resource management. According to Lippit (1977)^{iv} as “Quality of Work Life is the degree to which work provides an opportunity for an individual to satisfy a wide variety of personal need to survive with some security, to interact with others, to have a sense of personal usefulness, to be recognized for achievements and to have an opportunity to improve one’s skills and knowledge” Lippit relate quality of work life to the needs of an individual. According to him if an employee is able to fulfil his most of the personal needs through his work experiences, his is said to have higher quality of work life.

Quality of work life is indeed the manifestation of employee’ feelings of satisfaction about all dimensions of work including economic rewards, security, working conditions, organisational culture and climate and co-worker relationship (Zahoor 2016)^v. In this definition the author says quality of work life is concerned with the satisfactory feeling of the employee in respect of various work aspects.

Skrovan, D.A. (1980) ^{vi} mentioned that The American Society for Training and Development appointed a task force on the QWL in 1979. The task force defined quality of work life as, “a process of work organizations which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed toward meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organization and improved quality life at work for employees”. According to this definition, quality of work life is a process of work organization designed to enhance the effectiveness of an organization and improve the quality of work life of its employees.

Richard Walton (1979)^{vii} made a significant contribution in the development of concept Quality of Work Life in more meaningful manner. He has developed method of measuring QWL by eight criteria. According to him “quality of work life is the work culture that serves as the corner stone”. Hence work culture of the organisation should be recognised and improved to improve QWL of the organisation.

According to Robert H. Guest (1979)^{viii} “Quality of Work Life is a generic phrase that covers a person’s feeling about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relations and its intrinsic meaning in person’s life,” and “It is a process by which an organization attempts to unlock the creative potential of its people by involving them in decisions, affecting their work lives”. In this definition Robert Guest talk about person’s opinion and feeling regarding every dimension of work. He says by improving QWL an organisation can utilise creative potential

of its employees up to maximum extent. He says QWL is a process of improving employees' opinion regarding various work aspect.

Cohel and Rosenthal(1980)^{ix} describe quality of work life as, “an internally designed effort to bring about increased labour management co-operation to jointly solve the problems of improving organisational performance and employee satisfaction” Thus they focussed on employees participation in solving organisational problem to improve QWL.

According to Mansell and Rankin (1983)^x “Quality of working life is the concrete expression of a particular set of beliefs and values- about people, about organisations and, ultimately about society”.

Goodman (1985)^{xi} observes that, “in recent years the term quality of work life has been used to refer to employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction with over-all condition of work”. Thus according to this writer quality of work life can be higher when employees are satisfied with work.

House and Cummings (1985)^{xii} defined the quality of work life as “the consistency between individuals' fulfilment and job satisfaction with organisational proficiency”. These writers have given importance to both individual satisfaction and organisational proficiency while defining quality of work life.

In the development process, the term quality of work life has acquired many different definitions creating confusion. Nadler and Lawler (1983)^{xiii} brought out this confusion as:-

First Definition	1969-72	QWL = Variable
Second Definition	1965-75	QWL = Approach
Third Definition	1972-75	QWL = Methods
Fourth Definition	1975-80	QWL = Movement
Fifth Definition	1979-82	QWL = Everything

In 1983, Nadler and Lawler perceived that after the phase of 1979-82 when quality of work life means everything, it would lose its impact and mean nothing. But it is observed that instead of losing importance, quality of work life is gaining momentum day by day.

Rao VSP (2002)^{xiv} QWL refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of job environment for people. It also refers to the level of satisfaction, motivation, involvement and commitment of individuals with respect to their lives at work”.

Misra Shaili (2013)^{xv} in her research article entitled ‘Quality of Working Life: A key to Humane Working’ reviewed thoroughly the concept and the literature on quality of work

life. The author expressed her views as present industrial world is full of materialistic race. To cope up with cut throat competition of globalization, Indian organizations have to upgrade themselves, which is possible through improvement of quality of work life. QWL actions should be implemented by neutralizing its ill effects and after eradicating their drawbacks. Quality of Working Life has always been important in studying organizational behaviour. Quality of working life is the most substantial work related behavioural phenomenon, which may lead any organization to the path of success.

From the above discussion it can be said that the term QWL has been defined and interpreted by various authors differently. Therefore the concept QWL continue to be vague. However the minute scrutiny of the above definition, it can be said that the most of the author relate the QWL with the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employees towards various work aspects like economic rewards, working conditions, organisational and interpersonal relations, opportunity for growth etc. If the employees are highly satisfied with these work aspects, they are said to have better QWL.

QWL of School Teachers and Its Determinants

Quality of work life of a teacher can be defined as “the amount of satisfaction that a teachers derived through his services at educational institution”. It is teacher’s satisfaction level on various work aspects including economic rewards, working conditions, nature of work and job satisfaction, organisational and interpersonal relations, job security, opportunities for self-development and career growth, constitutionalism in work organisation and social and family life. If a teachers is highly satisfied with these work aspects he is said to have the highest quality of work life and visa-versa. Therefor the work aspects are the key determinants of quality of work life of a teacher. An improvement in these work aspects may lead to improvement in quality of work life of teachers. The key determinants of QWL of school teachers are enlisted as above

1. Salary and Compensation

Like other employees economic rewards is an important satisfying element for a teacher. Teachers get monthly salary for his/her services in educational institutions. In India the schools broadly falls into two main categories such as grantable schools and non-grantable schools. These schools are owned and management by either government or private bodies. Salary of teachers working in grantable schools are paid by Govt. and that of non-grantable schools are paid by their respective management. The compensation or pay policy of teachers mainly includes monthly basic salary, dearness allowances, fringe benefits like

house rent allowances, travelling allowances, medical reimbursements, pension, provident fund, remuneration for examination work life supervision, question paper setting, assessment of answer book etc. In India the salaries of government employees and teaching staff working in granted educational institutions are revised by the government according to the recommendations of pay commission for every 10 years. The compensation policy of the non-grantable teacher is slight different from those of grantable teachers. There is no formal structure of the pay policy for non-grantable teachers and there found so many variation of non-grantable teacher's salary. Teachers opinions with respect to their affect their quality of work life.

2. Working Conditions

Educational industry came under the service sector. The main object of education is to equip students with knowledge, skills, competencies, and values so that these students can offer their best services in other industries. The working conditions and infrastructure requirement in educational institutes is different from other manufacturing industries. The working condition aspects relating to the school teachers comprises of the academic infrastructure relating to teaching including no of classrooms, virtual classrooms, adequate space and arrangements of stage, board, benches etc. in classrooms, the general academic infrastructure including total space, built up area, staff rooms, cubicles, head master/principal cabin, quarters for staff, reading rooms for faculty and students, hostel, seminar hall, exam room etc. library, availability of advanced teaching aids the health and safety measures, the sanitary facilities, safe and healthy drinking water, availability of good food nearby institution or in canteen.

3. Nature of Work

Work is a major aspect of life that it influences once life style tremendously. School teachers are expected to teach in the classroom, guide the students, motivates them for study, imbibe moral values and prepare them for higher education. Apart from teaching, teachers are also expected to do some administrative and clerical jobs too. Teachers organises various programmes in the schools such as tree plantation, various competitions, cultural programmes, study tours, sports etc. In addition to this state government also allot some work relating to the govt. administration to the teachers in primary, secondary and higher secondary schools. These includes election duties, census, awareness programmes etc. The teachers' opinion on these work affects their QWL.

4 Interpersonal and Organizational Relations

An education institute is an organisation made of employees and students. The employees of educational institutes are head master, teachers, office staff and sub-ordinate staff. Apart from these management members are an important part of an educational institute. During the service tenure teachers formally and informally make communication with every one of them. Communication is the life-blood of an organisation and an education institution is not an exception to this. The communication in the education institution creates interpersonal and organisational relations which affect the quality of work life of teachers. The factors of organisational and interpersonal relations include relations of teachers among colleague teachers, teachers relations with non-teaching staff, teachers relations with head master, teachers relation with management members and teachers relations with their students.

5. Job Security

Job security assures employee to remain in the employment up to the age of retirement according to terms and conditions of the employment. It is an assurance or confidence given to the employees to keep their current job. Higher the job security lowers the chances of losing the job for the employees. Through job security, management can satisfy employee's basic need of security. Several aspects such as Govt. policy, rules and regulations, changing environment of education, privatisation, students' strength, competition with private schools, English medium schools and international schools affect the job security of school teachers and that further affects their quality of work life.

6. Opportunity for Self Development and Career Growth

After satisfaction of basic needs like pay and physical condition, an employee is interested to use and develop his capacity for betterment of organisation and society. Therefore employees expect that the organisation should make available a platform to them so they can show their talent, skills and capabilities. They also expect that the organisation should give them opportunity to develop further. The self-development and career growth is utmost important for teachers because the primary function of teacher is to impart latest knowledge to the students. Thus the skills of imparting knowledge, updated knowledge, and personality of a teacher have direct impact on the performance. Therefore proper arrangements should be made in the institution so that teachers are encouraged to develop their capacities. The opportunity for self-development and career growth can be

analyse with availability of adequate tools like internet facility, journals, books etc. for self-development, opportunities for promotion and continued growth, availability and usefulness of training programme, scope for creativity and new ideas, system of performance appraisal, available opportunities for participation in management.

7. Constitutionalism in the Work Organisation

Constitutionalism in the work organisation is related with grievance system, rules and regulation, treatment given to the employees in the organisation, freedom of expressions of thoughts, respect to individual characteristics and particulars etc. It is concerned how much organisation respect to employee. Constitutionalism in work organisation may not give motivation to employees to work hard but lack of constitutionalism may lead to dissatisfaction on part of employees. Therefore it is considered as hygiene factor. The constitutionalism in the work organisation is an important part of work life of teachers.

8. Social & Family Life

Social and family life of teacher effect on the quality of work life of a teacher. If teacher is satisfied in his family life and social life, he can work satisfactory and without any stress. It motivates teachers to work to their best. Teaching profession is considered as a noble profession. There are so many opportunities in this profession to serve for social development along with working for fulfilling family needs and organisational goals. Teachers with his service can change the lives of masses. He can imbibe moral qualities, good characters and lots of other leadership qualities in the minds of students who are the future of the country.

Importance of School Teachers QWL

Education is of paramount importance in the development and well-being of the nation. All the discoveries of the world is the result of education and research. The quality of overall education is mostly depends on the quality of primary, secondary and higher education. Students starts their education with the primary education i.e. first standard up to the fourth standard. Here the attitude, approaches, interest and thoughts among the students regarding education is being cultivated. The basic foundation of the study have been

developed in the secondary and higher secondary school education. Therefore the overall quality of education and the quality of students is much more dependent on quality of education of primary, secondary and higher secondary education.

Teacher is backbone and the brain of the education system. Almost all factors and quality parameters of education revolves around the teacher. If teachers are satisfied and competent they can pass their knowledge, skills, competencies and values to their students. And hence the development of the teacher is a key to improve the quality of education and quality of the students. By improving QWL of teachers, we can improve quality of teachers. QWL is a measure of employees' satisfaction with regards to various work aspects. The concept quality of work life is most important in education because the quality of work life of teachers have wide and direct impact on the quality of life students.

Several past research studies indicate the significant role of QWL in education. Among these Dr. O.P. Singh and Sandeep Kumar Singh (2015) found that 'quality of work life is an important issue from the teacher's perspectives as it affects the teacher's job satisfaction level, commitment, engagement, performance, work life balance, organizational commitment and etc'^{xvi}. Dr.K.Chelladurai and Dr. N.Raman (2014) found out that 'the Quality of Work Life has a direct impact on Job Satisfaction of the faculty members of higher educational institutions. Improved work environment provides Quality of Work Life; improved Quality of Work Life will provide Job Satisfaction'^{xvii}. According to Reen and Jayan (2012) QWL not only contributes to greater job satisfaction but also support improvement in productivity, capability and overall effectiveness of an organisation. The well-being of the employees and a higher level of QWL among them are paramount for growth and development of an organisation.^{xviii}

Quality of the education depends on the quality of the teachers. With an efforts to develop teachers, it is also important to attract the talents and retain them in the education. QWL is an employee's index of happiness. Higher QWL in certain organisation indicates that the employees in that organisation is happier. Hence it attracts others to make their career in such organisation. Further employees in such organisation may not ready to leave. It motivates them to work at their best in their only. In this regards Sushil S. (2013) found higher level of QWL will help an organisation retain and attract employees^{xix}. Hence it can be said that higher QWL of teachers will certainly help to attract talented people in the field of education and to retain them. It reduces the employee turnover.

From the above discussion it can be said that Higher QWL leads to higher motivation, higher job satisfaction, higher commitment, higher engagement, better performance, better work life balance and higher level of organisational commitment of the teachers. Higher quality of work life means lesser employees turnover ratio. Higher QWL not only motivates to the employees for better performance but also attracts talents in such organisation to make their career. As education is the most important aspects of the nation which have influence over almost every other sector of the nation, the importance of QWL of teachers is further deepened.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion it is concluded that the scope of QWL is so vast that it covers almost all areas of human resource management. QWL has been defined and interpreted by various authors differently. Therefore the concept QWL continue to be vague. However the minute scrutiny of the above definition, it can be said that the most of the authors relate the QWL with the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employees towards various work aspects. If the employees are highly satisfied with these work aspects, they are said to have better QWL. QWL of a teacher is the amount of satisfaction that a teachers derived through his services at educational institution. It is teacher's satisfaction level on various work aspects relating to teachers service. If a teachers are highly satisfied with these work aspects he is said to have the highest quality of work life and visa-versa. School teachers QWL determinants are salary and compensation, working conditions, nature of work, job security, organisational and interpersonal relations, opportunities for self-development and career growth, constitutionalism in the work organisation and social and family life. Several past research studies indicate the significant role of QWL in education. Higher QWL leads to higher motivation, higher job satisfaction, higher commitment, higher engagement, better performance, better work life balance and higher level of organisational commitment of the teachers.

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