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# EFFECTIVENESS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS –A STUDY

DR. MUNIVENKATAPPA
ASST. PROFESSOR
GOVERNMENT FIRST GRADE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
K.R.PET, MANDYA DISTRICT

RAMANA REDDY. B
ASST.PROFESSOR IN COMMERCE
GOVT. FIRST GRADE COLLEGE
ANEKAL, BANGALORE DISTRICT

#### **ABSTRACT**

Public Sector Units (PSUs) in India are either wholly or substantially owned by Government. These companies are operating in a highly complex and competitive environment. On one hand, these organizations have to compete with both local companies and MNCs to retain the market share or leadership, and on the other hand it is regulated and controlled by Government in matters such as fixation of remuneration, investments, expansions and other major decisions. Managing business in such a complex environment requires competent, effective and loyal workforce to run the organization profitably and create value to the stakeholders. Some organizations support their people to help them to balance the work-life because the benefits of QWL initiative in an organization go to both employees and employers. The present study examines existing policies and practices that influence the development of work-life balance that are excellent for people as well as for the organization in Bangalore based Govt. Public Sector Organizations in the manufacturing segment and which are serving the society successfully for last few decades.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Quality of Work Life, Policies, Public Sector Units.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

ife at work is an integral part of total life space. Quality of Work Life (QWL) is therefore conceptualized as a sub-set of the quality of life, which is all-inclusive notion of life and living conditions. QWL is the quality of the content of relationship between human beings and their work (http:www.highbeam.com/doc/igi-189653414.html). The QWL may have different connotations to different persons and hence the factors contributing to QWL are also varied. Thus the concept of QWL is broad and diverse. There are several strands of thought which have been active in the continuous process of humanizing work like workplace environment, wage-work Life at work is an integral part of total life space. Quality of Work Life (QWL) is therefore conceptualized as a sub-set of the quality of life, which is all-inclusive notion of life and living bargain, safety and security, protection and extension of human rights in the society, protection against the exercise of arbitrary authority by the employer, need for meaningful and satisfying work, participation in the decisions that affect work situation (http://www.jstor.org/pss/4375055). As the concept of working life is complex and consists of different components, some authors like Walton of the view that these components of working life are interrelated and should be seen as constituting an integrated whole rather than as separate and discrete. Walton proposes eight major conceptual categories which provide a framework for analysis of the salient features together that make up the quality of work life. These are; i) Adequate and fair compensation ii) Safe and healthy working condition iii) Immediate opportunity to develop human capacities iv) Opportunity for continued growth and security v) Social integration in the organization vi) A proper balance between work and total life space vii) Social relevance of work life viii) Constitutionalism in the work area.

Based on the above integrated approach of Walton, the study examines the QWL policies and practices to comprehend and analyze its effectiveness and outcome on the organizational performance in selected PSUs. These Public enterprises are bodies with corporate form set up and wholly or substantially owned by the Government, for the purpose of undertaking activities of an industrial, manufacturing, trading or allied nature (including the provision of not merely goods but also economic services) on commercial lines (Ramaswamy, 1991). The rationale of public investment and the role of public enterprises as perceived include achieving self-sufficiency in the manufacture of the plant and equipment needed for other industries need for accelerating the rate of growth, speeding up industrialization, ensuring equitable distribution, and so on. The selected PSU organizations are consistently performing well over the last few decades in spite of social, economic, technological, political, and market changes, especially after liberalization and globalization. Also, by and large, these organizations are able to retain loyal and competent employees who become the most important resource in the organization and capable of making valuable contribution. These Successful organizations support and provide facilities to their employees to facilitate them to balance the work-life. This is because the benefits of QWL initiative in an organization go to both employees and employers. Employees trust that with QWL initiative they feel safe, relatively satisfied, and able to progress in their career. QWL are equally beneficial to the employers, because it positively nurtures a more flexible, loyal, motivated workforce and better Employee relations. It is one of the essential components in determining the organizational competitiveness. Today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives. As a result, organizations are coming up with new and innovative policies

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

An appraisal of literature on the theme shows that very few studies have been undertaken concerning to effectiveness of QWL policies and practices in the PSUs and its impact. A review of existing literature on the subject matter shows that in India a chain of experiments and projects concerning to QWL started after a workshop was organized by Fred Emery, for senior managers and union leaders in 1973. The first experiment was done in Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited and later in Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd, both were PSUs. These were made by National Labour Institute, New Delhi. National Productivity Council initiated experimental projects in other PSUs like Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd, Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., and other selected organizations. These experiments were reviewed by Kanawaty and others (1981). They identified factors which facilitate or impede the introduction of job and work place redesign (dspace.vidyanidhi.org.in:8080/dspace/bitstream/.../MAU-1994-076-2.pdf). The National Productivity Council conducted a survey in 1990, concerning QWL practices in Indian Industry covering 47 organizations. The study examines the QWL policies and practices which are in vogue and aid in promoting better QWL of employees, harmony, subsistence of competent workforce and progressive growth of the organization performance over decades.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Work is an integral part of our everyday life. It does influence the overall quality of our life. A happy and healthy employee will give better turnover, make good decisions, and positively contribute to the organizational goal. An assured good quality of work life will not only attract young and new talent but also retain an

existing experienced talent. There are several factors that influence and decide the Quality of Work Life like work environment, nature of job, growth and development, career prospects, opportunities, people, safety, rewards, meaningful and autonomy in the job, and others. How effectively these issues are addressed through policies and practices by an organization determine the degree of QWL of people. Higher the degree of QWL implies more loyal, flexible and motivated workforce which is essential in determining the organizational competitiveness and success.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the study are

- 1) To identify the policies and practices concerning to QWL.
- 2) To study its effectiveness on quality of work life and organizational performance.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

Sample Size - The present study is conducted in selected Govt. PSUs located at Bangalore. These are basically manufacturing units spread across different verticals. The data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. The total 65 number of respondents from different PSUs are randomly selected. All are workers.

Measuring Instrument-It contains 52 questions and the scale includes Walton's eight major conceptual factors of QWL. A higher score on the QWL scale indicates "better Quality of Working Life". The policies & practices related to QWL will be studied under the Walton's eight major conceptual areas as given below.

#### Measuring Scales are Adequate and fair compensation

The typical impetus to work is to earn a living. Therefore, satisfaction one derives through income from the work depends upon the fulfillment of financial needs adequately by pay or compensation. Therefore QWL is affected by income from the work. Policies that is studied here is - Wage policy.

#### Safe and healthy working condition

Policies and procedures concerning to safety, working environment conditions and welfare measures to promote good employee health and safety are focused. Policies studied under this factor are – Health and Safety policy, Welfare measures.

#### Immediate opportunity to develop human capacities

Focuses on how an organization enables an employee to use and develop skills, opportunity to participate in planning one's task and decision making. Policies that is studied here is – Work policy.

#### Opportunity for continued growth and security

This shows whether an organization provides an opportunity for creativity, growth, personality development, and of work security.

#### Social integration in the organization

This covers on the nature of personal relationships and sense of community in work organization.

#### Constitutionalism in the work area

The key aspects here are whether organization takes care for the welfare of all, provide equitable treatment, privacy, and others.

#### Work and total life space

An individual's work experience can have positive or negative effects on other spheres of life. This covers areas such as social and individual requirements are considered, whether the job affect the life, and determines the balanced role of work in life.

#### The Social relevance of work life

The concept raises the social relevance of both organizations to the society and to the individual.

#### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### TABLE 1: ADEQUATE INCOME AND FAIR COMPENSATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales  | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Are you satisfied with your Income from the work                        | 47(72)           | 18(28)          |
| 2     | Are your financial needs fulfilled adequately by your pay?              | 45(69)           | 20(31)          |
| 3     | Would you continue to be in the present job regardless of pay received? | 52(80)           | 13(20)          |
| 4     | Do you feel that you are over compensated in your job?                  | 23(35)           | 42(65)          |

Above table shows that 72 percent of the workers are satisfied with the income which they get from the work. Income is related to the financial security of the job. Economic needs are the basic needs in the era of the financial capitalism. 69% of the workers feel that they are adequately paid by the organization. 80% of them are ready to continue to be in present job regardless of pay. 35%of the workers opinions that, they are over compensated and65%are of the opinion that they are properly compensated.

It is very interesting to note that, in PSU s workers are satisfied with their income from the job and other financial and compensatory benefits. Regardless of their income they want to continue with the same job, it means they are not worried about their income but they need job security. The job security is well assured in public sector. The quality of work life of workers in PSUs determined to large extent by the job security factor than the income.

TABLE 2: SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKING CONDITION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales  | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Do you think that members in this organization are so occupied with their duties that they can hardly | 14(21)           | 51(79)          |
|       | spare time for their co-workers?  |                  |                 |
| 2     | Does the working condition have risk of illness and injury?   | 4(6))            | 61(94)          |
| 3     | Is your organization overcrowded and dirty?   | 2(3)             | 63(97)          |
| 4     | Do you feel that your working conditions are dehumanized?   | 0(0)             | 65(100)         |
| 5     | Is the noise and illumination of working place is irritating?   | 2(3)             | 63(97)          |

From the above table it can be perceived that only 21% of the workers have revealed that the members in the organization are so occupied with their duties and spend little time with their co workers but 79% of the workers are not compliance with this opinion. They accept that with their duties they also care for co workers, share pain and pleasure. 100% respondents accept that the working conditions are so humanized, and 97% are of the opinion that the working place is not irritating and no noise and illumination.

From the above data in the public sector it can be identified that safe and healthy working condition measures are properly taken care off. Safety and healthy policy has improved the quality of work life of the workers in public sector.

TABLE 3: OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTINUED GROWTH AND SECURITY OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| TABLE 3: OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTINUED GROWTH AND SECURITY OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=05 |   |              |              |  |  |
|---|---|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| Sl.No   | QWL Scales  | Yes          | No           |  |  |
|   |   | (Percentage) | (Percentage) |  |  |
| 1   | Does your work involve corporate planning, research and development?  | 43(66)       | 22(44)       |  |  |
| 2   | Is your work too challenging and trying the limit your ability?   | 7(11)        | 58(89)       |  |  |
| 3   | Are there any facilities and opportunity for individual creative work in the organization?                        | 60(92)       | 5(8)         |  |  |
| 4   | Do you think that you could use newly acquired knowledge for further work assignment?                             | 55(85)       | 10(15)       |  |  |
| 5   | Is your work group based by which your own achievements are not given importance?                                 | 6(9)         | 59(91)       |  |  |
| 6   | Do you get opportunities to improve your job?   | 64(98)       | 1(2)         |  |  |
| 7   | Does the information passed from one person to another person in this organization deliberately made inaccurate?. | 2(3)         | 63(97)       |  |  |

From the above table, it is shown as 66% of respondents feel that their work involves corporate planning research and development, where as 44% have neglected this. 89% of respondents have found that their work is not challenging and it do not limit their ability.92% have accepted that they have facilities and opportunities for their individual creative work in the organization and 85% of them think, they could use newly acquired knowledge for further work assignment.91% of the selected workers of the opinion that there individual achievements also properly recognized and importance is given in their work group and also 98% of them accept that they have an opportunity to improve their job too. 97% of the respondents feel that information passed from one person to another in the organization is accurate and they are well informed of the organization.

From the above analysis it is inferred that the workers in the public sector are satisfied with opportunities for their continued growth and for the improvement of their individual abilities. But it is very important to note that slightly less than 50% of the respondents are not satisfied with corporate planning, research and development in their work. it calls for further concentration on this issue in public sector.

TABLE 4: IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP HUMAN CAPACITIES OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales   | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Does the information passed from one person to another person in this organization deliberately made       | 2(3)             | 63(97)          |
|       | inaccurate?  |                  |                 |
| 2     | Do you agree that almost everyone here knows - who is working under whom?                                  | 59(91)           | 6(9)            |
| 3     | Are your ideas to bring new changes in the organization appreciated?                                       | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |
| 4     | Do you get an opportunities to participate in technical planning of your work?                             | 56(86)           | 9(14)           |
| 5     | Do you get adequate information about what is going on in other departments and units in the organization? | 51(78)           | 14(22)          |
| 6     | Do you have freedom of taking decision for your job and implement them?                                    | 55(85)           | 10(15)          |
| 7     | Does your job provide with meaningful information about total work process and results?                    | 63(97)           | 2(3)            |
| 8     | Is your job characterized by unitary and meaningful results?   | 61(94)           | 4(6)            |
| 9     | Does the organization facilitates the self-improvement for members?  | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |
| 10    | Do you get correct information about your work, duties, etc.?  | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |
| 11    | Do you feel isolation from your organization in terms of total tasks?                                      | 1(2)             | 64(98)          |

From this table 97% of the respondents accept, the information passed from one person to another in the organization is not deliberately made inaccurate. 91% of them know the hierarchy in the organization and who is working under whom 100% respondents accept that there is appreciation of their ideas to bring new changes in the organization. 86% agree, they get opportunities to participate in technical planning of their work.78% feel that they get adequate information about other departments and units of the organization. Among respondents, 85% say they have freedom of taking decision in their job and implement them.97% of them accept, their jobs provide with meaningful information about total work process and results.94% of them also accepted that their job is characterized by unitary and meaning full results. 100% of them feel organization provides the facilities for the self improvement of the workers, and they have correct information about their work results etc. 98% feel that they are not isolated from their organization in terms of total tasks.

It is pointed out that highest numbers of respondents are satisfied with the immediate opportunities to develop human capacities. They have best opportunities, to grow individually, for individual recognition, to participate in work plan and have access for complete information of their work and organization. Thus public sectors are more transperant. Transparncy in the organization and opportunities to develop human capacities inculcate the quality of work life of the workers.

TABLE 5: SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN THE WORK ORGANIZATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTSN=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales  | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Does the all members of the work organization have the sense of one community?  | 64(98)           | 1(2)            |
| 2     | Do you identify yourself as a member of the organization on the basis of skill and potentialities without regard of race, sex, age, etc.? | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |
| 3     | "Working in group" is no problem here. Do you agree with this statement?  | 59(90)           | 6(10)           |
| 4     | Are the people in higher levels aware of the problems?  | 53(81)           | 12(19)          |
| 5     | Do the members of different levels work as a member of team?  | 57(88)           | 8(12)           |
| 6     | Do you prefer to accomplish work individually than in the team?   | 6(9)             | 59(91)          |
| 7     | Do you think that member of senior staff pay attention to grievances of the junior staff?   | 55(85)           | 10(15)          |
| 8     | Are your views taken into account in resolving working problems?  | 53(81)           | 12(19)          |
| 9     | Do you co-operate with your co-workers.   | 57(88)           | 8(12)           |
| 10    | Do you think inter-group relations of the organization are satisfactory?  | 60(92)           | 5(8)            |
| 11    | Does the organization encourage reciprocal help?  | 63(97)           | 2(3)            |

In this table 98% of the respondents in organization feel sense of one community. 100% accepts that they are identified as members of the organization on the basis of skill and potentialities with out regard of race caste, sex, etc. 90% of respondents accept working in group concept.81% of them feel, the people in higher levels are aware of the problems.88% of respondents agree that the members of the different levels of work as members of a team. 91% of them do not prefer to accomplish work individually than in the team.85% are happy that members of the senior staff pay attention to grievances of the junior staff.81% of respondents have said that their views are taken into account in resolving working problems.88% of them agree they co-operate with their co workers.92% of the respondents feel satisfactory with respect to their inter group relations and 97% of them say organization encourage reciprocal help.

From the above responses it can be concluded that in public sector the maximum workers feel and express that they enjoy equal treatment, group work spirit, opportunity for individual skill and abilities, mutual co-ordination, help and care, "top to bottom" and "bottom to top" approach in the work coordination etc. The social integration and harmoniousness in the organization provides more work satisfaction. It is good condition to be fulfilled in all organizations in private sector also. to bring about a good quality of work life and resolve to maintain better industrial relations.

#### TABLE 6: CONSTITUTIONALISM IN THE WORK ORGANIZATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales   | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Does the organization take care of welfare of persons of all ages?                             | 59(90)           | 6(10)           |
| 2     | Do you receive equal treatment in all matters like employee compensation, job, security, etc.? | 55(85)           | 10(15)          |
| 3     | Does your organization believe that there is "one best way for everyone".?                     | 4(6)             | 61(94)          |

From the above table it is revealed that 90% of the respondents are satisfactory with the organizations care for welfare of persons of all ages. 85% of them say, they receive equal treatment all matters like employee compensation job security etc. 94% of them do not accept that the organization believe that there is one best way for every one because every individuals problems and grievances are not similar with that of another.

From this analysis it is proved that constitutionalism in the work organization provides an opportunity to enjoy equality welfare etc. such treatment in public sector in accordance with the constitutional provisons, which are properly implemented. Such constitutional rights of workers extend quality of work life in public sector.

TABLE 7: WORK AND TOTAL LIFE SPACE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales   | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Does your job satisfying your needs in general on the job?                 | 51(78)           | 14(22)          |
| 2     | Do you neglect your health due to your job?                                | 4(6)             | 61(94)          |
| 3     | Are your social and individual requirements neglected in the organization? | 3(5)             | 62(95)          |
|       | Does the energy and time spent on the job affect your life adversely?      | 0(0)             | 65(100)         |

From the above table 78% of respondents agree that their jobs satisfy their needs in general on job. 94% of them do not agree that they neglect their health due to their job.95% of them do not agree that their social and individual requirements neglected in the organization and 100% respondents do not accept that the energy and time spent on the job effect their life adversely.

From the above analysis it can be inferred that, the work and total life space of the workers in public sector organizations are very good. Only a negligible percentage of the respondents do not agree with this. They enjoy more job satisfaction, good health and life. They would not feel monotonous on job.

TABLE 8: THE SOCIAL RELEVANCE OF WORKING LIFE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS N=65

| Sl.No | QWL Scales   | Yes (Percentage) | No (Percentage) |
|-------|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 1     | Does your organization function as a socially responsible unit?              | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |
| 2     | Do you think that your job lowers your social prestige?                      | 4(6)             | 61(94)          |
| 3     | Does your job have improved social security scheme?                          | 60(92)           | 5(8)            |
| 4     | Do you feel that organization is too heavily production oriented?            | 55(85)           | 10(10)          |
| 5     | Does your work life match the social life you lead?                          | 58(89)           | 7(11)           |
| 6     | Is your organization aware of methods of prevention of industrial pollution? | 65(100)          | 0(0)            |

From the above table it is shown that 100% of respondents agree that organization function as a socially responsible unit. 94% of the total respondents disagree that their job lowers their social prestige. 92% of them say their jobs have improved social security scheme. Among total respondents 85% have felt that their work life match the social life they lead. and 100% of them agree that their organization aware of methods of preventing of industrial pollution.

From the above table it is very clear that the public sector organization has good social relevance by having social responsibilities taking good social security measures, controlling pollution, upholding workers social life and their social prestige, and ultimately bringing out more production. The social relevance of working life is also taken into account to measure quality of work life. If the social relevance of work life is very high the quality of work life also more and viseversa.

#### **FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS**

- 1. It is very interesting to note that, in PSU s workers are satisfied with their income from the job and other financial and compensatory benefits. Regardless of their income they want to continue with the same job, it means they are not worried about their income but they need job security. The job security is well assured in public sector. The quality of work life of workers in PSUs determined to large extent by the job security factor than the income
- 2. From this study it can be identified that safe and healthy working condition measures are properly taken care off. Safety and health policy has improved the quality of work life of the workers in public sector.
- 3. From the above analysis it is inferred that the workers in the public sector are satisfied with opportunities for their continued growth and for the improvement of their individual abilities. But it is very important to note that slightly less than 50% of the respondents are not satisfied with corporate planning, research and development in their work. it calls for further concentration on this issue in public sector
- 4. It is pointed out that highest number of respondents are satisfied with the immediate opportunities to develop human capacities. They have best opportunities to grow individually, for individual recognition to participate in work plan and have access for complete information of their work and organization. Thus public sectors are more transparent. Transparency in the organization and opportunities to develop human capacities inculcate the quality of work life of the workers.
- 5. it identified that in public sector the maximum workers feel and express that they enjoy equal treatment, group work spirit, opportunity for individual skill and abilities, mutual co- operation, help and care, "top to bottom" and "bottom to top" approach in the work coordination etc. The social integration and harmoniousness in the organization provides more work satisfaction. it is good condition to be fulfilled in all organizations in private sector also. To bring about a good quality of work life and resolve to maintain better industrial relations.
- 6. From this study it is proved that constitutionalism in the work organization provides an opportunity to enjoy equality, welfare etc. such treatment in public sector in accordance with the constituently provisions, which are properly implemented. Such constitutional rights of workers extend quality of work life in public sector.
- 7. From the above analysis it can be inferred that, the work and total life space of the workers in public sector organizations is very good. Only a negligible percentage of the respondents do not agree with this. They enjoy more job satisfaction, good health and life. they would not feel "monotonous on job",
- 8. It is very clear that the public sector organization has good social relevance by having social responsibilities taking good social security measures controlling pollution up holding works social life and their social prestige, and ultimately bringing out more production. the social relevance of working life is also taken into account to measure quality of work life. If the social relevance of work life is very high the quality of work life also more and vis-versa.

#### CONCLUSION

The present study is on the "Effectiveness of quality of work life policies and practices in the public sector organizations". Present study covers the QWL policies and practices followed in the public sector units. The laws passed by the pre and post- independent governments of India and the Indian constitutional provisions have provided wide scope for good quality of work life in PSUs. Indian economy is a mixed economy with the co-existence both private and public sectors.

This study shows the quality of work life is higher in the public sector. Workers in the public sector are getting adequate pay and compensation. Various policies and practices in the public sector are implemented effectively, as a consequence safe and healthy conditions are maintained. There are ample opportunities to develop human capacities and to have job satisfaction. The present study is interesting in the era of globalization, liberalization and privatization, because at this

juncture privatization of the public sectors has become the order of the day. Public sector is facing major challenge of criticism from the vested interests of the private sector. In this critical context present study exibits the human face of the public sector.

#### SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- 1. Positive practice environments for health care professionals
- 2. Teamwork and high performance work organization

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