Quality of Work Life-An Overview

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A B S T R A C T

Work is a part of our daily life. We work on an average eight hours daily in business or career earning our livelihood. That means one third of our life is spent working. It affects the quality of our life. A satisfied employee can put his best efforts towards achievement of organisational goals. The employer needs to provide a conducive environment in the organisation, to reach the goals. The term quality of work life (QWL) refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of a job environment for people. A willing worker puts his best efforts to achieve organisational goals. Retention of worker is a difficult task in complex environment where more stress is there on one side and opportunities on the other. Satisfaction with pay and relationships with work colleagues, but also factors that broadly focuses on life satisfaction and general feelings of well-being. To retain the talented people in the organisation it is important for the organisation that he should have low stress level and high quality of work life. This article focuses on detailed analysis of Quality of work life and its uses to employers and organisations.

Introduction

The term quality of work life (QWL) refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of a job environment for people[i]. Employees at the gross-root level experience a sense of frustration because of low level of wages, poor working conditions, unfavourable terms of employment, inhuman treatment by their superiors and the like, whereas managerial personnel feel frustrated with their conditions of employment, inter-personal conflicts, role conflicts, job pressures, lack of freedom in work, absence of challenging work, etc. It means High QWL is sought through good supervision, good working conditions, good packages and benefits and an interesting, challenging and rewarding job. QWL efforts are systematic attempts by organisations to give employees a greater opportunity to affect the way they do their jobs and the contributions they make to the organisation's overall effectiveness. QWL has assumed increasing interest and importance in both industrialised as well as developing countries of the world. In India, its scope seems to be broader than many labour legislations

enacted to protect the workers. It is more than a sheer work organisation movement which focuses on job security and economic growth to the employees.

The Concept of Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life[ii] can be defined as the status of objective conditions/status of living of workers at the work place. It is a function between objective conditions of life and the subjective attitude. The condition in which the worker is exposed to the working place is work place environment.

Work plays a central role in the life of most people engaged in productive activities. Jerome M. Rosow[iii] with the long experience in government and business has summed up the centrality of work in following statements. Work is at the core of life. Consider the deeper meaning of work to the individual and the life values; work means a good provider, it means autonomy, it pays off in success, and it establishes self-respect or self-worth.

There are two ways of looking at what we mean by "Quality of Work Life", one way is to equate QWL with a set of objective organizational conditions and practices (job enrichment, democratic supervision, employee involvement and safe working conditions). The other way is equating QWL with employees perceptions that they are safe, relatively well satisfied, and are able to grow and develop as human beings. This relates QWL to the degree to which the full range of human needs is met[iv].

Commenting on the impact of routine work on individuals and its subsequent dysfunctional manifestations, George Strauss[v] sums up the research finding as "There is overwhelming evidence that many (but not all) workers react negatively to work that is routine and without challenge. A whole series of studies from mass production industry shows, for example, that dissatisfaction appears directly related to short job cycles, lack of autonomy and control over work place, and jobs, which require attention but not challenge. Such factors also relate to absenteeism, turnover, strikes and even poor mental health."

In "the Institution of work"[vi] the workplace for most people in organized sector of human activities is confluence of organization's objectives, values and practices; the individual's attitudes, potentials and aspirations; and the larger objectives of the society and the demands that the society places on him. There are multiple inter-linkages among the work system, the organization, the individual and the society at large. It is necessary to look into the institution of work and examine the nature of inter linkages between work and some aspects of socio-cultural and psychological milieu. It is further added that in the recent years a growing interest among concerned professionals in bringing about improvement in QWL in organizational sectors is indicative of their efforts to exercise the choice in a deliberate and planned manner to design new work systems which alone can meet the aspirations of the people in the given socio-cultural context. Work system changes have wider implications for society as a whole because improvement of QWL in any society presupposes enhancement of QWL.

The most effective way of achieving rapid and politically sustainable improvements in the quality of work life for the worker is the pursuit of a pattern of growth that ensures productive use of the workers most abundant asset-labour and to provide him/her opportunity and widespread provisions of basic social service, especially primary education, primary health care, and family planning which improve the capacity of poor to take advantage of these opportunities. Adequate provision for the social sector would allow a rapid reduction in child mortality and an increase in the primary school enrolment[vii].

The quest for improved productivity through human resources has its beginning in the early 1900s. F.W. Taylor's scientific management principles created a new awareness regarding human resources, who were earlier considered as mere instruments of production, ready to work from dawn to dusk under whatever conditions and being motivated by the lure of money. From then, till today continuous research and experiments have been undertaken to understand human beings at work and the ways to improve their job satisfaction, balanced with the aim of the organisations to combine better productivity with job and employee satisfaction. In order to achieve these twin objectives, different approaches have been developed and applied. The concept of QWL has originated from this continuous research process[viii].

The theories of motivation and leadership provide a sound base for the concept of QWL[ix]. Maslow depicted the complexity of human nature by describing various levels of human needs and satisfaction. As soon as the lower – order needs are satisfied, people seek satisfaction of the higher-order needs. Herzberg[x] went a step further and distinguished 'hygiene factors' (maintenance factors), which maintain a reasonable level of motivation and 'motivational factors' which can improve employee's performance. McGregor in his Theory-Y assumed that under proper conditions, people have the potential to work with responsibility.

Evolution of QWL

Walton[xi] attributes the evolution of QWL to various phases in history. Legislation enacted in early 20th century to protect employees from job-injury and to eliminate hazardous working conditions, followed by the unionisation movement in the 1930s and 1940s were the initial steps. Emphasis was given to 'job security, due process at the work place and economic gains for the worker'. The 1950s and the 1960s saw the development of different theories by psychologists proposing a 'positive relationship between morale and productivity' and the possibility that improved human relations would lead to the enhancement of both. Attempts at reform to acquire equal employment opportunity and job enrichment schemes also were introduced. Finally, in the 1970s the idea of QWL was conceived which, according to Walton , is broader than these earlier developments and that must include 'the values that were at the heart of these earlier reform movements' and 'human needs and aspirations'.

QWL activity gained importance between 1969 and 1974, when a broad group of researchers, scholars, union leaders and government personnel developed interest in how to improve the quality of an individual through on-the-job experience. A series of attitudinal surveys conducted at the University of Michigan between 1969 and 1973 attracted attention towards the quality of employment. The US Department of Health, Education and Welfare sponsored a study on this issue, which led to the publication of *Work in America* (MIT press, 1973). Simultaneously, the pressures of inflation prompted the US government to address some of these issues. Accordingly, a Federal productivity commission was established. This commission sponsored several labour management QWL experiments, which were jointly conducted by the university of Michigan quality of work programme and the newly-evolved National Quality of Work Centre[xii].

The term QWL emerged in a much broader perspective after the Arden House Meet in New York in 1972, which led to the establishment of the International Centre of QWL. The term QWL was introduced by Louis Davis. The first international QWL conference was held in Toronto in 1972. Several QWL projects initiated during the early 1970s had by then matured and began to bear fruit (i.e. certain high visibility initiatives, such as those by General Motors) and catch the public eye[xiii]. The American Society of Training and Development established a task force on the QWL in 1979[xiv]. The concept of QWL has originated from this continuous research process.

The QWL is a cooperative rather than authoritarian, evolutionary and open rather than static and rigid; informal rather than rule-bound; impersonal rather than mechanistic; mutual respect and trust rather than hatred against each other[xv]. Since the origin of the term in early 1970's, quality of work life has become an important matter of concern in work organisations[xvi].

The term "Humanization of Work", "Industrial Democracy", "quality of work life" and "participate work" are interchangeably used to denote the same sense. The core of these concepts in the value of treating the worker as a human being and emphasizing his development and involvement in work decisions. These concepts are very close to the HRD concepts[xvii]. Taylor suggested that the concept of quality of work life includes emphasis on extrinsic and intrinsic job factors and other aspects like individual power; employees participation in the management process; fairness and equity, social support, use of one's present skills ; self-development, a meaningful future at work; social relevance of the work or product and effect on extra work activities.

Katzell[xviii] observed that a worker assumed to be enjoying a high quality of working life when he (1) has positive feeling towards his job

and its future prospects, (2) is motivated in the job and perform well, and (3) feels his working life fits well with his private life to afford him a balance between the two in terms of his personal values.

It is a perspective concept; it attempts to design work environments so as to maximize concern for human welfare. It is a goal, as well as a process[xix]" The goal is the creation of more involving, satisfying and effective jobs and work environment for people at all levels of the organisation. As a process QWL involves efforts to realize this goal through active participation. The quality of work life movement in a broader sense seeks to achieve integration among the technological, human, organisational and societal demands which are often contradictory and conflicting[xx].

A growing number of companies recognize that employees are more likely to choose a firm and stay there if they believe that it offers a high quality of work life. A high quality of work life is related to job satisfaction, which in turn is a strong predictor of absenteeism and turnover. A firm's investments in improving the quality of work life also pay off in the form of better customer service[xxi].

Basic principles

The basic concept underlying the QWL is what has come to be known as "humanization of work". It involves basically the development of an environment of work that stimulates the creative abilities of the workers, generates cooperation, and interest in self – growth. Herrick and Maccoby[xxii] have identified four basic principles which summarise the humanization of work. These principles are:

1. **The principle of SECURITY:** Humanisation or work implies freedom from anxiety, fear and the loss of future employment. The working conditions should be safe and there should be no fear of economic want. These preconditions will guarantee utmost development of skills and ideas.

2. **The principle of EQUITY:** Hostility is generated if there are substantial differences between efforts and rewards. The equity principle requires that there is a just way of evaluating the conditions of an employee. Another aspect of equity refers to paying for knowledge and skill to carry out the task and not for the task alone. If work has to be humanised, equity would also require sharing in the profits of the organisation according to the individual or group contribution.

3. **The principle of INDIVIDUATION:** Individuation refers to the work environment in which employees are encouraged to develop themselves to their utmost competence, a system of work that facilitated blossoming of individual potential. A basic precondition for this is the availability of freedom and autonomy in deciding their own pace of activity and design of operations.

4. **The principle of DEMOCRACY:** Akin to the principle of individuation, this also implies greater authority and responsibility vested into the work force. Increasing controls, close supervision, and a general institutionalization inhibit humanization of work. Meaningful participation in decision-making also guarantees the "right of citizenship".

Quality of work life is somewhat a general concept, referring to several aspects of the job experience. These include such factors as management and supervisory style, freedom and autonomy to make decisions on the job, satisfactory physical surroundings, job safety, satisfactory working hours, and meaningful tasks. Basically, a sound quality of work life (QWL) programme assumes that a job and the

work environment should be structured to meet as many of worker's needs as possible[xxiii].

There have been divergent views as to what really is QWL. An American Society of Training and Development[xxiv] established a task force on the QWL in 1979, which defined QWL as 'a process of work organisations which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shaping the organisations environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed towards meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organisation and improved quality of life at work for employees'.

Cohen and Rosenthal[xxv] describe it as an "internationally designed effort to bring about increased labour management cooperation to jointly solve the problem of improving organisational performance and employees' satisfaction". Quality of work life has been defined by Udai Pareek and Venkateswara Rao[xxvi] as 'the quality of relationship between employees and the total working environment'.

Wilson [xxvii] defined QWL as enriching the nature of work experience, grappling with issues of efficiency and satisfaction. Dubey[xxviii] defined QWL as 'the degree of excellence of one's life which contributes to the individual and benefits the society at large'. Richard and Lloyd[xxix] defined QWL as "the degree to which members of a work organisation are able to satisfy their personal needs through their experiences in the organisation."

In 1977 the staff of American Centre for Quality of work life[xxx] developed the following definition: "Quality of work life improvements are defined as activities which take place at every level of an organisation which seek greater organisational effectiveness through the enhancement of human dignity and growth… a process through which the stake holders in the organisation – management, unions and employees – learn how to work together better… to determine for themselves, what actions change and improvements are desirable and workable in order to achieve the twin and simultaneous goals of an improved quality of life at work for all members of the organisation and greater effectiveness for both the company and the unions".

According to Takezawa[xxxi] "what constitutes a high quality of working life may vary in relation to both the workers aspirations and the objective reality of his work and society. It is ultimately defined by the workers himself." Luthans[xxxii] recognises the purpose as "to change the climate at work so that the human-technological-organisational interface leads to a better quality of work life". Quality of work life is ensured when members of an organisation are able to satisfy their important personal needs through their experiences in the organisation[xxxiii].

More than half of the families cannot afford even the cheaper houses now being built. Apart from keeping down costs and rents, the key factors are supply of minimal essential services such as health care, education, energy, drainage, proximity to workplace and other social facilities. One way to achieve Quality of work life is to let the economy of the country grow at a fast pace and industrialise so that the people will increasingly be in a position to help them. Any attempt on the part of the state agency or individual to launch a new programme aimed at improving the Quality of work life, especially of the erstwhile disadvantaged section is likely to be resented by those in positions of advantage. Studies indicate that Government programme for the developments of poorest of the poor have simply been efforts from above which failed to reach the lowest rungs the society. The disadvantaged class succeed only in areas and industries where specific skills possessed by the disadvantaged prove useful, whilst the advantaged refrain from joining the occupations such as leather industry, shoe making industry, etc.[xxxiv]

The most effective way of achieving rapid and politically sustainable improvements in the quality of work life for the worker is the pursuit of a pattern of growth that ensures productive use of the workers most abundant asset–labour and to provide him/her opportunity and widespread provisions of basic social service, especially primary education, primary health care and family planning which improve the capacity of poor to take advantage of these opportunities. Adequate provision for the social sector would allow a rapid reduction in child mortality and an increase in the primary school enrolment[xxxv].

QWL is a large step forward from the traditional job design of scientific management, which focused mostly on specialization and efficiency for the performance of narrow tasks. As it evolved, it used full division of labour, rigid hierarchy and standardisation of labour to research its objective efficiently. The idea was to lower costs by using unskilled, repetitive labour that could be trained easily to do a small part of the job. Job performance was controlled by a large hierarchy, which strictly enforced the one best way of work as defined by technical people[xxxvi].

Benefits and Losses of QWL

Poor quality of work life is a disease; it leads to low productivity, high cost of production per unit, high labour turnover and finally the organisation going into insolvency position. The symptoms of poor quality of work life[xxxvii] are (i) High absenteeism and labour turnover, (ii) Poor quality of product, (iii) Low productivity, (iv) High cost of production per unit, (v) Human relation conflicts, and (vi) Non – involvement and apathy.

In general, the benefits of QWL [xxxviii] include: (a) healthier, satisfied and productive employees; and (b) efficient, adaptive and profitable organisations. Specifically, the benefits are as follows (i)More positive feelings towards one's self (greater self-esteem), (ii) More positive feelings towards one's job (improved job satisfaction and involvement), (iii) More positive feelings towards the organisation (stronger commitment to the organisation's goals), (iv) Improved physical and psychological health, (v) Greater growth and development of the individual as a person and as a productive member of the organisation, (vi) Decreased absenteeism and turnover, and fewer accidents, (vii) Higher quality and quantity of output of goods and services

In conjunction with the above benefits, when undertaken jointly by union and management, collaborative QWL programmes lead to improved labour-management communication, more effective and smoother contract negotiations, improved pay and benefits, more effective and sound management, and stronger and more effective union organisations.

Overall, QWL involves interaction of the individual and the organisation to satisfy each other's needs and expectations. QWL improvements may also facilitate such social goals as greater economic prosperity or political stability. They may also provide remedies to such social evils, like mental health problems, unemployment, drug and alcohol addiction, among workers and their families. Lastly, QWL improvements are also desirable from the perspective of humanitarian values.

From the above QWL concepts and Definitions, the following determinants are identified. The QWL determinants are as follows. Physical working conditions include temperature, lighting and comfortable work place existing at an optimum level. The organisation has an inbuilt heating system to sustain its operations under sub-zero temperature. Some of the shops must have been provided with air conditioning. Regular Bi-annual medical check-up of the employees working on hazardous jobs are carried out and daily allowance is provided to them. Dust extraction systems have been provided in dust prone shops. Following are the physical working conditions.

The work environment has important bearing on the efficiency and satisfaction of the employees. A dimly lighting, poorly ventilated and crowded place of work hampers efficiency. The workers are faced to spend more energy to accomplish tasks which they can do with much lesser efforts if good working conditions are provided. Poor working conditions have been found to cause greater fatigue negligence, absenteeism, indiscipline and insubordination among the employees. Working conditions include housekeeping temperature /humidity, canteen/welfare, working postures and lighting, work surface height, noise, space for work site, strenuous physical load, dust etc. If the organisation is providing good working conditions definitely they boost the quality of work life of employees.

1. **Temperature at work place:** Ideal temperature is required to undertake any work with utmost efficiency. In summer, the workers must be provided with temperate climatic conditions to work near the boilers, with ease and excellence

2. **Lighting:** Sufficient lighting is required to do the work by the employee. It is not possible for the employees to do the work in dark places. If he does that may lead to accident. So sufficient lighting should be provided at work place, either through natural or artificial measures.

3. **Freedom from excessive supervision and control:** The employees require freedom to discharge their duties with heart and soul. The excessive supervision or over - control may lead to over – burden so freedom at work place is required it leads to increase in quality of work life.

4. **Autonomy at work place:** The employees should be vested with such powers as are absolutely necessary to handle their work with efficiency and reflect originality. This leads to increase in the quality of work life in the organisation.

5. **Appreciation of merit and talents:** The employees' talent / merit must be appreciated by his supervisor, Departmental managers and organisation. It leads to increase the confidence of the employees and improve the economy of the organisation.

6. **Safe and Healthy working conditions:** The Organisation should provide safe and healthy working conditions so as to enable the employees to work with vigor and vitality. That means employees are not interested to do the work in unsafe conditions even though they get high amount of remuneration. Because if their health is spoiled everything is spoiled. So, the organisation should provide safe-working conditions and protect the employees from hazardous working conditions. It leads to increase the quality of work life.

7. **Absence of job stress:** The organisation should not cause stress to its employees or over-burden them with the work. The organisation should create congenial and happy atmosphere to the employees. When they go to work place there by contribute to the increase of quality of work life.

Further Canteen facility should be extended to employees where food items are provided at subsidized rates. The organization should run a shop where daily necessities of life are sold at relatively cheaper rates. Crèche facilities must be provided. For education of employee's school fees concession, transport facilities must be provided. However

the recreational facility for workers is conspicuous by its absence in many work places. The organization must maintain a dispensary for their employees and provide accommodation for in-patient facilities the following steps are necessary for employee welfare.

The employee welfare facilities which lead to increase the quality of work life are: (i) Hospital facilities , (ii) Medicare after retirement, (iii) Educational Allowances for Self-development , (iv) School Subsidy for children, (v) Subsidized Transport for the school going employee's children, (vi) House Building Loans at low interest, (vii) Pension scheme, (viii) Loan for purchase of vehicles by employees, (ix) Loan for purchase for durable consumer goods , (x) Reimbursement of medical expenses for treatment at other than company / organisation hospitals, (xi) Festival advances repayable on easy installment , (xii) Subsidized canteen facilities, (xiii) Reimbursement of examination fees for acquisition of professional qualifications, (xiv) Recreational facilities , (xv) Quarters within the organisation premises , (xvi) Crèche facilities

The organisation should provide facilities to its employees through various schemes such as scheme for providing financial assistance for the construction, purchase of residential accommodation through approved financial institutions, leave travel concessions, interest subsidy for purchase of vehicles, hiring of unfurnished / furnished residential accommodation to their employees on concessional rates; compensation for employment injury to those not covered under the workmen's compensation act besides other schemes.

The organisation should give job security, advancement based on merit, employees' involvement in decision making etc. lead to increase the quality of work life. The following are the measures adopted by any organisation to achieve this objective. (i) Job security, (ii) Job enlargements, (iii) Job enrichment, (iv) Advancement based a merit, (v) Employee Commitment on the job (Feeling of loyalty commitment and concern for future of the organisation), (vi) Employee involvement and influence on the job, (vii) Appreciation of ability and talents, (viii) Disciplinary mechanism, (ix) Opportunity to use one's own capability (change of applying job knowledge and skill), (x) Standing of the organisation in the society (Performance of organisation in a society in a beneficial manner).

The Organisation must pay to the employee's adequate and fair remuneration / compensation from time to time. The following four factors need to be considered. (i) Adequate financial compensation/salary, (ii) Giving of different types of allowances to workers to meet their regular expenses.(iii) Payment of bonus (Production & annual bonus), (iv) Compensation payable to employee or Employee's nominee for Accident or death and other retirement benefits.

A number of attempts have been made to identify various dimensions of this concept. "Some have emphasized the improvement in working conditions leads to better quality of life, while others feel a fair compensation and job security should be emphasized" [xxxix] , Luthans[xl] recognises the purpose as "to change the climate at works so that the human – technological – organisational" interface leads to a better quality of work life.

Richard E. Walton explains quality of work life in terms of eight broad conditions of employment that constitute desirable quality of work life (QWL). He proposed the same criteria for measuring QWL. Those conditions criteria include:

(i) *Adequate and fair compensation*: There are different opinions about the adequate compensation. The committee on fair wages defined fair wage as "…the wage which is above the minimum wage but below the living age".

(ii) *Safe and Healthy working conditions*: Most of the organisations provide safe and healthy working conditions due to humanitarian requirements and /or legal requirements. In fact these conditions are a matter of enlightened self interest.

(iii) *Opportunity to use and develop human capacities*: Contrary to the traditional assumptions, QWL is improved "…to the extent that the worker can exercise more control over his or her work, and the degree to which the job embraces an entire meaningful task…" but not a part of it. Further QWL provides for opportunities like autonomy in work and participation in planning in order to use human capabilities.

(iv) *Opportunity for career growth*: Opportunities for promotions are limited in case of all categories of employees either due to educational barriers or due to limited openings at the higher level. QWL provides future opportunity for continued growth and security by expanding one's capabilities, knowledge and qualifications.

(v) *Social integration in the work force*: Social integration in the work force can be established by creating freedom from prejudice, supporting primay work groups, a sense of community and inter-personnel openness, legalitarianism and upward mobility.

(vi) *Constitutionalism in the work organisation*: QWL provides constitutional protection to the employees only to the level of desirability as it hampers workers. It happens because the management's action is challenged in every action and bureaucratic procedures need to be followed at that level. Constitutional protection is provided to employees on such matters as privacy, free speech, equity and due process.

(vii) *Work and quality of life*: QWL provides for the balanced relationship among work, non-work and family aspects of life. In other words family life and social life should not be strained by working hours including overtime work, work during inconvenient hours, business travel, transfers, vacations etc.

(viii) *Social relevance of work*: QWL is concerned about the establishment of social relevance to work in a socially beneficial manner. The workers' self-esteem would be high if his work is useful to the society and the vice versa is also true.

Klott, Mundick and Schuster suggested 11 major QWL issues. They are[xli]:

(i) *Pay and Stability of Employment*: Good pay still dominates most of the other factors in employee satisfaction. Various alternative means for providing wages should be developed in view of increase in cost of living index, increase in levels and rates of income tax and profession tax. Stability to greater extent can be provided by enhancing the facilities for human resource development.

(ii) *Occupational stress*: Stress is a condition of strain on one's emotions, thought process and physical condition, stress is determined by the nature of work, working conditions, working hours, pause in the work schedule, worker's abilities and nature and match with the job requirements. Stress is caused due to irritability, hyper excitation or depression, unstable behavior, fatigue, stuttering, trembling psychometric pains, heavy smoking and drug abuse. Stress adversely affects

employee's productivity. The HR manager, in order to minimize the stress, has to identify, prevent and tackle the problem. He may arrange the treatment of the problem with the health unit of the company.

(iii) *Organisational health programmes***:** Organisational health programmes aim at educating employees about health problems, means of maintaining and improving of health etc. These programmes cover drinking and smoking cessation, hypertension control, other forms of cardiovascular risk reduction, family planning etc. Effective implementation of these programmes result in reduction in absenteeism, hospitalization, disability, excessive job turnover and premature death. This programme should also cover relaxation, physical exercise, diet control etc.

(iv) *Alternative work schedules***:** Alternative work schedules including work at home, flexible working hours, staggered hours, reduced work week, part-time employment which may be introduced for the convenience and comfort of the workers as the work schedule which offers the individual the leisure time, flexible hours of work is preferred.

(v) *Participative management and control of work***:** Trade unions and workers believe that workers' participation in management and decision-making improves QWL. Workers also feel that they have control over their work, use their skills and make a real contribution to the job if they are allowed to participate in creative and decision making process.

(vi) *Recognition:* Recognising the employee as a human being rather than as a labourer increases the QWL. Participative management, awarding the rewarding systems, congratulating

the employees for their achievement, job enrichment, offering prestigious designations to the jobs, providing well-furnished and decent work places, offering membership in clubs or association, providing vehicles, offering vacation trips are some means to recognize the employees.

(vii) *Congenial worker-supervisor relations***:** Harmonious supervisor-worker relations give the worker a sense of social association, belongingness, achievement of work results etc. This in turn leads to better QWL.

(viii) *Grievance procedure***:** Workers have a sense of fair treatment when the company gives them the opportunity to ventilate their grievances and represent their case succinctly rather than settling the problems arbitrarily.

(ix) *Adequacy of resources***:** Resources should match with stated objectives, otherwise, employees will not be able to attain the objectives. This results in employee dissatisfaction and lower QWL.

(x) *Seniority and merit in promotions***:** Seniority is generally taken as the basis for promotion in case of operating employees. Merit is considered as the basis for advancement for managerial people whereas seniority cum-merit is preferred for promotion of ministerial employees. The promotional policies and activities should be fair and just in order to ensure higher QWL.

(xi) *Employment on permanent basis***:** Employment of workers on casual, temporary, probationary basis gives them a sense of insecurity. On the other hand, employment on permanent basis gives them security and leads to higher order QWL.

Components and Dimensions of a QWL Programme

The following figure presents the various components of a QWL programme identified by G. R. Mahapatra[xlii].
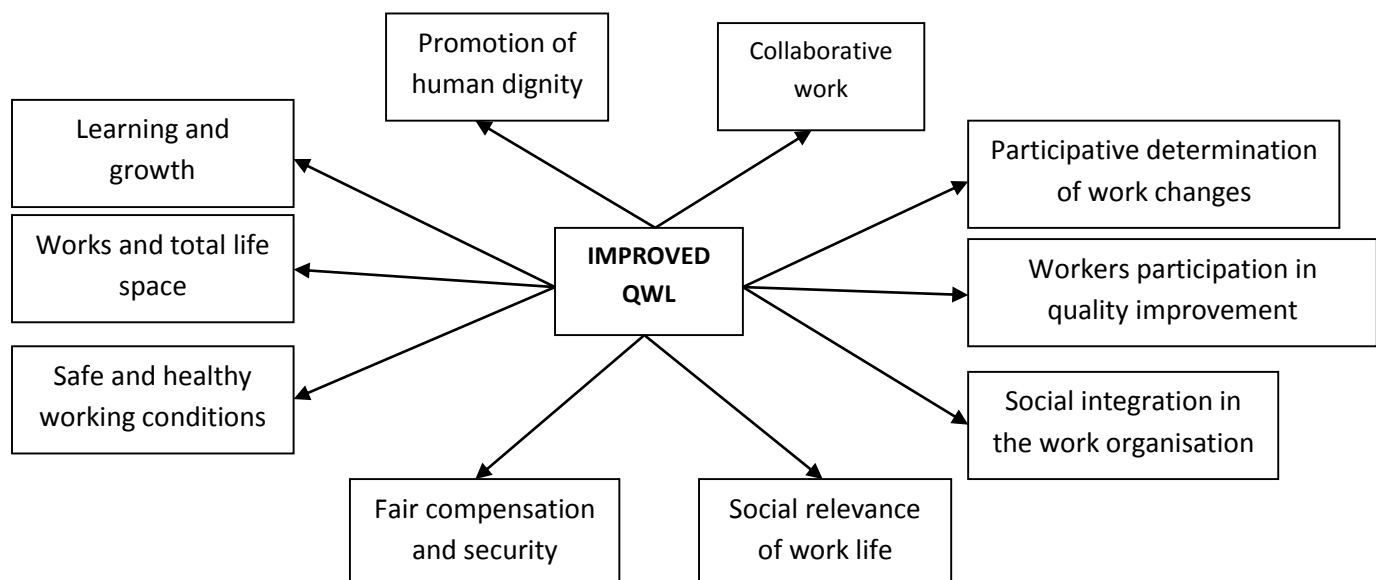

Chart – 1: Components of a QWL Programme

Graham S. Lowe[xliii], suggested 32 qualities of work life indicators as follows: (1) Absenteeism, (2) Control over practice, (3) Employee Supports (Ex: Employee assistance programmes), (4) Empowered local units, (5) Error rates, (6) Flexible Schedule, (7) Food Service/Healthy life style, (8) Full-time/Part-time ratio, (9) Influence in decision making, (10) Injury/Illness rates, (11) Job satisfaction/Stress, (12) Labour relations, (13) Leadership, (14) Organisational Structure, (15) Organisational Supports, (16) Overtime

hours, (17) Parking, security, (18) Peer competence, (19) Peers who can fill in, (20) Professional development, (21) Quality practice settings survey scores, (22) Role in Governance, (23) Scope of practice, (24) Skill mix, (25) Span of control, (26) Supplies and Equipment, (27) Turnover, (28) Value/Respect, (29) Whistle blower protection, (30) Work allocation, (31) Work- life balance, and (32) Work load.

According to Glaser[xliv], QWL means more than job security, good working conditions, adequate and fair compensation even more than equal employment opportunities. Dr. Benarjee and Roja Rani[xlv] after careful examination have taken the following 11 dimensions as measures of QWL. They are: 1. Working conditions, 2. Autonomy, 3. Relation with the organisation, 4. Pay structure, 5. work complexity, 6. Welfare facilities, 7. Personal growth, 8. Group cohesiveness, 9. Workers participation, 10. Job stress and 11. Job design.

Herbert Morton[xlvi] has described Quality of work life in terms of six major dimensions, which are summarised as follows: (1) Compensation (wage, fringe benefits and differed income) (2) Hours and work schedules, (3) The nature of the job, (4) Physical aspects of the work environment, (5) Internal and external institutional aspects of work setting and (6) Economic, social and political factors affecting life of the job.

Saklani [xlvii] has chosen thirteen dimensions for analyzing the concept of QWL viz., (1) Adequate and fair compensation, (2) Fringe benefits and welfare measures, (3) Job security, (4) Safe and healthy physical environment, (5) Work load, (6) Opportunity to use and develop human capacity, (7) Opportunity for continued growth, (8) Human relations, (9) Participation in decision making, (10) Reward and penalty system. (11) Equity, justice and grievance handling, (12) Work and total life space, and (13) Image of organisation in the society.

Mirvis and Lawler (1984)[xlviii] suggested that quality of working life was associated with satisfaction with wages, hours and working conditions, describing the "basic elements of a good quality of work life" as: safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement.

Baba and Jamal (1991)[xlix] listed what they described as typical indicators of quality of working life, including: job satisfaction, job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role conflict, work role overload, job stress, organisational commitment and turn-over intentions. They also explored routinisation of job content, suggesting

that this facet should be investigated as part of the concept of quality of working life.

Balaram, et al.(2015)[l] have taken the following 14 dimensions as measures of QWL. They are: (1) Education, (2) Housing, (3) Health, (4) Employment and working conditions, (5) Income, (6) Clothing, (7) Food, (8) Transportation, (9) Communication, (10) Fuel and electricity, (10) Water supply and sanitation, (11) Environment and pollution, (12) Recreation, (13) Social security and (14) Habits.

Difficulties of QWL:

Notwithstanding potentially powerful mechanisms, QWL programmes in their collaborative forms (involving joint union-management activities) are fraught with difficulties. Whether originated at the instance of the management or the union, or a third party, QWL programmes have been successful in various settings and in a number of ways. Lehrer indicates certain conditions which help overcome the difficulties. These are: (i) Acknowledgement by both parties of 'mutuality of concerns' and specific identification of these concerns, (ii) An understanding that joint activities will, in fact, be joint and supportive of the continuing integrity of both parties, (iii) Acceptance of QWL concepts as the norm by the top management, by union leadership and by middle management and supervision, (iv) An administrative structure to provide guidance for QWL project activities, (v) An established charter for QWL committees and project activities, specifying ground rules, responsibilities, authorities, etc, (vi) A clear cut understanding that joint ownership of the entire QWL is a reality and open acknowledgement of what each party expects to receive as benefits, (vii) A mechanism for involvement; handling substantive issues; worthwhile participation in personal terms and in influencing affairs of the organisation; and a provision for knowledge and skills to deal with such problems effectively.

Conclusion

The term quality of work life (QWL) refers to the likeliness or unlikeliness of a job environment for people. A willing worker puts his best efforts to achieve organisational goals. Retention of worker is a difficult task in complex environment where more stress is there on one side and opportunities on the other. Satisfaction with pay and relationships with work colleagues, but also factors that broadly focuses on life satisfaction and general feelings of well-being. To retain the talent in the organisation it is important for the organisation to see that he should have low stress level and high quality of work life.

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