

Living the Quality Life. ‘Capacities at Work’ as a Dimension of the Study in Higher Education

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Abstract: *In today's competitive scenario it has become imperative for all the employers to look into the aspirations and needs of its work force in order to survive in the market. It has become important to continue assess the factors which are responsible to improve the quality work life. The better quality work life improves the efficiency and effectiveness of both the organization and individual. Keeping in view the importance of satisfaction of work force, the present study has conducted to measure the perception of faculty members regarding the dimensions of quality of work life in higher educational institutions of Jammu and Kashmir. Four sample universities were selected for data collection from different parts of the state. The questionnaire was personally administered to collect the primary data. The questionnaire was pilot tested and minor changes were introduced in the final questionnaire. In addition to this secondary data was collected from journals, magazines, books and internet. The research design was adopted to address the aims and objectives which were both descriptive and analytical in nature. The research findings revealed that quality of work life is significantly poor in higher educational institutions.*

Keywords: *Quality of work life, Universities, Faculty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life as a concept appeared nearly at the end of the 1960s, surrounding a variety of theoretical concepts that aimed to resolve several organizational issues. Luthans (1998) is of the opinion that quality of work life concept has become an important social issue around the world while in earlier decades the focus was only on quality of personal life. Today quality of work life is a dynamic multidimensional concept that includes concepts like job security, reward system, training and development, promotions, and participation in decision-making. Akdere (2006) holds the view that researchers interested in the concept of quality of work life are looking for new ways to facilitate employees to balance their work and personal life. Quality of work life is defined as sum total of work in an organization which contributes to material and mental well-being of its employees (Harrison, 2004). Quality of work life (QWL) is defined as the sum total of values, both substantial and non-substantial attained by a worker all through his working life. Quality of work life includes all the work-related dimensions which are important for a good life such as adequate wages, working hours, working conditions, work environment, extra benefits, quality of services, career growth, welfare amenities and human relations, which are probably relevant to satisfaction and motivation of the employee and on the other hand also significant for employees' overall performance, output, productivity, increased morale, effectiveness, and efficiency. According to Gronroos (1978), there are three dimensions of service quality in higher education which are as follows (1) The technical quality of outcome; 2) The functional quality of the service encounters (3) The corporate image. The customer can measure the outcome of service in an objective manner while, the functional quality of the service encounter is concerned with the interaction between the provider and recipient of a service and is often perceived in a subjective manner (Ghobadian, et al.,1993).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality of work life is a multifaceted concept influenced by, and interacting with, many work and non-work related factors of life (Hsu & Kernohan, 2006). Sirgy et al., (2001) viewed that any study on Quality of work life broadly aims at getting an insight of job-related indicators that affect persons and groups at work. Edwards et al., (2009); Sashkin and Burke, (1987) viewed Quality of work life as an emerging concept which may be understood in different ways by the people depending upon the situations and their roles. "Quality of work life is described as the "favourableness or unfavourableness of a sum total of the work environment" (Rantanen, et al., 2011) Moreover, Mohanraj and Ramesh, (2010) have described Quality of work life as an advancement which not only focuses employee satisfaction, but also enhances organizational effectiveness and productivity. Arif and Ilyas, (2013) studied Quality of work life from employees' point of view only and concluded that perceived value of work, work climate, work-life balance and satisfaction with relationships in life were the important indicators which are responsible for work attitudes and employee perceptions of quality of work-life. As per the views of Lee et al., (2007); Sirgy et al., (2008) Quality of work life has been associated with basic job parameters such as: salary/wages or compensation, physical or psychological environment at work, workload and stress at work and equal chances of growth and promotions. Work and life are interrelated in a way that each and every aspect of life be it daily job, work environment or administration, have an impact on professional as well as personal life. Work life balance can get disturbed due to the stress in work (Judge, et al., 2006). Various studies done by the researchers on quality of work life (e.g. Che Rose et al., 2006; Connell and Hannif, 2009; Elizur and Shye, 1990) examined different ways to improve employees' quality of work life by focusing on job-related welfare, reward systems, and performance management. According to the studies of Gittel, Weinberg, Pfefferle, & Bishop, (2008) dimensions like autonomous work groups, job enrichment, and high-performance opportunities are considered to improve the quality of work life. Employee participation in decision making and problem solving are the other major concerns of quality of work life which leads to common welfare of employees and management.

According to American Society of Training and Development (1979), Quality of Work Life is defined as a "process that enables its members at all levels to participate actively and efficiently in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. It is a value based process, which is aimed towards meeting the dual goals of enhanced effectiveness of organizations, and improved quality of life at work for employees".

Davis (1983) has observed Quality of work life as "the quality of association among employees and the total working environment, with human dimensions included to the usual technical and economic considerations." According to Morin & Morin, (2004) Quality of work life is a multi-dimensional construct which refers to the satisfaction of individuals to his/her work life, work-life balance, sense of belongingness and respect and a feeling of being worth to an organization. The Quality of work life parameters should cover all the aspects by which overall well being of an individual is improved. The organizations are more demanding and in turn employees are getting less and organizations fail to deal with the quality of work life issues (Pranee, 2010). As a consequence, employees may work less and show less effort which affects the overall productivity of the organization. Indumathy and Kamalraj (2012) defined Quality of work life as, "the degree of happiness or dissatisfaction with one's job". They further concluded that the key factors influencing quality of work life are attitude, environment, opportunities, nature of job, people stress level etc and as per their study, a happy employee can give good revenue, make better decisions and can contribute positively towards organizational goals.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sample was selected from respondents of the four well established universities of Jammu and Kashmir State. The four sample universities included in this very research were University of Kashmir (KU), University of Jammu (JU), Sher-e-Kashmir university of Agriculture sciences and technology of Kashmir (SKUAST- K) and Sher-e-Kashmir university of Agriculture sciences and technology Jammu (SKAUST-J).The questionnaire was personally administered to collect the primary data from the respondents. Such a communication method has been employed in the study where a structured non-disguised questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was pilot tested and minor changes were introduced in the final questionnaire. In addition to this secondary data was collected from journals, magazines, books and internet. The research design was adopted to address the aims

and objectives which were both descriptive and analytical in nature. Questionnaires received from the respondents were scrutinized carefully to detect errors caused by inconsistent information provided by the respondent. The errors were rectified by resorting to filling of questionnaires afresh. The data was then classified in an analyzable form. The data was tabulated on the basis of respondents.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Hypothesis 1: Capacities used at work as a dimension of Quality of Work Life (QWL) is significantly poor in the Universities of J&K.

Capacities used at work place

The descriptive statistics from the table 1 reveals that the respondents of the sample universities has been at average level of satisfaction as clearly depicts from the overall mean value of 3.274 for the dimension capacities used at work. The further statistical analysis also support the fact that the Quality of work life is significantly poor in higher educational institutions as the F-value for the dimension is 19.466 at 5% level of significance. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is accepted as the significance level has been 0.000 for the dimension, which shows that there is significant difference between the perception of employees regarding capacities used at work place and overall quality of work life.

Furthermore the statement wise descriptive statistics shows that the mean value for autonomous decision making (3.07), assignment of important work (3.07), performance of several tasks (3.12), satisfactory evaluation (3.36) and responsible assignments (3.74) indicates an average level of satisfaction regarding capacities used at work. Moreover the Anova indicates that ‘p’ value for all the variables of the above dimension is less than 0.05 implying that the quality of work life is significantly poor on the dimension capacities used at work among respondents of four sample universities.

Table1. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis of the dimension capacities used at work by using ANOVA

S. No	Dimension	Overall		ANOVA test		status
		M	S.D	F	Sig	
1.	Autonomous decision making is encouraged	3.07	1.137	11.262	0.000	H1 Accepted
2.	Important work is assigned	3.07	1.148	8.438	0.000	H1 Accepted
3.	Performance of several tasks at work	3.13	1.12	10.943	0.000	H1 Accepted
4.	Satisfactory evaluation	3.36	1.103	20.105	0.000	H1 Accepted
5.	Responsible assignments.	3.74	0.913	7.222	0.000	H1 Accepted
	Overall	3.274	0.8158	19.466	0.000	H1 Accepted

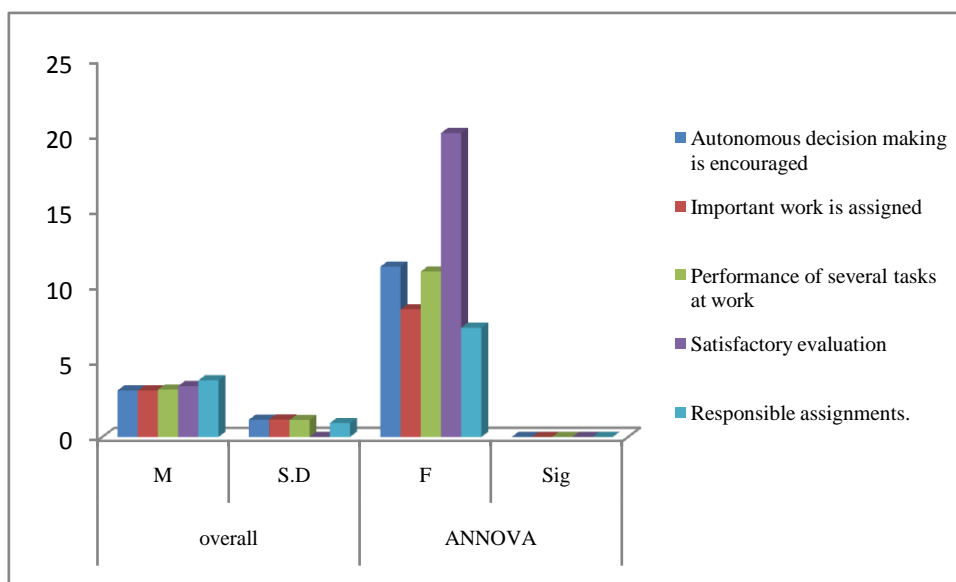


Fig1. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis of the dimension capacities used at work by using ANOVA

Hypothesis 2: Growth opportunities and securities at work as a dimension of Quality of Work Life (QWL) are significantly poor in the Universities of J&K.

Growth opportunities and securities at work

The table 2 shows that the mean value for the dimension, Growth opportunities at work place has been 3.588, it represents that there is a moderate level of satisfaction, with regard to growth opportunities at work place. The significance of the dimension as shown in table as 0.000 at 5% significance level, which indicates that the quality of work life with regard to growth opportunities and securities at work place is poor. The low level of satisfaction of faculty members may be due to the reason that educational sectors are not offering as much growth to its employee’s as other service sectors do. It has been revealed from the findings of table 2 that with regard to the job securities faculties are highly satisfied. In the views of Pandey and Jha(2014), “Quality of work life propose future opportunity for continued growth and security at work place by increasing one’s capabilities, skills, knowledge and qualification”. This indicator of Quality of work life generates a useful connection between the education and employment. Job security is not any apprehension in the case of academic people as growth and development is more important. Industries other than education sector offer more growth opportunities to it employees as compared to education sector. Therefore more focus should be given in providing growth opportunities at work places in order to achieve high level of quality of work life.

Table2. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis of dimension, growth opportunities at work by using ANOVA

S. No	Dimension	Overall Descriptive statistics		ANOVA		Hypothesis testing
		M	S.D	F- value	Sig	Status
1	Sufficient growth opportunities	3.44	0.970	8.458	0.000	H2 accepted
2	Fruitful training and development programs	3.55	1.07	11.599	0.000	H2 accepted
3	Job security to employees.	3.77	0.960	3.845	0.010	H2 accepted
	Overall	3.588	0.7667	13.019	0.000	H2 accepted

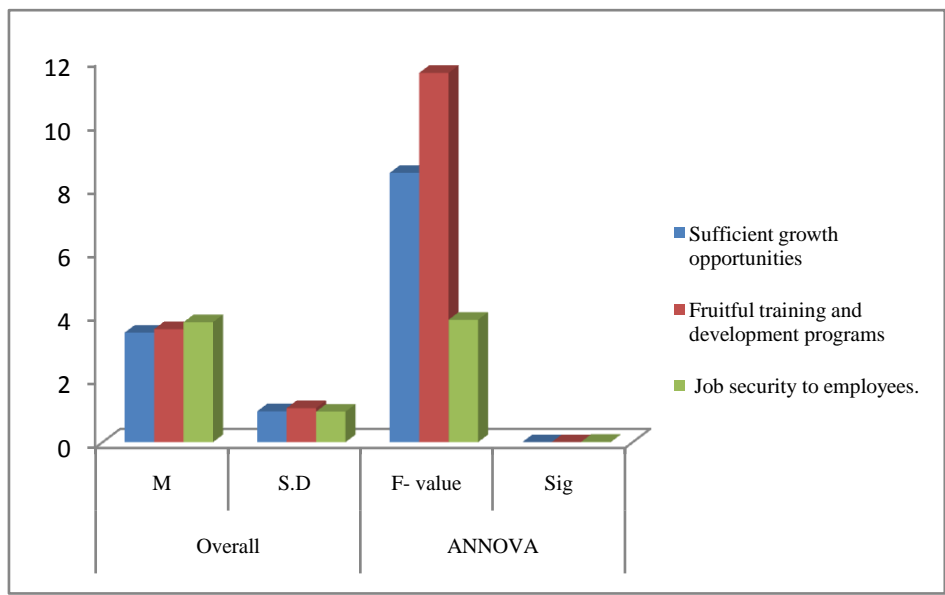


Fig2. Parametric statistics-Testing of hypothesis of dimension, growth opportunities at work by using ANOVA

5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The statistical analysis of our research reveal that the mean score has remained highest for SKUAST-J i.e., 3.62 followed by Jammu University with the mean score of 3.25. It indicates that respondents of both universities (SKUAST-J and J.U) were satisfied regarding the autonomous decision making system. Kashmir University is at the lowest mean score of 2.62 which shows a considerable dissatisfaction of the faculty members. Statistical inferences also support the fact that the Quality of work life is significantly poor in higher educational institutions as the F-value for the dimension is 19.466 at 5% level of significance. Growth and security at work being the very important aspect has been studied as one of the dimensions of quality of work life. Growth opportunities being the

important aspect of work life are necessary to motivate the employee so that they may not feel stagnated. The findings reveal that the respondents of SKUAST-J and SKUAST-K have shown resemblance with the growth aspects. While as the respondents of the JU and KU have shown moderate level of satisfaction to the growth opportunities in their respective institutions. The significance Level of the dimension is 0.000 at 5%, which indicates that the quality of work life with regard to growth opportunities and securities at work place is significantly poor. The low level of satisfaction of faculty members may be due to the reason that educational sectors are not offering as much growth to its employee’s as other service sectors do. It has been revealed from the findings that with regard to the job securities faculties are highly satisfied. In the views of Pandey and Jha (2014), “Quality of work life proposes future opportunity for continued growth and security at work place by increasing one’s capabilities, skills, knowledge and qualification”. However, researches have provided a direction for the universities to work with the other stakeholders. Each university will be able to understand what the universities should offer. Intellectual leadership could be provided in terms of sustainable growth and development. Also, Transformational programs can contribute to the sustainable growth and development in terms of attention paid to their own carbon footprint and mobilizes a wide range of disciplines to inform the policies and practices of regional businesses, public authorities and households. Similarly, inclusivity will involve the university opening out all its programmes to excluded social groups and fostering a culture of lifelong learning in the region. Tackling these challenges will involve working with business and the regional community in the co-production of knowledge in living laboratories that foster social as well as business innovation and plugging into European policies regarding, for example, the digital and green agendas, entrepreneurship and social innovation. But to realize this potential to change the world outside of academia, universities will need to develop themselves as learning organizations by investing in their own human capital, particularly in those performing a boundary-spanning role. The universities of the state’s capacity to reach out to regional business and the community will fail if sufficient capacity for innovation is not in place within the region. The university-business cooperation brings recognized benefits but has also many barriers. Students improve their learning experience and develop skills for the future employment, companies improve their business performance, the community can benefit from the increased employment, disposable income and competitive local industry, and the university can achieve the missions while academics increase their reputation, expand their research and contribute to the image and standards of the university.

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