

QUALITY OF WORKLIFE: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Jobs are essential to our survival. To support ourselves, most of us spend eight hours a day, on average, at our jobs. That equates to around a third of our lives being devoted to our jobs. It has a bearing on how pleasant our lives are. When an employee feels appreciated, he is more likely to give his all to the company's mission. The success of the organization's objectives depends on the employer's ability to provide a productive working environment. Quality of work life (QWL) describes how pleasant or unpleasant an individual's working conditions are. A dedicated employee works tirelessly to help the company succeed. Keeping employees happy in a demanding workplace where there are also many possibilities may be a daunting undertaking. Variables that look at the big picture of life and how one generally feels, such as contentment with one's salary and one's connections with co-workers. It is essential for the organization to maintain low stress levels and provide a high quality work environment in order to retain its talented individuals. The benefits that quality of work life has for businesses and other organisations are the primary topic of this essay.

Keywords: *Work Life, Organization Success, Quality, Productive, Stress Management.*

Introduction

One's "quality of work life" (QWL) is a reflection of how pleasant or unpleasant their working conditions are. Managers frequently encounter frustration stemming from their work circumstances, encompassing issues like interpersonal conflicts, role conflicts, job pressures, limited autonomy, and the absence of stimulating tasks. This contrasts with the frustrations experienced by entry-level employees, who are generally dissatisfied with their inadequate salaries, unfavorable working conditions, unjust employment terms, and inhumane treatment from their superiors. This implies that high quality of work life (QWL) is prioritised by providing supportive management, pleasant working environment, competitive pay and benefits, and stimulating work. Companies that make an effort to foster QWL offer workers more say in how they conduct their jobs and how they contribute to the success of the company as a whole. QWL has been a topic of intense research and development in both developed and underdeveloped

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nations. Compared to other worker protection laws in India, it seems to have a greater reach. It's more than just a push for better workplace organisation that benefits workers' financial stability and prosperity as a whole.

The Concept of Quality of Work Life

The term "work life quality" refers to how satisfied workers are with their current objective working and living situations. It's a relationship between one's objective life circumstances and their subjective outlook. Workplace environment refers to the circumstances in which an employee is required to perform their job duties.

To most individuals who are actively contributing to society, work is the most important thing in their lives. Jerome M. Rosow, an individual with significant experience in both the public and private sectors, has encapsulated the significance of labor in the following statements. Working is essential to living. Think about the values that labour represents and how they shape a person's identity: the ability to provide for oneself, the chance to make one's own decisions, the satisfaction of accomplishing goals, and the sense of pride and accomplishment that comes from achieving those goals.

One interpretation of "Quality of Work Life" (QWL) equates QWL with an objective collection of organisational circumstances and practices (such as job enrichment, democratic oversight, employee engagement, and safe working conditions). Another way of looking at QWL is as an indicator of how secure, happy, and capable of personal development an individual feels they are at their workplace. QWL is therefore connected to the extent to which a person's whole range of requirements may be addressed.

In "The Establishment of Employment," the workplace, for the majority within the organized sector of human activities, serves as the intersection of the organization's goals, principles, and procedures; the individual's beliefs, capabilities, and ambitions; as well as the broader societal objectives and the expectations that society imposes upon them. The workplace, the business, the employee, and the public at large are all interconnected in several ways. An investigation of the workplace and its institution, as well as the nature of the interconnections between the workplace and other facets of the social, cultural, and psychological environment, is required. It is worth noting that in recent times, there has been an increasing focus among dedicated professionals on enhancing the quality of work life (QWL) within organizational domains. This underscores their commitment to proactively and strategically shape new work systems that can effectively align with the aspirations of individuals within the specific socio-cultural framework. Changing the way work is done has societal ramifications since raising the quality of people's working lives is a goal shared by all progressive societies.

The most effective approach to attain swift and politically viable enhancements in the worker's quality of work life involves pursuing a growth strategy that optimizes the utilization of their most abundant resource, which is labor. This strategy should also offer ample opportunities and widespread access to essential social services, with a particular emphasis on primary education, primary healthcare, and family planning. These services serve to enhance the capability of impoverished individuals to seize these opportunities. It is estimated that a decrease in infant mortality rate and an increase in primary school enrollment may be achieved in as little as five years if enough social sector provision was made.

Attempts to boost productivity by investing in human capital date back to the early 20th century. Before F.W. Taylor's scientific management concepts were implemented, people were not seen as anything more than expendable tools of production, willing to work around the clock under any circumstances and primarily driven by financial incentives. Companies have been conducting studies and conducting experiments to better understand workers and how to increase their job happiness ever since, all with the goal of boosting productivity without negatively impacting morale or engagement. Various methods have been created and implemented to accomplish these two goals simultaneously. This ongoing body of study is where the notion of QWL first emerged.

The idea of QWL is supported by the literature on leadership and motivation. Maslow illustrated the intricate nature of people by outlining different levels of human longings and fulfillment. Once the fundamental needs are satisfied, people then turn their attention towards fulfilling higher-level requirements. Herzberg, in a further elaboration, introduced the concept of 'hygiene elements' (maintenance factors) that sustain a reasonable level of motivation and 'motivational variables' which have the potential to enhance employee performance. McGregor's Theory Y is based on the premise that, given the right circumstances, individuals may be accountable workers.

Evolution of QWL

Evolving QWL	Characteristics or view
QWL as a variable (1959-1972)	Individual's reaction to work; research on how to improve QWL for individual.
QWL as an approach (1969-1974)	Focus was on the individual, rather than on the effect on the organisation, while seeking to simultaneously affect improvements for the employee and management
QWL as a method (1972-1975)	A set of approach, methods, and techniques for improving the workplace and making work more productive and satisfying.
QWL as a movement (1975-1980)	Ideological statements about the nature of work and employee relations with the company; participative management; and industrial democracy
QWL as everything (1979-1982)	QWL as a panacea against foreign competition, quality problems, low productivity rates, and complaints
QWL as nothing (Future)	In case any QWL projects fail in the future, QWL will be considered to be nothing but temporary "fad"

Source: Nadler and Lawler (1983)s

Several models have been developed to identify the factors that affect QWL. Chart 2 presents a summary of the main models which were used in the model developed by Barcelos and Freitas (2012).

Chart 2: Summary of QWL Evaluation Models

Authors	QWL Evaluation Characteristics
Walton (1973)	Establishes 8 criteria related to economic, political and social factors.
Hackman and Oldham (1975)	Establishes 3 critical psychological stages for 5 basic work dimensions.
Westley (1979)	Establishes 4 categories of problems that can occur in the workplace: Injustice, insecurity, alienation, and anomie.
Werther and Davis (1983)	Establishes 3 groups of elements: organizational, environmental, and behavioral.
Sirgy <i>et al.</i> (2001)	Evaluates QWL in terms of 7 human needs that are divided into two orders: higher (social, self-actualization, knowledge, ethics, and esteem) and lower (health, economic security, and family).
Zhu and Long (2008)	Evaluates QWL in terms of 5 characteristics of the work experience (Position and remuneration; safety and comfort in the workplace; leisure activities; interpersonal harmony and characteristics of the work itself).

Source: the authors

Basic Principles

Humanization of work is fundamental to the QWL's underlying philosophy. To put it simply, it's the process of shaping a workplace in such a way as to encourage employees' initiative and innovation, foster collaboration, and pique their curiosity in developing their own potential. Humanising the workplace may be summed up by four tenets that Herrick and Maccoby have established. Those are the guiding concepts:

- **The principle of SECURITY:**
- **The principle of EQUITY:**
- **The principle of INDIVIDUATION:**
- **The principle of DEMOCRACY:**

The term "quality of work life" may apply to a wide range of factors related to one's time spent at work. Things like management and supervisory style, discretion and independence on the job, a comfortable working environment, a secure workplace, manageable hours, interesting work, and a sense of purpose are all important. The foundation of any good quality of work life (QWL) strategy is the belief that jobs and workplaces should be designed to accommodate as many of an individual's demands as feasible.

The American Centre for Quality of Work Life introduced a comprehensive definition in 1977, stating that "Quality of work life upgrades are characterized as exercises that happen at all levels of an association, meaning to improve hierarchical adequacy by advancing human respect and self-awareness. It's a cycle through which partners in the association - the board, associations, and workers - collaborate to determine the best way to achieve the organization's goals."

QWL is a major improvement over the scientific management norm of task-based specialization and efficiency, which was the emphasis of previous job design. Over time, it perfected a system of strict hierarchy and standardized procedures that allowed it to efficiently investigate its goal via complete division of tasks. The goal was to limit costs by employing incompetent, tedious specialists that could be taught quickly to execute a tiny portion of the task. There was a rigid structure in place that decided what was best for everyone at work and made sure that everyone followed it.

Benefits and Losses of QWL

When employees are unhappy at work, it has a domino effect that causes less output, higher per-unit costs, more employee turnover, and ultimately financial ruin for the company. Low quality of work life is characterized by (i) high rates of absenteeism and employee turnover, (ii) low product quality, (iii) low productivity, (iv) high production costs per unit, (v) human relation conflicts, and (vi) a lack of interest and engagement in one's job.

Broadly speaking, the benefits of Quality of Work Life (QWL) encompass: (a) individuals who are in good health, content, and productive; and (b) companies that are effective, flexible, and profitable. Positive emotions have many positive outcomes, including (i) increased self-esteem, (ii) increased job satisfaction and involvement, (iii) increased commitment to the organization's goals, (iv) enhanced physical and mental health, (v) enhanced personal and professional development, (vi) decreased absenteeism and turnover, and fewer disciplinary issues.

In addition to the aforementioned advantages, joint union-management QWL initiatives also result in enhanced dialogue between the two parties, better contract negotiations, higher wages and benefits, better decision-making from upper management, and a more powerful and cohesive labour movement.

For QWL to be really effective, it requires both the person and the organisation to work together to meet the requirements and expectations of all parties involved. Social objectives like increased economic prosperity or political stability may be aided by enhancements to QWL. They have the potential to address societal ills such as mental illness, unemployment, and substance abuse in the workplace and the home. Moreover, the enhancement of Quality of Work Life (QWL) is also a desirable objective when viewed through the lens of humanitarian principles.

The following factors are derived from the previously discussed ideas and definitions of QWL. As such, the following factors are responsible for establishing QWL. Physical working factors include an optimal temperature, lighting, and pleasant working environment. The company has a built-in heating system that allows it to continue working even when outside temperatures are below freezing. Some of the stores must have been equipped with air conditioning.

How comfortable and stimulating an office is may have a major impact on how productive and happy its staff members are. The ability to get work done is diminished when employees are subjected to stuffy, poorly lit, and overcrowded quarters. When poor working circumstances exist, employees have to use more effort to do the same job that would need considerably less effort under optimal settings. Inadequate working circumstances have been noted to prompt raised exhaustion, carelessness, truancy, absence of discipline, and disobedience among the labor force. These functioning circumstances encompass aspects such as cleanliness, temperature, humidity, cafeteria and welfare facilities, ergonomic working postures, lighting, work surface height, noise levels, workspace availability, strenuous physical demands, and exposure to dust, among others. It seems to reason that the quality of workers' working lives would improve if the company did a good job of providing favorable working circumstances.

Temperature at workplace

- **Lighting**
- **Freedom from excessive supervision and control**
- **Autonomy at work place**
- **Appreciation of merit and talents**
- **Safe and Healthy working conditions**
- **Absence of job stress**

Further Employees should have access to a canteen where they may purchase meals at a discount. The group has to manage a store where basic essentials may be purchased at affordable

prices. The availability of a crèche is mandatory. To support employees' education, the company should provide school tuition assistance and travel benefits.

However, many workplaces lack the essential amenity of a leisure room for their employees.

Worker comforts that contribute to happier employees include: (i) Medical centres, (ii) Medicare benefits after retirement, (iii) Self-Improvement/Educational Allowances, (iv) Children's School Subsidies, and (v) Transportation Subsidies for Students who Attend School Loans for the purchase of automobiles by workers (viii) Pension plans (vii) Low-interest loans for the construction of homes (vi)(xii) Free or reduced-cost meals in the workplace cafeteria; (xiii) Financial support for taking exams leading to certification or licensure; (xiv) Places to have fun, Housing for employees on the property; (xv) a nursery; (xvi) a crèche.

A few examples of employee perks that should be provided by the company include compensation for work-related injuries suffered by employees not covered by workers' compensation, leave travel concessions, interest subsidy for vehicle purchases, subsidised rates on renting unfurnished and furnished housing, and subsidised rates on renting unfurnished and furnished housing to employees.

The organization's commitment to its workers' well-being may be shown in its provision of employment stability, promotion opportunities based on performance, and opportunities for participation in organisational decision-making. The following procedures are used by any organisation with this goal in mind. In terms of (i) job stability, (ii) job growth, (iii) job improvement, and (iv) promotion on the basis of performance, (ix) (x) The opportunity to leverage one's own capabilities (the chance to apply job knowledge and skills), (v) The organization's reputation in society (the positive impact of the organization on society), (v) Employee dedication to their job (a sense of dedication, responsibility, and worry for the association's future), (vi) Worker commitment and impact in their job, (vii) Recognition of abilities and talents, (viii) The disciplinary process, and (x) The organization's societal standing.

The company is obligated to compensate workers on a regular basis in a manner that is both fair and sufficient. The following four criteria must be taken into account. Workers should be provided with (i) a pay or wage that is fair and (ii) allowances that would enable them to cover their necessary living costs. (iii) Bonus payments (Production and yearly bonuses), (iv) Accident and death benefits payable to Employee or Employee's nominee, and (v) Retirement benefits.

Many researchers have tried and failed to pin down specific aspects of this idea. "while others have argued that a focus on fair compensation and job security is more important, there are those who have argued that better working conditions lead to a higher quality of life." In line with Luthansxl's perspective, the objective is to transform the workplace environment in such a way that the interaction among humans, technology, and the organization leads to an elevated quality of life for employees.

Richard E. Walton delves into the concept of quality of work life by outlining eight key employment attributes that constitute the ideal quality of work life (QWL). QWL was also presented as a metric by which he may be judged:

- **Adequate and Fair Compensation:** Thoughts on what constitutes fair pay vary widely. The Fair Wages Committee's definition of "fair pay" is a wage that exceeds the minimum wage but falls below the sustenance level.
- **Safe and Earthy Working Conditions:** Due to humanitarian needs and/or regulatory mandates, most companies provide a risk-free and healthy workplace for their employees. It is in reality in everyone's best advantage to adhere to these guidelines.
- **Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities:** The quality of work life (QWL) is enhanced when workers have greater control over their tasks and when the job involves a complete meaningful task, as opposed to just a partial assignment, which goes against the prevailing belief.
- **Opportunity for Career Growth:** All groups of workers face a lack of upward mobility, either because of educational hurdles or a dearth of available positions at higher levels. Growing one's skillset, body of knowledge, and sense of safety via QWL is the key to a prosperous and secure future.
- **Social Integration in the Work Force:** Factors that play a role in fostering social integration in the workplace encompass impartiality, support from core work teams, a sense of belonging to a community, openness in interpersonal relationships, egalitarianism, and opportunities for career advancement.
- **Constitutionalism in the Work Organisation:** QWL only affords workers constitutional protection up to the point when doing so is desirable, given the constraints it places on

employees. Every decision made by management is scrutinized, and bureaucratic protocols must be adhered to, therefore this inevitably occurs. Privacy, free expression, equality, and due process are only few of the employee rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

- **Work and Quality of Life:** Maintaining a healthy equilibrium between work, leisure, and family obligations is made possible by QWL. Hence, factors related to employment such as overtime, shift work, inconvenient schedules, business trips, relocations, and holidays should not disrupt personal and social responsibilities.
- **Social Relevance of Work:** The development of social significance for productive social action is a major focus of QWL. If an employee believes his or her employment is contributing positively to society, he or she will have a healthy sense of self-worth.
- **Klott, Mundick, and Schuster identified eleven critical QWL concerns. Those people are.**
 - *Pay and Stability of Employment:*
 - *Occupational stress*
 - *Organisational health programmes*
 - *Alternative work schedules:*
 - *Participative management and control of work:*
 - *Recognition*
 - *Congenial worker-supervisor relations:*
 - *Grievance procedure:*
 - *Adequacy of resources:*
 - *Seniority and Meriti promotions*
 - *Employment on permanent basis*
 - Components and Dimensions of a QWL Programme

Demonstrating appreciation for staff can be achieved through various means, such as recognizing their achievements, enriching their job experiences, bestowing distinguished titles upon them, offering well-appointed and enjoyable workspaces, granting club or association memberships, providing vehicles, and organizing vacation excursions.

- ***Congenial worker-supervisor relations***
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- ***Congenial worker-supervisor relations:***
- ***Grievance procedure:***
- ***Adequacy of resources:***
- ***Seniority and meriting promotions:***
- ***Employment on permanent basis:***

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

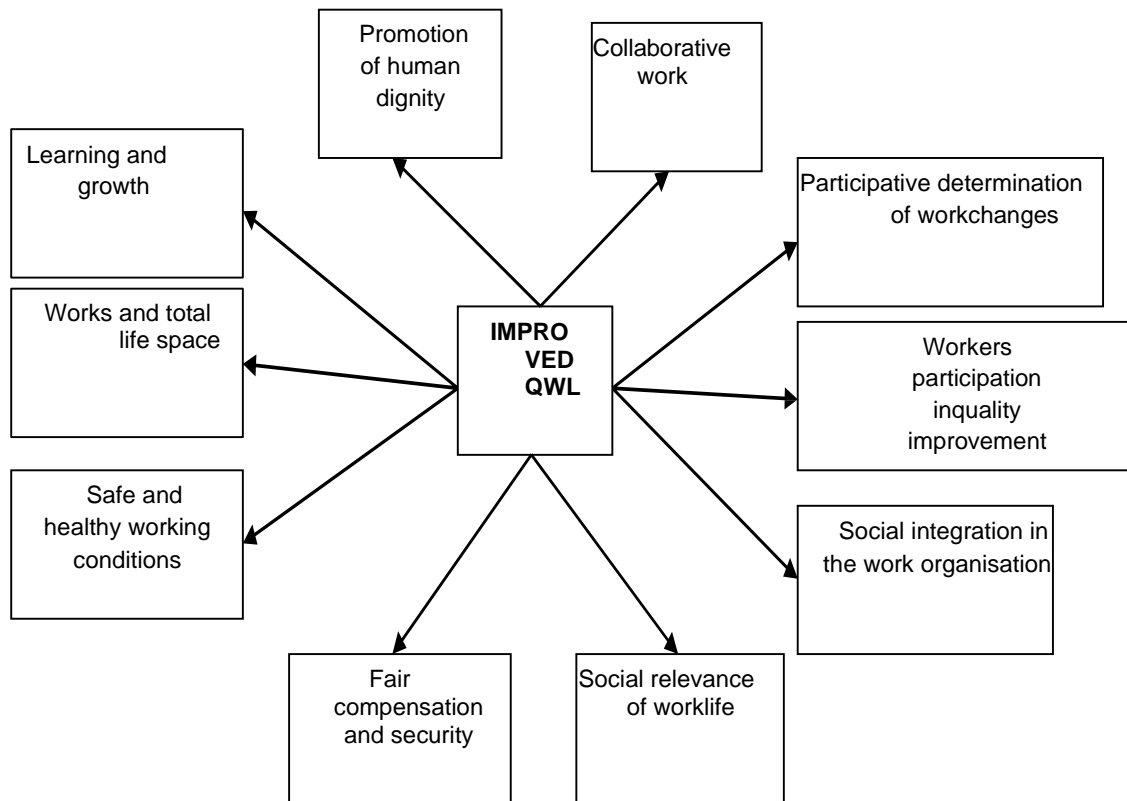


Chart 1: Components of a QWL Programm

Graham S. Lowexliiii proposed a list of 32 work life indicator qualities, which includes:

Absenteeism,2. Practice control,3. Employee support (e.g., Employee assistance programs),4. Empowered local units,5. Error rates,6. Flexible schedules, 7. Foodhours, (Safety and parking concerns Skillssets of peers (18), Availability of peers (19), Twenty (10) Career Enhancement, Position in Government (22) 23) Range of competence, Combination of abilities, Authority, Control, Resources, Changing the subject (27) Respect/Value (28), (30) Time spent on tasks, (31) a good work-life balance, and (32) an excessive workload.

Glaser argues that QWL encompasses more than just guaranteed work, decent pay, and equitable opportunity for advancement. After extensive research, Dr. Benarjee and RojaRanixlv settled on the 11 factors below as indicators of QWL. The items in question are: Conditions at work include: 1, Employee Independence, 2, Employee Connection, 3, Workload Complexity, 4, Compensation, 5, Job Satisfaction, 6, Benefits, 7, Professional Development, 8, Team Cohesion, 9, Employee Involvement, 10, and Job Design.

Quality of work life has been characterised by Herbert Mortonxlvi in terms of six main aspects, which are summed up as follows. Six factors—including economic, social, and political ones—influence a person's experience in the workplace: (1) pay (wages, benefits, and other forms of income), (2) hours and schedules, (3) the nature of the work itself, (4) the physical aspects of the workplace, (5) the internal and external institutional aspects of the workplace, and (6) external and internal economic, social, and political factors.

For the purpose of evaluating the idea of QWL, Saklani has settled on thirteen criteria, including (1) adequate and fair remuneration; (2) Perks and employee welfare provisions; (3) Employment stability; (4) A secure and conducive physical workspace; (5) Work responsibilities and demands; and (6) flexible work hours. Human capital development opportunities (7) expansion possibilities (8) interpersonal connections (10) A system of incentives and punishments that encourages (9) group decision making. (11) Fair treatment of all parties, (12) Balance between work and personal life, and (13) Public perception of the company as a whole.

Mirvis and Lawler (1984) defined the fundamental components of a great work life as a solid workplace, fair compensation, equal job prospects, and avenues for career progression. These elements are conjectured to be associated with employee contentment concerning their pay, working hours, and job conditions. Job satisfaction, employee participation, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, stress, organisational commitment, and intention to leave are only few of the measures of quality of working life cited by Baba and Jamal (1991) that considering this aspect as part of the overall quality of one's working life is something that has to be looked at.

Balaram, et al.(2015)I have adopted the following 14 dimensions as metrics of QWL. And those things are: A person's quality of life may be affected in many ways, including but not limited to their access to: (1) education (2) housing (3) health (4) employment and working conditions (5) income (6) clothing (7) food (8) transportation (10) fuel and electricity (11) environment and pollution (12) recreation (13) social security and (14) habits.

Difficulties of QWL

Despite having the potential to be effective procedures, QWL initiatives in their collaborative versions (including combined union-management activity) are laden with challenges. Whether initiated by management, the union, or a third party, QWL initiatives have proven effective in a variety of contexts and approaches. Lehrer provides a list of prerequisites that make it easier to deal with obstacles. They are: (i) Mutual recognition and agreement on the existence and nature of the parties' shared concerns, Assertion (ii) that all collaborative efforts will be really collaborative and beneficial to each party's long-term health and vitality. (iii) Top management, union leaders, and those in middle and upper management and supervision all see QWL ideas as the norm. (iv) A hierarchical framework to direct the QWL project's operations, Having a charter in place for QWL committees and project activities that lays out roles, duties, authority, etc.,

Clear and unambiguous acknowledgment of the advantages each party anticipates receiving, and an agreement that shared ownership of the full QWL is a fact, (vii) A system for participation, a plan for dealing with serious challenges, opportunities to have an impact on both a personal level and the organisation as a whole, and training in how to solve complex issues.

Conclusion

Quality of work life (QWL) describes how desirable or undesirable a certain work setting is for employees. A willing worker exerts his best efforts to attain organisational objectives. Keeping employees happy in a demanding workplace where there are also plenty of possibilities may be a daunting challenge. Pay and interpersonal satisfaction at work, as well as broader variables that contribute to a sense of fulfillment and happiness in one's life. Ensuring a low-stress environment and a high-quality work life is essential for the organization to retain its talent.

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