

Investigating the relationship between quality of working life (based on Walton's model) and employees' performance (based on annual performance evaluation scores) in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi.

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Abstract:

Nowadays the quality of working life is the key to success in any organization. Improving employees' performance and promoting it to the optimum level has been one of the main concerns of managers recently. High quality of working life is essential for organizations which care about staff recruitment and survival, so the quality of working life is one of the important variables which have been noted by many managers who wish to evaluate the performance of their employees, Therefore the aim of present study is investigating the relationship between quality of working life and employees' performance.

The present study is apply in terms of objectives and descriptive- analytical in terms of method, the study population includes the staff of Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study) who are 150 people and the sample size are 108 people (based on Morgan formula). According to the characteristics of the study population stratified sampling method was used to coordinate with the size of the levels in which any job level was considered a class and each employee was considered a unit.

The tool for gathering the data for assessing the quality of working life was Richard Walton standard questionnaire and to measure the employees' performance, performance evaluation scores for the year 2012 were considered.

The research result indicates that there is a appositive relationship between quality of working life and employees' performance. Ranking the elements based on feridman test is as follows:

1. Chance of growth and security
2. Safe work conditions
3. Development of capacities
4. Social relevance of the work in the life
5. Fair and appropriate compensation
6. Constitutionalism
7. Social integration in the organization
8. work and the total space of life

Also in order to compare the performance of employees, scores of performance evaluation for the year 2011 collected & compared with scores of performance evaluation for the year 2012 and the result shows 2% growth in the year 2012.

Keywords: quality of working life, employees' performance, employees' performance evaluation score.

Introduction:

Recently the quality of working life is the key to success in any organization. quality of working life is an important variable noted by many managers who are to assess the performance of their employees. In organizational investigations, employees are considered as smart decision-making who are promoted for work and view the work based on a favorable balance between the rewards given and what is expected from them. Quality of working life has direct relation with their spirits and spirits have direct impact on leaving the job. So, ignoring quality of working life by creating fatigue and dissatisfaction indirectly causes low spirits in the employees, increases their absence at work, leaving job and their psychological tension. So, invigorating working environment through the use of the techniques of quality working life will be able overcome the basic needs of employees [9].

Problem Statement:

Investigating about working conditions of the staff in organizations and their interest and enthusiasm for doing their job is an important issue to be dealt with. Work has different meaning for different people but generally it can be said that at the core of any work system's configuration are the tasks and roles performed by employees in their jobs – 'the set of activities that are undertaken to develop, produce and deliver a product – that is, a physical and/or information good and service' [4].

Also, today employee's performance is the main concern in many organizations especially executive ones and efficient management depends on measuring, planning and improving organizational performance.

Regarding the points mentioned, it can be claimed that theory of quality of working life on one hand notes the factors affecting organizational development and growth and on the other hand suggests solutions for increasing efficiency of employees' performance and organizations. If real needs of employees are not identified and met on time, there will a chance of their leaving the organization. So, considering and studying about the employees' quality of work life and its relation with their performance will be highly effective and this point has got the attention of managers in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study). Therefore, this research is to investigate the relation between quality of work life (base on Walton model) and the employees' performance (base on annual performance evaluation scores) in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study).

The objectives of research:**The main objective of research:**

Investigating the relation between quality of working life (based on Walton's model) and employees' performance (based on annual performance evaluation scores) in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study).

The secondary objectives of research:

1. investigating the position of quality of working life in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study).
2. Investigating the position of employees' performance in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study) by using performance evaluation scores for the year 2012.
3. Presenting suggestions to improve the quality of working life and performance of employees in Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study).

The hypothesis of research:**The main hypothesis of research:**

There is a positive relationship between quality of working life (based on Walton's model) and employees' performance.

The secondary hypothesis of research:

1. There is a positive relationship between fair and appropriate compensation & employees' performance.
2. There is a positive relationship between safe work conditions & employees' performance.
3. There is a positive relationship between development of capacities & employees' performance.
4. There is a positive relationship between chance of growth and security & employees' performance.
5. There is a positive relationship between social integration in the organization & employees' performance.
6. There is a positive relationship between constitutionalism & employees' performance.
7. There is a positive relationship between social relevance of the work in the life & employees' performance.
8. There is a positive relationship between work and the total space of life & employees' performance.

The model of research :

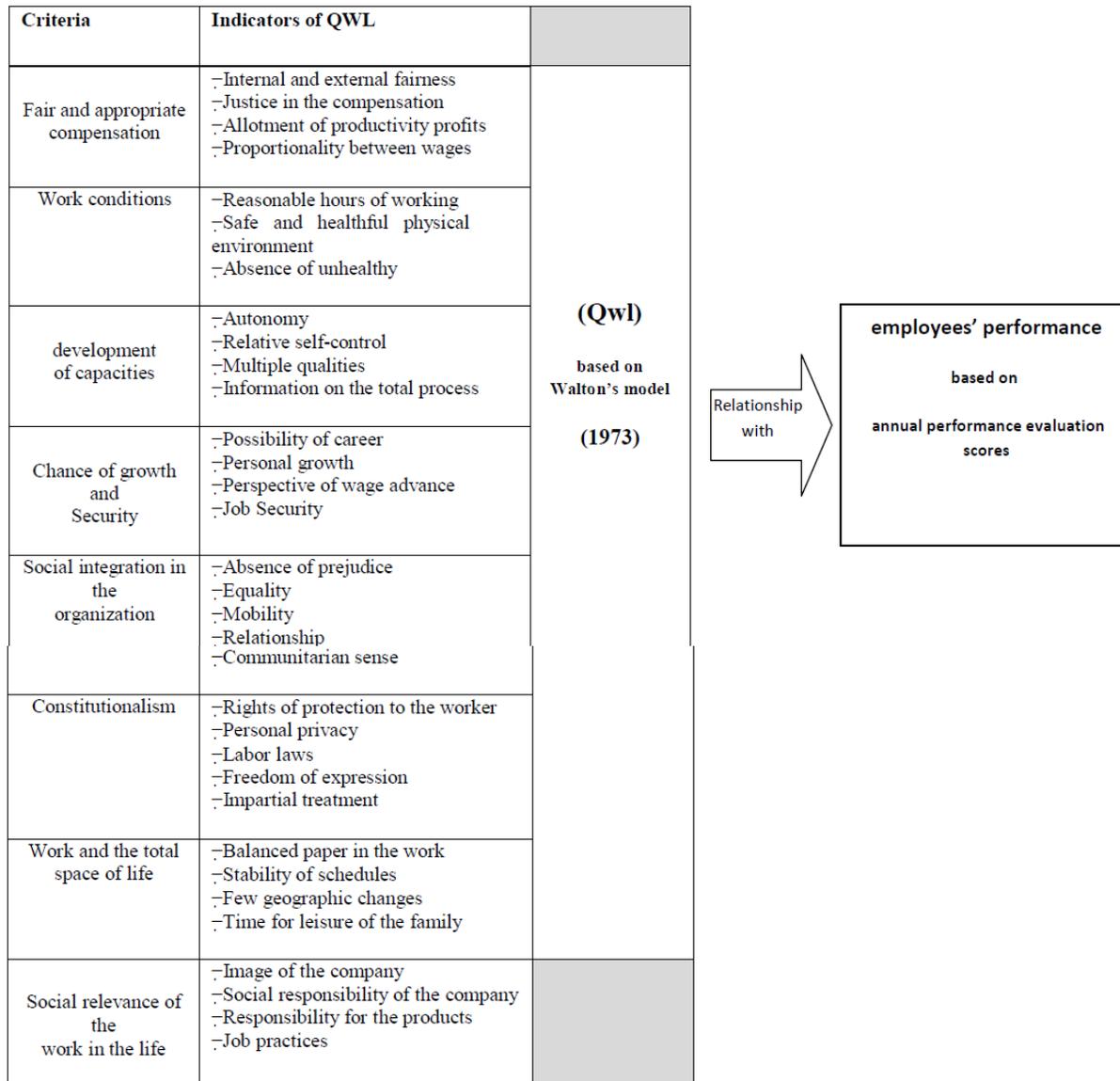


Fig (1): The conceptual model of research

Literature review

Quality of working life:

Most of event in recent years which have happened in the context of decentralization and reducing organizational layers, participative management, and performance management and so on are the key to increasing efficiency of human resources. The plan of quality of working life includes any improvement in the organizational culture which supports growth and development of organization's staff. Therefore, reviving the employees by improving the quality of working life is the key to success for any organization [11].

Definition of quality of working life by human resource theorists from different perspectives:

Scientists and theorists in organizational development have defined quality of working life from different views which we are going to discuss:

Quality of working life is a critical concept with having lots of importance in employees life. Quality of work life indicates a proper balance both in work and personal life which also ensure organizational productivity and employees job satisfaction [1].

According to J. Lloyd Suttle, quality of work life is the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. More specifically, QWL may be set into operation in terms of employees perceptions of their physical and psychological wellbeing at work [15].

Today quality of working life is a dynamic multidimensional concept that includes such concepts as job security, rewarding systems, promotional opportunities, and involvement in decision-making processes. Akdere (2006) holds that researchers interested in the concept of quality of work life are looking for new mechanisms to hel employees to balance their work and personal lives [2].

An effective Quality of Working Life (QWL) is basically a tool to improve working conditions (an employee's perspective) and greater organizational efficiency(mainly from an employer's perspective) [22].

According Robins (1990) QWL is "a process by which an organization responds to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work". The key elements of QWL in the literature include job security, job satisfaction, better reward system, employee benefits, employee involvement and organizational performance. QWL practice involves acquiring, training, developing, motivating and appraising for the best performance of the employees as per organizational objectives. Indeed, core elements of QWL are of working conditions, employee job satisfaction, employees' behavioral aspects, and employees' financial and non-financial benefits, growth and development, and supervision [23].

According to Dessler (1981), quality of working life was seen as the level to which employees are able to satisfy their personal needs not only in terms of material matters but also of self respect, contentment and an opportunity to use their talents make contribution and for personal growth. So it is very important for an organization to provide employees proper valuation which will satisfy them and will ensure the productivity [14].

"Edgar" and "Baldwin" argue that quality of working life is a set of real work situation in organization, and believe that quality of work life indicate employee's attitudes and feelings toward their own activities. therefore, organization, in order to improve the quality of employee's life, develops more opportunities to influence personnel and cooperating on effectiveness of the organization [20].

QWL covers a person's perception or feelings about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relationships and intrinsic meaning in a person's life. The basic concept underlying the QWL is what has come to known as "humanization of work". It involves the development of an environment of work that stimulates the creative ability of the employees and generates cooperation and a strong work culture. Culture is made up of the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors shared by a group of people [18].

Walton (1980) divided QWL main components into four categories. According to him, the affecting factors on QWL include: work meaningfulness, work social and organizational equilibrium, work challenge and richness [6].

Lau (2000) found that QWL companies have a higher growth rate as measured by the fiveyear trends of sales growth and asset growth [5].

The quality of working life (QWL) aims at achieving an effective work place environment that satisfies both the organizational and personal needs and values of employees , promoting well being by job security, job satisfaction, development and thereby helping to maintain a better balance between work and non-work life [16].

The variation within the five dimensions of the QWL, *open ways to solve work conflicts, work influence, supervisory work, social openness at workplace and intrinsic rewards of work*, is also pretty small between the years. Also, their mutual ranking remains the same, intrinsic rewards of work ranking highest and open ways to solve work conflict lowest [7].

Objectives of quality of working life :

The most common benefits of quality of working life programs, including job satisfaction, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower rates of complaints and fewer employees leaving the service in its [8].

In an organization, a high level of quality of working life is necessary to continue to attract and retain employee. Quality of work life is mainly defined as “satisfying an employee’s needs via the resources, activities and outcomes that arise from involvement in the workplace .Normala proposes that the key constructs of QWL are higher payment, job security, better reward systems, growth opportunity and participative groups among others. More importantly, various studies on work life confirm that what happens in the workplace has considerable influence on individuals and their families, So it is vital to enhance the QWL in order to reduce the negative effects of lower QWL levels [3].

Excellent quality of working life is gained through paying attention to the philosophy of employees’ relations and it includes attempts to use high quality work life, which means regular attempts in an organization which gives its employees bigger chances to affect their work and collaborate in the overall effectiveness of the organization. Work life quality means having appropriate supervision, suitable working conditions, good pays and benefits and above all creating challenging, satisfying and collaborative working environment [17].

Quality of work life is an important thing. Some studies mentioned the fact that a happy worker is a productive worker; a happy worker is a worker who devoted and committed to the organization. The quality of work life also aims to make work more attractive and provide benefits to workers .it is important to realize that career planning and development process involves assessment of workers and organizations that will enhance success in one's career and also can reduce negative behavior and improve the quality of workers in the organization. Thus career development program which will be able to meet organizational needs and the workers needs [24].

Recently Serey (2006), observed in his research on QWL, that career growth opportunity is a crucial factor determining constructs of QWL. He concluded that QWL includes (i) an opportunity to realize one’s potential and utilize one’s talents, to excel in challenging situations that require decision making, taking initiative and self-direction; (ii) a meaningful activity perceived worthwhile by the individuals involved; (iii) an activity in which one has clarity of role necessary for the achievement of some overall goals; and (iv) a feeling of belongingness and pride associated with what one is doing and moreover doing it well. This aspect of meaningful and satisfying work is generally integrated with aspects of career related variables, and assumed to be more favorable to QWL [19].

Employees’ performance:

Decreasing staff’s commitment to the organization is one of detrimental factors in increasing the individual’s efficiency and performance. The employees who feel committed to their organization leave their job less than those who don’t feel committed [10].

Definition of employees’ performance:

The scientific definition of performance is the sum of behaviors associated with the job. According to this definition the concept of performance is beyond productivity [13].

Performance evaluation

Definition of performance evaluation:

Performance evaluation is the formal process of providing appropriate feedback (awareness of positive and negative result of the work) for employees about their job performance. Performance evaluation is any organizational decision regarding the status of the employees; keeping, dismissing, promoting, demoting, revenge, decreasing or increasing the payments. And it requires four decisions to make: what do we assess? Who should do the evaluation? Which procedure should we use for evaluation? How do we convey the results of evaluation? [12].

Research Methodology:

The presented research is applied in terms of objectives and descriptive- analytical in terms of method and considering the time, it is cross-sectional and the data were gathers in field and non-field data collection method. In order to assess the quality of work life, Walton standard questionnaire was used (the researcher has used the survey method for gathering the required data and completing the questionnaires) and in order to assess the employees’ performance, the annual performance evaluation forms were used. The study population was consisted of the staff of Water and Wastewater Office, Khorasan Razavi (Mashhad case study) who were 150 people.

Table (1) : The total of employees in the different posts of organization in the study population

The number of employees	The posts of organization	row
6	supervisour	1
32	manager	2
70	specialist	3
42	technician	4
150	Total	5

The sampel size (based on kokran formula) is 108 people .

Table (2) : The sample of employees in the different posts of organization in the study population

The number of employees	The posts of organization	row
6	supervisour	1
22	manager	2
51	specialist	3
29	technician	4
108	Total	5

Results & discussion

Analyzing the results of test of hypothesis:

There is a positive relationship	Results	The range of accepting	The Amount of eventuality	Pierson coefficient of correlation	Employees' Performance &
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.473	QWL
+	0.007<0.05	0.05	0.007	0.256	fair and appropriate compensation
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.396	Safework conditions
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.461	development of capacities
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.405	chance of growth and security
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.384	social integration in the organization
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.352	Constitutionalism
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.488	social relevance of the work in the life
+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	0.355	work and the total space of life

Table (3) : Investigating the relationship between quality of working life & the employees' performance

The results of the position of quality of working life and its aspects in the study population:

unDesired position	Desired position	result	The range of accepting	The Amount of eventuality	factors
	+	0.007<0.05	0.05	0.007	QWL
+		0.43>0.05	0.05	0.43	fair and appropriate compensation
	+	0.0003<0.05	0.05	0.0003	Safework conditions
	+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	development of capacities
	+	0.0001<0.05	0.05	0.0001	chance of growth and security
+		0.25>0.05	0.05	0.25	social integration in the organization
+		0.1>0.05	0.05	0.1	Constitutionalism
	+	0.0007<0.05	0.05	0.0007	social relevance of the work in the life
+		0.86>0.05	0.05	0.86	work and the total space of life

Table (4): Investigating the position of quality of working life and its aspects in the study population

The priority & the amount of affect of quality of working life on employees’ performance:

It can be stated that the quality of working life and employees’ performance have linear relationship, Regarding the regression coefficients, the affect of quality of working life & its aspects on employees’ performance and the priority of each of the factors are as follows:

priority	The amount of affect	Standard regression coefficients	factors
	12%	0.12	QWL
1	23.6%	0.236	chance of growth and security
2	19.2%	0.192	Safework conditions
3	17.8%	0.178	development of capacities
4	17.7%	0.177	social relevance of the work in the life
5	11%	0.11	fair and appropriate compensation
6	4.5%	0.045	Constitutionalism
7	4.3%	0.043	social integration in the organization
8	2%	0.02	work and the total space of life

Table (5) : The priority & the affect of quality of working life and its aspects on employees’ performance

The results of investigating the employees’ performance in the study population (in the years 2011 & 2012):

a. Investigating the employees’ performance in the study population:

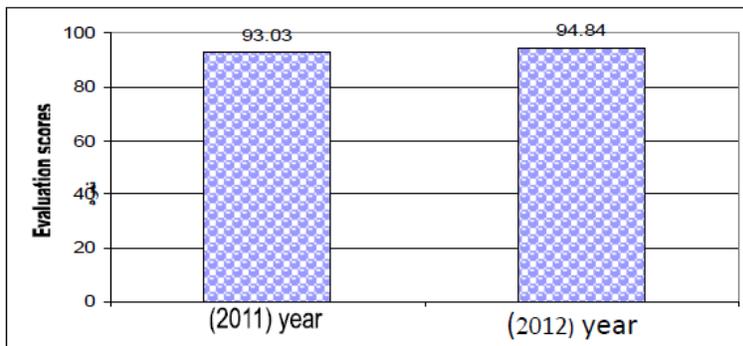
(year) 2012	(year) 2011	Descriptive analysis
94.84	93.03	The mean of evaluation scores
78	70	The minimum of evaluation scores
100	100	The maximum of evaluation scores

Table (6) : The employees’ preformance evaluation scores

b. Investigating the growth of employees’ performance in the study population .

The difference of averages	(year) 2012	(year) 2011	Descriptive analysis
1.8	94.84	93.03	The Average Of evaluation scores

Table (7) : The growth of employees’ performance in the study population



Diagram(1) : The statistical results of employees’ performance evaluation scores

According to the datas of table (6), the following results are obtained :

Employees’ performance is not similar in the years 2011 & 2012 and their mean difference is 1.8 and regarding diagram (1), employees’ performance in the year 2012 , shows %2 growth compared with the year 2011.

Recommendation :

Results from the research indicate that (with 95% certainty) there is a positive relationship between quality of working life & its aspects and employees’ performance .

1.In order to improve fair and appropriate compensation and its direct relationship with performance the following cases are suggested:

Designing and implementing the system of fair and reasonable salary by analyzing different professions in the organization.Considering motivational theories like the equality theory by taking in to account: accordance between the salary and the criteria of a common social life, equal pay for equal work, accordance between the job and the salary received, paying the employees on time (based on the law).Constant supervising and reviewing the system of pays and rewards by senior managers of the organization with considering work conditions and toughness, position, career characteristics and the organizational duties of employees.

2.Regarding the accordance between the results of researches by Sadri, & Goveas (2013) and Yukthamarani (2013) and also Heiskanen.& Jokinen (2011) and the results of the presented

research, in order to improve safe work conditions and their direct relation with performance and expansion of effective organization the following items are suggested:

Determining fair and reasonable work hours. Abiding to the principles of Labor Law and international safety and health standards in work environment. Using and reviewing the required criteria in order to provide a healthy and secure environment (having mental comfort at work) Being equipped with appropriate and timely health care system.

3. Regarding the accordance between the results of researches by Sheel (2012) and also Zohurul Islam & Siengthai (2009) with the results of this research on development of capacities and its direct relation with performance, the following items are suggested:

Using creativity and bedding for jobs which require a wide range of skills and creating a culture based on trust and institutionalizing the pattern of learning-teaching organization and promoting the level of some cases like delegation, providing and encouraging continuing education, avoiding excessive horizontal or vertical specialization of work .

4. Regarding the accordance between the results of the researches by Baleghizadeh & Gordani (2012) with the results of the presented research on chance of growth & security and its direct relation with performance the following items are suggested:

Designing jobs in order to pave the way for growing potential abilities and using new skills, also encouraging and bedding for continuing education. Performing supportive measures by the organization guarantee job security and stability.

5. Regarding the accordance between the results of researches by Sankar & Mohanraj (2013) and Heiskanen & Jokinen (2011) with the results of this research on social integration in the organization and its direct relation with performance, the following items are suggested:

Creating unity and trust among employees and working teams and indiscrimination among employees. Recruiting talented deserving people and increasing a sense of commitment and loyalty to the organization. Not being biased towards race or gender, also socializing in the organization and individuals' freedom to express ideas and feelings.

6. Regarding the accordance between the results of research by Zohurul Islam & Siengthai (2009) with the results of this research on constitutionalism in the organization and its direct relation with performance , the following items are suggested:

Implementing labor laws, regulations and internal guidelines and dealing fairly with employees and implementing legal procedures to address complaints and suggestions and providing conditions for free speech and complaint (in the context of regulations) without fear. Promoting items like abiding to the law by managers, briefing sessions on the importance of laws and policies in administrative and organizational relationships.

7. Regarding the accordance between the results of research by Salmani (2005) with the results of this research on social relevance of the work in the life and its direct relation with performance, the following items are suggested:

Institutionalizing the importance of paying attention to social responsibility with bedding for appropriate culture. Supporting team work, caring for free informal relations and supporting the

employees in case of social problems. optimum interaction between the organization and governmental or private organizations. promoting the level of case like delegation and involving them in organizational decision-making.

8. Regarding the accordance between the results of researches by Sadri & Goveas (2013) and Baleghizadeh & Gordani (2012) with the results of the presented research on work and the total space of life and its direct relation with performance, the following items are suggested:

Setting reasonable work hours and considering pay benefits in order to maximize performance. Creating healthy and joyful atmosphere at work to elevate employees' spirits and its positive mutual effect of personal and work life.

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