A Case Study on Benefits of Quality of Work Life to Employees and Organizations in India

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Abstract- The goal of quality of work life current scenario is to identify and implement alternative programs to improve the quality of professional as well as personal life of an organization's employees. Quality of work life provides opportunities of employees and organization. The success of any organization is highly dependent on how it attracts recruits, motivates, and retains its workforce. Today's organizations need to be more flexible so that they are equipped to develop their workforce and enjoy their commitment. The quality of work life current scenario approach considers people as an 'asset' to the organization rather than as 'costs'. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. This paper focus on quality of work life factors like Team work, boss factor, communication, influence.

Indexed Terms- QWL (Quality of Work Life), Organisation, employees, HR (Human Resource).

I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of work life (QWL) is a wide term covering an immense variety of programmes, techniques, theories and management styles through which organizations and jobs are designed so as grant employees more autonomy, responsibility and authority than is usually done. It is a comprehensive, department- wide program designated to improve employee satisfaction, strengthening workplace learning and helping employees. A high quality of work life is essential for organizations to continue, to attract and retain employees. Many factors contribute to QWL which includes adequate and fair remuneration, safe and healthy working conditions and social integration in the work organization that enables an individual to develop and use all his or her capacities; it holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect. Quality of work life is a process by which an organization attempts to unleash the creative potential of its personnel by involving them in decisions affecting their work lives. This approach motivates people by satisfying not only their economic needs but also their social and psychological ones. To satisfy the new generation workforce, organizations need to concentrate on job designs and organization of work. Further, today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives.

- Definition

QWL define it is the feelings that Employees have towards their jobs, colleagues and organizations that ignite a chain leading to the organizations' growth and profitability. A good feeling towards their job means the employees feel happy doing work which will lead to a productive work environment. This definition provides an insight that the satisfying work environment is considered to provide better QWL. Quality of work life is ensured when members of an organization are able to satisfy their important personal needs through their experiences in the organization.

II. QUALITY OF WORK LIFE PROGRAMS

The term refers to the favourableness or unfavourableness of a total job environment for people. QWL programs are another way in which organisations recognise their responsibility to develop

jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for economic health of the organisation. The elements in a typical QWL program include – open communications, equitable reward systems, a concern for employee job security and satisfying careers and participation in decision making. Many early QWL efforts focus on job enrichment. In addition to improving the work system, QWL programs usually emphasise development of employee skills, the reduction of occupational stress and the development of more co-operative labour-management relations. Human resource departments are involved with efforts to improve productivity through changes in employee relations. QWL means having good supervision, good working conditions, good pay and benefits and an interesting, challenging and rewarding job. High QWL is sought through an employee relations philosophy that encourages the use of QWL efforts, which are systematic attempts by an organisation to give workers greater opportunities to affect their jobs and their contributions to the organisation's overall effectiveness.

III. BENEFITS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE TO EMPLOYEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- The potential to attract high quality, innovative and productive staff in an increasingly competitive labour market
- Higher levels of staff morale, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, dedication and loyalty amongst existing employees resulting in retention of current employees whose skills, knowledge and talents are invaluable.
- An enhanced public perception of the organisation as one that demonstrates an appreciation of flexibility in work to assist staff to manage their work-life balance. Better able to manage multiple responsibilities without feeling guilty about sacrificing priorities at work or outside.
- A good human resource practice would encourage professionals to be more productive while enjoying their work. Therefore, QWL is becoming important human resource issue in all organizations.

IV. THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE

The role of human resource department in QWL efforts varies widely. In some organisations, top management appoints an executive to ensure that QWL and productivity efforts occur throughout the organisation. In most cases, these executives have a small staff and must rely on the human resource department for help with employee training, communications, attitude survey feedback, and similar assistance. In other organisations, the department is responsible for initiating and directing the firm's QWL and productivity efforts. Perhaps the most crucial role of the department is winning the support of key managers. Management support – particularly top management support appears to be an almost universal prerequisite for successful QWL programs.

4.1   Quality of work life –as HR strategy – an analysis
Today's workforce consists of literate workers who expect more than just money from their work. In the modern scenario, QWL as a strategy of Human Resource Management is being recognised as the ultimate key for development among all the work systems, not merely as a concession. This is integral to any organisation towards its wholesome growth. This is attempted on par with strategies of Customer Relation Management.

4.2   Strategy and Tactics
Over the years, since industrial revolution, much experimentation has gone into exploiting potential of human capital in work areas either explicitly.

4.3   Quality of Work Life Factors
To cite some examples, employers in certain software companies have provided infrastructure to train the children of workers in vocational activities including computer education, so that the workers need not engage their attention on this aspect. Employee care initiatives taken by certain companies include creation of Hobby clubs, Fun and Leisure Clubs for the physical and psychological well-bigness of workers and their families. After all, the workers are inexorably linked to the welfare of their families, as it is their primary concern.

4.4 Teamwork

Teamwork is the new mantra of modern day people's excellence strategy. Today's teams are self- propelled ones. The modern manager has to strive at the group coherence for common cause of the project. The ideal team has wider discretion and sense of responsibility than before as how best to go about with its business. Here, each member can find a new sense of belonging to each other in the unit and concentrate on the group's new responsibility towards employer's goals. This will boost the coziness and morale of members in the positive environment created by each other's trust. Positive energies, free of workplace anxiety, will garner better working results. Involvement in teamwork deters deserters and employer need not bother himself over the detention exercises and save money on motivation and campaigns.

4.5 Supervisor Factor

Gone are the days when employers controlled workers by suppressing the initiative and independence by berating their brilliance and skills, by designing and entrusting arduous and monotonous jobs and offer mere sops in terms of wages and weekly off. Trust develops when managers pay some attention to the welfare of the workers and treat them well by being honest in their relations. The employer should keep in mind that every unpaid hour of overtime the worker spends on work is an hour less spent with the family.

4.6 Involvement and Communication

Multi-skilling and exposing workers to different lines of activity in the unit indirectly leads to the greater involvement and better job security of worker in the organization. The employer too, can make use of the varied skills to any altered situations of restructuring and other market adaptations. Thus, the monotony of work life can be alleviated. The employer, armed with the depth of cross- trained human resources, need not go hunting for new talent and thus save on the unspent pay packets, which can be spent usefully on the amenities for workers. No doubt, rivals should be envying him for this edge.

The change should be apparent in mutual trust and confidence towards effective understanding of the needs of worker and employer. The new knowledge-based workers are mostly young in the fields of technology and management. They are more forthcoming in trusting the boss and older peers. Now, all modern managements are cognizant of the innate desire of workers to be accepted as part of the organization for identity and other social reasons.

4.7 Influences

Overwork is tolerated in emerging industries unlike government departments as part of the game and work culture. This is so, what with the soaring competition among the tightly contested players. The point is empowerment of workforce in the area of involvement. All said and done, the workers are considered as the invisible branch ambassadors and internal customers in certain industries. It is evident that most of the managements are increasingly realizing that quality alone stands to gain in the ultimate analysis. Restructuring the industrial relations in work area is the key for improving the quality of product and the price of the stock. Without creating supportive environment in restructured environment, higher quality of work cannot be extracted. It is already high time the older theories of industrial relations should be unlearnt.

4.8 QWL through employee involvement

One of the most common methods used to create QWL is employee involvement. Employee involvement (EI) consists of a variety of systematic methods that empower employees to participate in the decisions that affect them and their relationship with the organization. Through (EI), employees feel a sense of responsibility, even "ownership" of decisions in which they participate. To be successful, however, EI must be more than just a systematic approach; it must become part of the organization's culture by being part of management's philosophy. Some companies have had this philosophy ingrained in their corporate structure for decades; Hewlett-Packard, IBM, General Motors, Ford, etc.

4.9 Pygmalion Effect

The implications for managers and human resource specialists are to create an organizational culture that truly treats people as though they are experts at their jobs and empowers them to use that expertise. When management does this, a Pygmalion effect may result, which occurs when people live up to the high expectations that others have of them. If management further assumes that people want to contribute and

seek ways to tap that contribution, better decisions, improved productivity and a higher QWL are likely.

4.10 Quality Circles

Quality circles are small groups of employees who meet regularly with their common leader to identify and solve work-related problems. They are a highly specific form of team building, which are common in Japan and gained popularity in North America in the late 1970s and early 1980s. By the 1980s most medium- and large-sized Japanese firms had quality control circles for hourly employees. This effort began as a quality improvement program but has since become a routine procedure for many Japanese managers and a corners tome of QWL efforts in many Japanese firms. Several characteristics make this approach unique. First, membership in the circle is voluntary for both the leader (usually the supervisor) and the members (usually hourly workers). Secondly, the creation of quality circles is usually preceded by in-house training. For supervisors these sessions typically last for two or three days. Most of the time is devoted to discussions of small-group dynamics, leadership skills, and indoctrination in the QWL and quality circle philosophies. Management may suggest problems of concern, but the group is empowered to decide which ones to select. Ideally, the selection process is not by democratic vote but is arrived at by consensus, whereby everyone agrees on the problem to be tackled. (If management has been pressing problems that need to be solved, these problems can be handled in the same way that they were resolved before the introduction of quality circles). When employees are allowed to select the problems they want to work on, they are likely to be more motivated to find solutions. And they are also more likely to be motivated to stay on as members of the circle and solve additional problems in the future.

4.11 Socio technical Systems

Another intervention to improve QWL is the use of socio technical systems. Socio technical systems are interventions in the work situation that restructure the work, the work groups, and the relationship between workers and the technologies they use to do their jobs. More than just enlarging or enriching a job, these approaches may result in more radical changes in the work environment.

4.12 Autonomous Work Groups

A more common, albeit still rare, approach to employee involvement is the use of autonomous work groups. These are teams of workers, without a formal company- appointed leader, who decide among themselves most decisions traditionally handled by supervisors. The key feature of these groups is a high degree of self-determination by employees in the management of their day-to-day work. Typically this includes collective control over the pace of work, distribution of tasks, organization of breaks, and collective participation in the recruitment and training of new members. Direct supervision is often necessary. QWL is more likely to improve as workers demand jobs with more behavioral elements. These demands will probably emerge from an increasingly diverse and educated work force that expects more challenges and more autonomy in its jobs – such as worker participation in decisions traditionally reserved for management.

V. BENEFITS OF IMPROVING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Aiding employee recruitment and retention
- More employees may stay on in a job, return after a break or take a job with one company over another if they can match their other needs better with those of their paid work.
- Employers who support their staff in this way often gain the bonus of loyalty from those staff.
- Reducing absenteeism
- Workers (including their managers) who are healthy and not over-stressed may be more efficient.
- Improving the quality of people's working lives
- Minimizing work-life role conflict can help prevent role overload and help people have a more satisfying working life, fulfilling their potential both in paid work and outside it.

- Quality of work life measures in organizations: Opportunity to use and development human capabilities: Contrary to the traditional assumptions, QWL is improved 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. For that

Retail sector (like big bazaar, Wall mart and Marks and Spencer) has been so concerned. Further, QWL provides for opportunities like autonomy in work and participation in planning in order to use human capabilities.

- Opportunity for Career Growth: Main reason why employees prefer Retail sectors is that they provide lot of opportunities. Most Retail sector's QWL provides future opportunity for continued growth and security by expanding one's capabilities, knowledge and qualifications and prepare them to accept responsibilities at higher levels.

- Participative management style and recognition: It is the one of the most important quality in work that Retail sector is providing in current scenario. Flat organizational structures help organizations facilitate employee participation. A participative management style improves the quality of work life. Workers feel that they have control over their work processes and they also offer innovative ideas to improve them. Recognition also helps to motivate employees to perform better. Recognition can be in the form of rewarding employees for jobs well done.

- Constitutionalism in the Work Organization: Nowadays QWL in Retail sector is providing 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.

- Work-life balance: In most of the Retail sectors relaxation time is provided for the employees and tips are offered to balance their personal and professional lives. They don't believe in straining employee's personal and social life by forcing on them demanding working hours, overtime work, business travel, untimely transfers etc. Retail sector believes that balanced work-life can lead to greater employee productivity. With the progressive shift of the economy towards a knowledge economy, the meaning and Importance of tile quality of work life is also assuming a new significance.

- 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. As retailing is mainly a societal process so it is beneficial for both the employees and organization.

- 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 which offers the individual the leisure time, flexible hours of work is preferred. This QWL in Retail sector is attracting more and more employees.

- Recognition: Recognizing 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.

- Pay and stability of employment: Good pay still dominates most of the other factors in employee satisfaction. Majority of the retail outlets like Wall mart, big bazaar, Marks and Spencer believe that 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. Fair compensation and job security Safe and healthy working conditions.

VI. CONCLUSION

Quality-of-work-life programs go beyond work/life programs by focusing attention less on employee needs outside of work and realizing that job stress and

the quality of life at work is even more direct bearing on worker satisfaction. The main elements of the QWL, such as health and well-being, job security, job satisfaction, competence development, balance between work and non-work life are expected to help human resource practitioners as adult educators to co-design the IT work with humanistic factors. This will ensure the smooth transition of the contemporary workforce towards a knowledge based workforce. Open communications, mentoring programs, and fostering more amicable relationships among workers are some of the ways employers are improving the quality of work life. On the other side organisation must focused effective working conditions to their employee because work is an integral part of employee everyday life. As it is their livelihood or career or business on an average they spend around 12 hours daily in the work place. That is one third of their entire life. It does not influence the overall quality of their life. It should yield job satisfaction, give pieces of mine, of fulfilment of having done a task as it is expected without any flaw and having spent the time fruitfully, constructively and purposefully. Even if it a small step towards of their life time goal at the end of the day it gives satisfaction and eagerness to look forwarded the next day.

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