A Study of Quality of Work Life and Organizational Commitment amongst Academicians

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Quality of Work life (QWL) refers to the good feeling perceived from the interaction between the individuals and the work environment. It aims at achieving the effective work environment that meets with the organizational and personal needs and values that promote health, well being, job security, job satisfaction, competency development and balance between work and non-work life. Organizational commitment (OC) is a strong identification with and involvement in the organization. Commitment is reflected in the employee's acceptance of organizational goals, willingness to work hard for the organization, and the desire to stay with the organization. Commitment develops slowly and consistently over time as a result of the employer/ employee relationship. QWL and OC amongst academic research has provided empirical support to the contention that enhanced QWL leads to increased employee satisfaction, increased mutual trust, reduced stress and improved health, increased job security and commitment. The present empirical research aims at exploring the relationship between QWL and OC, to measure the impact of QWL on OC and also to find out the relationship between the dimensions of QWL and dimensions of OC.

Key words- Quality of work life, Organizational Commitment, Job satisfaction, Work life balance, proactivity.

Introduction

"Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans."

Peter F. Drucker

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to the strength of an employee's involvement in and identification with the organization (Hellrigel, Slocum & Woodman, 1998). Some researchers have conceptualized organizational commitment as either an attitudinal or behavioral construct (Mowdey et al., 1982; Scholl, 1981) while others have conceptualized it as a multidimensional construct (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Jaros et al., 1993). According to Meyer and Allen (1991) and Dunham et al., (1994) organizational commitment consists of three general themes, namely; affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs associated with leaving the organization and obligation to remain with the organization. These themes are known as affective, continuance and normative commitment respectively. The 'net sum' of a person's commitment to the organization reflects each of these separable psychological states since an employee can experience

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each of these psychological states with varying degrees, for instance, a strong need and obligation to remain in the organization but no desire to do so.

Affective commitment is defined as the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals (Mowday et al, 1997, Meyer& Allen, 1993; O'Reily & Chatman, 1986). It is characterized by three factors (1) belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to focus effort on helping the organization achieve its goals, and (3) a desire to maintain organizational membership (Porter et al., 1974). Employees with the strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so.

Continuance commitment is the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with "nontransferable" investments. Nontransferable investments include things such as retirement, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization (Reichers, 1985). Continuance commitment also includes factors such as years of employment or benefits that the employee may receive that are unique to the organization (Reichers, 1985). Continuance commitment often makes it very difficult for an employee to leave the organization (Meyer and Allen; 1997). This view of commitment sees it as a force tying an employee to an organization because perceived cost of doing otherwise is likely to be high (Kanter;1968). Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so.

Normative commitment a relatively new aspect is the commitment that a person believes that they have to the organization or their feeling of obligation to their workplace (Bolon, 1997). It is a "generalized value of loyalty and duty" (Weiner; 1982) or "a feeling of

obligation" (Meyer and Allen; 1991). Normative commitment is only natural due to the way we are raised in society. It can be explained by other commitments such as marriage, family, religion, etc. therefore when it comes to one's commitment to one's place of employment individuals often feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization (Wiener, 1982). This form of commitment is based on the view that employee's identification with the organizations goals and values are the result of personal moral standards, cultural or organizational socialization and not rewards or punishments.

Hence employees with a strong affective commitment will remain with an organization because they want to, those with a strong continuance commitment remain because they have to, and those with a normative commitment remain because they feel that they have to (Meyer & Allen; 1997).

Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

- 1. Belongingness: This includes affection towards organization, career goal empathy and empowerment.
- 2. Job satisfaction: This includes contentment, goal fulfillment.
- 3. Optimism: This includes positive thinking.
- 4. Quality of work life: This includes work environment.

Quality of work life: (QWL)

QWL is a multi-dimensional construct made up of a number of interrelated factors as revealed by a review of its various definitions. Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger (1997) define QWL as 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.

The key concepts captured in QWL include job security, better reward systems, higher pay, opportunity for growth, and participative groups among others (Havlovic; 1991, Scobel; 1975 & Straw and Heckscher; 1984). It is the variety of efforts to improve productivity through improvement in humans (Allen; 2001). Thus quality of work life can be described as a process of labour management collaboration, which contributes to the overall satisfaction of the individual and enhancement of the individual as well as organizational effectiveness and profitability.

The recent definition by Serey (2006) on QWL is quite conclusive and best meet the contemporary work environment. The definition is related to meaningful and satisfying work. It includes (i) an opportunity to exercise one's talents and capacities, to face challenges and situations that require independent initiative and self-direction; (ii) an activity thought to be worthwhile by the individuals involved; (iii) an activity in which one understands the role the individual plays in the achievement of some overall goals; and (iv) a sense of taking pride in what one is doing and in doing it well.

From this perspective, there has stemmed the notion of organizational responsibility and specifically of management, to ensure that employees who commit themselves fully to achieving the organization's objectives should also experience a high QWL (Kotze 2005). Besides, an employee who feels a great deal of work related well being and little job distress is apt to have a good QWL, and vice versa (Riggio 1990). Subsequently, organizations cognizant of issues surrounding the concept quality of work life appear to be more effective at retaining their employees and achieving their goals (Louis & Smith 1990). Hence, QWL can be viewed as a wide-ranging concept determined by interactions of personal and situational factors 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.

Dimensions of Quality of work life (QWL)

- Proactivity: This includes competent employees, growth opportunities, value orientation.
- Work life balance: This includes work life balance, stability of tenure, challenging activities.
- Human relations: This includes employee satisfaction and human relations.
- Learning organizations: This includes learning orientation, innovative practices.

In spite of this acknowledged connection not much attention has been paid to the conditions of the work environment that forms the basis for service oriented employees and in fact low QWL may affect the quality of services and organizational commitment. Moreover, QWL programmes can lead to greater self esteem and improved job satisfaction (Suttle, 1977) and satisfied employees are more likely to work harder and provide better services (Yoon & Suh 2003). Yet, despite such importance of QWL for the employees in the service sector, there is hardly any research, which elucidates the employees' expectations of the QWL elements especially in the academic sector. Consequently, this study propounds to measure the expected QWL for the academic sector employees and its affect on organizational commitment. With the introduction of information technology tools and increased access to information in the form of web, the study of academic institutions with respect to productivity, efficiency and quality of services is very crucial in order to improve the performance of the education sector in India.

Review of Literature

Mathieu & Zajac (1990) found in the study that O.C. focuses on a bond linking individuals to the organization. Meyer & Allen (1997) conducted a research and found those employees in 6 out of 7 organizations demonstrate

different forms of commitment. Some employees exhibit a strong belief in and acceptance of the new organization's goals and values. This group of employees also exerts considerable effort for the new organization, and exhibit a strong desire to maintain membership. Koslowksy et al., (1991) explained the relationship between commitment and satisfaction and found that if employees are satisfied with their work they will be more committed towards the organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) found that many factors influence employee commitment. These include commitment to the manager, occupation, profession or career. De Cotis & Summers (1989) found that when employees were treated with consideration, they displayed greater level of commitment. Meyer and Allen (1988) found that continuance commitment is predicated upon the employee's pragmatic assessment of the costs and benefits of remaining with a given organization, and normative commitment is based upon feelings of moral obligation or responsibility vis-à-vis the employing organization.

Lincoln and Kalleberg (1990) concluded that Japanese workers are more committed in comparison to Americans. This difference in organizational commitment of Japanese and American workers are due to differences in organizational structures and strategies of Japanese and American firms rather than cultural differences in attitudes toward work. Organizational commitment is facilitated by differences in organizational structures and practices among American and Japanese employers.

Clegg and Wall (1990) explained that quality of work life could be seen as a human resource management and is being recognized as the ultimate key for development. Quality of work life mainly focused on the relationship between the working conditions, job satisfaction, new forms of work organization, organizational arrangement and other aspects of

humanization of work. QWL is a significant determinant of various enviable organizational outcomes, such as increased task performance, lower absenteeism and turnover rate, lower tardiness frequency and increased organizational effectiveness and organizational commitment (Donaldson et al. 1999, Sirgy et al.2001, Srivastava 2008, Wilson et al. 2004). Dex and Smith (2002) found that quality of work life policies are found to have a small positive impact on workers' commitment as 50 percent of employees had satisfied employees because of these policies. The measurement of factors like performance, effectiveness, morale and motivation are found to have significant correlation with good quality of work life.

In their study Sirgy et al. (2001) found that QWL is positively related with life satisfaction of employees. Moreover, they argued that satisfaction of employees needs mainly help and safety needs, economic and family needs, social needs, esteem needs, actualization needs, knowledge needs, aesthetic needs (which they call as QWL), resulting from work place experiences, contribute to job satisfaction and satisfaction in other life domains. Furthermore, they resulted that satisfaction in major life domains (example work life, family life, home life, and major life), contributes directly to overall life satisfaction.

Objectives

The literature leads to the following objectives:

- 1. To study the relationship between Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Organizational Commitment (QC)
- 2. To study the impact of Quality of Work Life (QWL) on Organizational Commitment (O.C).
- 3. To study the relationship between dimensions of Quality of Work Life (QWL) and dimensions of Organizational Commitment (O.C).

Hypotheses

Keeping in view the literature review, the following hypotheses are formulated to achieve each of the objectives in this study:

- H₀: There is no significant relationship between Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Organizational Commitment (O.C).
- H₀₂: There is no significant impact of Quality of Work Life (QWL) on Organizational Commitment (O.C).
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Proactivity dimension of QWL and Optimism dimension of O.C.
- H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between Worklife balance dimension of QWL and Work environment dimension of O.C.
- H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between Human relations dimension of QWL and Job satisfaction dimension of O.C.
- H₀₆: There is no significant relationship between the Learning organization dimension of QWL and Belongingness dimension of O.C.

Research Methodology The Study

The present study is an exploratory investigation which aims to examine the impact of QWL on O.C and also the relationship between their various dimensions. The independent variable is QWL and the dependent variable is O.C.

The Sample

In this study, 85 faculty members from various management institutions were randomly selected using convenient judgmental sampling technique and provided with scales. The designations of the faculty ranged from lecturer to senior professor. The final sample of 74 respondents was selected after controlling for the extraneous variables like education, income, sector, length of work experience, functional area, size of the organization and other such variables by randomization

and elimination. In the final sample 57.70% respondents were males and 47.29% were females and the average age of the respondents was 36 years (Refer Table: 1 Annexure).

Tools for Data Collection

Two standardized psychometric tools- QWL Scale and OC Scale were administered to each respondent of the sample for data collection. All the respondents were well versed with English in addition to being multilingual. The tools were distributed personally to the respondents and they were asked to fill up their responses on their own with universal instructions given to all on the title page of the instrument. The reliability of the QWL scale and OC scale is 0.89 and 0.89 respectively.

Tools for Data Analysis

Kolmogorov-Simonov test and Shapiro-Wilk test were applied to examine the normal distribution of data and due to the normality of data Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation, One way Analysis of Variance and Regression were applied to test the various hypotheses. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0) was used to analyze and interpret data (Refer Table: 5)

Results

1. r = .60175

 \mathbf{H}_{01} : The null hypothesis stands rejected.

There is a significant relationship between Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Organizational Commitment (O.C) (Refer Table: 2)

2. H_{02} : The null hypothesis stands rejected.

There is a significant impact of Quality of Work Life (QWL) on Organizational Commitment (O.C).

F= 18.702 (F1, 72 = 3.97; p=.000)

(Refer Table: 3)

3. H_{03} : The null hypothesis is rejected.

r = 0.423 which indicates a significant bivariate correlation between Proactivity dimension of QWL and Optimism dimension of O.C. An R2 value of .17 indicates that 17% of variance in Optimism dimension of O.C is explained by Proactivity dimension of QWL. F= 15.717 (p=.000) reflecting the overall strong relationship between the two variables. = .423 which means that one standard deviation increase in Proactivity dimension of QWL would yield a .423 standard deviation increase in predicted Optimism dimension of O.C; t-test = 3.964 (p=.000) and is statistically significant meaning that the regression coefficient is significantly different from zero. Hence, Proactivity dimension of QWL has a positive impact on Optimism dimension of O.C

Regression equation: Optimism dimension of O.C (pred) = .078 (ProacQWL) + 2.140 (Refer Table: 4)

4. H04: The null hypothesis is rejected.

r = .576 which indicates that there is a significant bivariate correlation between Work life balance dimension of QWL and Work environment dimension of O.C. R2 value indicates that 33 % of the variance in Work environment dimension of O.C is explained by the work life balance dimension of QWL. F= 18.350 (p=.000) reflecting the overall strong relationship between the two variables. = .576 which means that one standard deviation increase in Work life balance dimension of QWL would yield a .576 standard deviation increase in predicted Work environment dimension of O.C; t-test = 5.982 (p=0.000) and is statistically significant, meaning that the regression coefficient for work life balance dimension of QWL is significantly different from zero. Hence, Work-life balance dimension of QWL has a positive impact on Work environment dimension of O.C.

Regression equation: Work Environment dimension of O.C (pred) = .363 (WLB-QWL) + 22.578

(Refer Table: 4; Graph 1)

4. H_{05} : The null hypothesis is rejected.

r = .508 indicates that there is a significant bivariate correlation between Human relations dimension of QWL and Job satisfaction dimension of O.C. R2 value indicates that 25 % of the variance in job satisfaction dimension of O.C. is explained by the human relations dimension. F= 24.710 (p=.000) reflecting the overall strong relationship between the two variables. = .508 which means that one standard deviation increase in Human relation dimension of QWL would yield a .508 standard deviation increase in predicted Job satisfaction dimension of O.C; t-test = 4.971 (p=0.000) and is statistically significant, meaning that the regression coefficient for human relation dimension of QWL is significantly different from zero. Hence, Human relation dimension of QWL has a positive impact on Job satisfaction dimension of O.C.

Regression equation: Job Satisfaction dimension of O.C (pred) = .566 (HR-QWL) + 13.614 (Refer Table: 4; Graph 2)

5. H_{06} : The null hypothesis is rejected.

r = .681 indicates that there is a significant bivariate correlation between Learning organization dimension of QWL and Belongingness dimension of O.C. R2 value indicates that 46 % of the variance in Belongingness dimension of O.C. is explained by the learning organization dimension. F= 62.175 (p=.000) reflecting the overall strong relationship between the two variables. = .681 which means that one standard deviation increase in Learning organization dimension of QWL would yield a .508 standard deviation increase in predicted Belongingness dimension of O.C; t-test = 7.885 (p=0.000) and is statistically significant, meaning that the regression coefficient for learning organization dimension of QWL is significantly different from zero. Hence, Learning organization dimension of QWL has a positive impact on Belongingness dimension of O.C.

Regression equation: Belongingness dimension of O.C (pred) = 1.421(L.Orgn-QWL) + 20.281 (Refer Table: 4; Graph 3)

Discussion

From the above results it is understood that the correlation between QWL and O.C is on the higher side which is proved to be significant. The results are in conformity with the research of Daud (2010) and Huang et al. (2007) who concluded that different dimensions of quality of work life result in distinctive effects on organizational commitments. For e.g., growth and development and pay and benefits is a significant antecedent of all the four types of commitment namely; affective, normative, continuance (alternatives) and continuance (cost). Fairness and the adequacy of their pay and benefits and rewards will spur the employees to be more committed to their organization. Likewise, social integration has also been shown to have a significant relationship with affective, normative and continuance (alternatives) commitments. Participation has significant positive relationship with affective, continuance (alternatives) and continuance (cost) commitments. As participation leads to involvement in the workplace, employees who perceive that they are given such opportunities would be more committed. Strong relationships and cohesiveness among employees in the workplace will improve their sense of commitments. Supervision has a significant positive relationship with continuance (alternatives) and continuance (cost) commitments. In other words, as quality of work life increases the amount of organizational commitment of the staff increases too, and from among the components of commitment, normative commitment predicts quality of work life more than other components (Asgari, and Dadashi; 2010). Thus, by increasing the amount of organizational commitment the level of quality of work life increases. If a person is happy with the job, he/she also enjoys his/her Quality of Work Life (Tang, 2007). Further Najafi (2006) concluded that as the quality of work life increases manager's profiting improves too. Organizations offering better QWL are more likely to gain leverage in hiring and retaining its valuable work force (May, Lau, & Johnson, 1999).

The results of the study indicate that the human relations dimension of QWL has a significant positive relationship with the job satisfaction dimension of O.C. The Human Relations perspective posits that satisfied workers are productive workers (e.g., Likert, 1961; McGregor, 1960). Thus, organizational productivity and efficiency is achieved through employee satisfaction and attention to employees' physical as well as socio emotional needs. They further argue that employee satisfaction sentiments are best achieved through maintaining a positive social organizational environment, such as by providing autonomy, participation, and mutual trust (Likert, 1961). The collaborative effort directed towards the organization's goals is necessary for achievement of organizational objectives, with unhappy employees failing to participate (effectively) in such efforts. Therefore, results support the contention that the satisfaction level of employees (as a whole) may relate to performance at the business-unit and/or organizational levels. In addition, QWL programmes can lead to greater self esteem and improved job satisfaction (Suttle, 1977) and satisfied employees are more likely to work harder and provide better services (Yoon & Suh 2003).

The results further indicate that proactivity and work-life balance dimensions of QWL have a positive impact on O.C. dimensions. Organizations are now offering a number of options (e.g., flextime, telecommuting, compressed work hours etc) to their employees to balance their work-life with their family or social life. This leads to employees being more engaged and emotionally committed to their organizations. Work schedule flexibility has been associated with increased organizational commitment and reduced turnover

intentions (Aryee, Luk, & Stone, 1998; Halpern, 2005; Houston & Waumsley, 2003), and voluntary reduced hours have been linked to greater job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational commitment (Williams et al., 2000). A number of studies have found that employees who benefit from childcare centres, referral services and other family-supportive practices report higher levels of commitment to the organization (Goldberg et al.,1989; Grover & Crooker, 1995; Orthner & Pittman, 1986; Youngblood & Chambers-Cook, 1984). Research studies have shown that proactive behaviors at work can lead to organizational commitment. Amongst employees working in the financial services sector, affective commitment was positively related with employees' engagement in proactive service performance (Rank et al., 2007). In another study across two organizations, Griffin and colleagues (2007) found positive relationships between affective organizational commitment with proactive behaviors directed at improving the effectiveness of the organization. Therefore, individuals who feel a strong attachment to the organization are more likely to report suggesting and implementing initiatives to improve the organization.

Conclusion

The results of this research show that QWL and O.C. are a multidimensional construct and is a product of the evaluation of one's work place. It has been found through regression analysis that different dimensions of QWL (a set of job variables) positively affect the various dimensions of O.C. The findings have given insights in efforts to improve the QWL to mould employees with right form of commitment and increase the level of commitment.

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Annexure

Table: 1. Respondents Characteristics (N=74)

Respondents'	Sub-Profile	Percentage		
Characteristics		(%)		
Gender	Male	53		
	Female	47		
Age	21-25 years	8		
	26-30 years	41		
	30-35 years	11		
	36 years and above	41		
Job Tenure	0-1 years	8.10		
	1-3 years	17.56		
	3-5 years	24.32		
	5 years and above	50		
Monthly Income (Rs.)	10k-25k	59.45		
	20k-30k	28.37		
	41k-56k	12.16		

Table: 2. Pearson Correlation Analysis

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Correlation
		Coefficient
QWL	O.C	.601
Proactivity (QWL)	Optimism (O.C)	.423
Work life balance (QWL)	Work Environment	.576
	(O.C)	
Human Relations (QWL)	Job Satisfaction (O.C)	.508
Learning Organization	Belongingness (O.C)	.681
(QWL)		

Table: 3. Result of ANOVA: Summary of Organizational Commitment

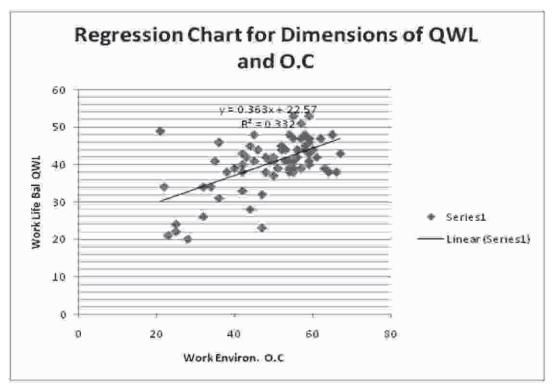
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6745.157	1	6745.157	18.702*	.000
Within Groups	25607.583	71	360.670		
Total	32352.740	72			

^{*}significant at 0.00 level

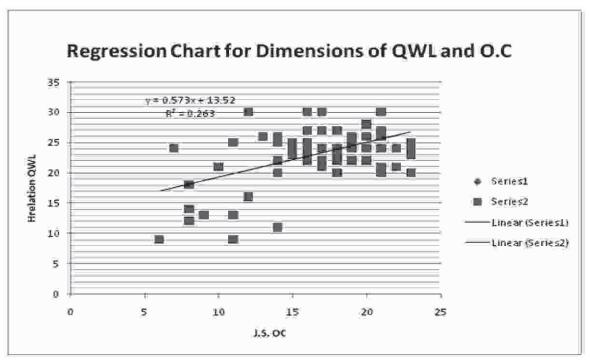
Table: 4. Results for Regression Analysis

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	P	t	p	В	Impact Status
Proactivity (QWL)	Optimism (O.C)	.17	15.717	.000	3.964	.000	.423	Positive
Work life balance (QWL)	Work Environment (O.C)	.33	18.350	.000	5.982	.000	.576	Positive
Human Relations (QWL)	Job Satisfaction (O.C)	.258	24.710	.000	4.971	.000	.508	Positive
Learning Organization (QWL)	Belongingness (O.C)	.463	62.175	.000	7.885	.000	.681	Positive

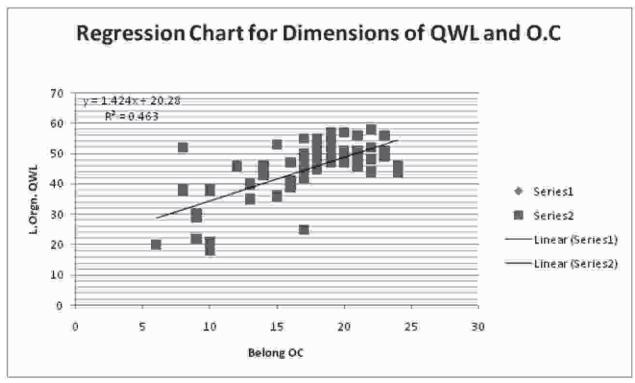
Graphs Showing Regression Results for dimensions of QWL and O.C Graph: 1. Work life Balance (QWL) and Work Environment (O.C)



The graph above suggests that there is a non-linear relationship between the two variables. But at the same time some of the values fall on the regression line showing a linear trend.



The graph above suggests that there is a non-linear relationship between the two variables. But at the same time some of the values fall on the regression line showing a linear trend.



 $Graph \ 3: Learning \ Organization \ (QWL) \ and \ Belongingness \ (O.C)$

The graph above suggests that there is a non-linear relationship between the two variables. But at the same time some of the values fall on the regression line showing a linear trend.