# Factors Influencing Quality of Work Life of Bus Drivers of Public Transport in Punjab

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# Abstract

This study aims to examine the factors influencing quality of work life among bus drivers of public transport in Punjab state of India. Data was collected from 483 bus drivers using purposive and convenience sampling technique. With the help of factor analysis the study identified 14 key factors influencing quality of work life of bus drivers, namely adequate pay and job security, work environment, advancement opportunities and career growth, physical working conditions, safety at work place, social support, clothing facilities and attendance, inadequate rest intervals, time pressures, participation in decision making, need for stress relieving program, leisure, work and home life balance and transfer policy. Findings of the study will be useful for management and policy makers in public road transport undertakings while formulating various policies and procedures for the growth and development of bus drivers and creating such working environment that enhances their quality of work life.

**Key Words:** Quality of Work Life (QWL), State Road Transport Undertakings (SRTUs), Bus Drivers, Punjab.

# Introduction

A robust public transport system reflects a nation's infrastructural development and plays a pivotal role in the overall economic advancement too as it serves dual purpose of providing for mobility of people and also generates employment (Ramanayya et al., 2007). Buses constitute famous mode of public transport on road network, however, driving a bus is characterized as low control, low support and high demand occupation that include high risks of physical and mental sickness, which results in absenteeism and reduced productivity of drivers as well as their organization (Kompier & Martino, 1995). India being a highly populated nation, roads stay congested most of the time. In real time, bus drivers need to cope with time pressures, negotiating heavy traffic and confrontations with other road users and uncooperative/violent passengers (Payal and Deepa, 2011). Apart from few cities, traffic rules are not followed truly, that often results in careless driving and one puts his own and others' life at risk. Moreover, conditions of Indian roads especially those of rural areas are terrible due to menace of potholes, to the extent that "total number of causalities from the year 2013 to 2017 due to pothole related accidents was 14,926 which was probably more than those killed on border or by the terrorists" (Rautray, 2018). In 2019 also, more than 2000 people

were killed due to same reason1. Further, bus drivers have to drive under difficult situations like unreliable and not routinely serviced vehicles, comparatively long working hours, and meagre salary especially for beginners2. This sort of working environment of bus drivers often results in psychosocial strain which further leads to anxiety, dissatisfaction, distress, depression and ultimately impacts driving performance and further lead to more accidents and fatalities (Kirschenbaum et al., 2000; Rabbani et al., 2009; Apostolopoulos et al., 2011). Thus, it is of utmost importance that working environment of employees must be designed in such a way that enables them with exultant working lives (Nayak et al., 2016). The present study makes a modest attempt to understand the underlying factors associated with quality of work life (QWL) of bus drivers in public transport.

#### Literature Review

QWL represents a construct that was put forward towards humane considerations in the organizations (Randhawa and Arora, 2016) and it includes "whole of the actual working conditions that promote full satisfaction of physical, economic, social, psychological needs of the employee in harmony with the success of the organization" (Monkevicioius, 2014). To get more insight into the research topic reviews of related studies have been mentioned in table 1.

Sr.	Author	Objective	Sample	Factors		
No.	(year)					
1.	Wyatt and Wah (2001)	To examine percepti ons of QWL of employees working in different organizations in Singapore.	332 managerial executives	Supportive management and favourable work environment; personal growth and autonomy; nature of job, and stimulating opportunities and co - workers.		
2.	Saklani (2004)	To assess importance of various QWL factors to employees from 24 organizations in Delhi, India.	294 employees	Opportunity for continued growth, opportunity to use & develop human capacity, adequate & fair compensation, work load, human relations & social aspects of life, work & total life space, reward & penalty system, fringe benefits & welfare measures, job security, participation in decision making, image of organization in society, equity, justice & grievance handling, and safe & healthy ph ysical work environment.		
3.	Hsu and Kernohan (2006)	To examine perceptions of QWL of nurses in Taipei, Taiwan.	65 nurses	Socio-economic relevance, demography, organiz ation aspects, work aspects, human relations aspect and self-actualization.		
4.	Wichit (2007)	To determine predictors of QWL among bus drivers of Bangkok Mass Transit Authority, Thailand.	460 bus drivers	Job characteristics, age and work duration.		

# Table 1: Studies Showing Factors Influencing QWL

5.	Dhar (2008)	To explore experiences of bus drivers with respect to QWL in Pune Municipal Co rporation, Maharashtra, India.	15 bus drivers	Time pressures, deteriorating condition of buses & increasing pollution, lack of professional relationship, temporary nature of job and lack of recognition and appreciation.
6.	Stephen and Dhanpal (2012)	To measure perceptions regarding QWL from the perspectives of employers and employees of small scale industries in South India.	317 employees and employers	Social support, inter-personal relationship and recognition.
7.	Gupta (2013)	To examine QWL among employees working in hospitals in Delhi and Noida, India.	600 employees	Work & family balance, relationship between management an d employees, career development , communication flow, equal distribution of work and planned night shifts.
8.	Mazloumi et al. (2014)	To evaluate QWL of train driver's working in Iran Railway.	100 train drivers	Working conditions and home -work interface.
9.	Kumari and Sidhu (2016)	To identify factors affecting QWL of taxi drivers in Punjab, India.	300 private taxi drivers	Accidental & environmental risk factor, safety, health & well -being, ergonomics risks, unsocial working hours, job & social security, interpersonal relations, occupational stress, human relations & social aspects of work life, work & life space, adequate & fa ir compensation, social relevance of working life and grievance handling.
10.	Nayak et al. (2016)	To examine predictors of perceived QWL in healthcare units of Odisha, India.	158 health care employees	Work life balance, communication, teamwork and empowerment.
11.	Yadav & Naim (2017)	To examine QWL in Indian power sector.	300 power sector employees	Salary, stress free work, job security, relations with colleagues, & communication.
12.	Kwahar & Iyortsuun (2018)	To explore dimensions of QWL in hotel industry of Nigeria.	355 hotel employees	Job security and career satisfaction, remuneration and benefits, home-work balance, training and opportunities for personal autonomy, and safe and healthy environment.
13.	Singh & Maini (2019)	To investigate fac tors associated with QWL.	317 faculty members	Management policies, work environment, fair salary and rewards, training and development opportunities, job design and life space, job security and grievance handling.

Source: Authors' compilation on the basis of literature review.

Data in table 1 shows that although various studies have examined factors influencing QWL of employees in different disciplines but there is a paucity of research in examining factors influencing QWL of bus drivers in public transport in India especially in Punjab. Thus, the present study aims at filling the niche in the existing literature. The paper aims to identify key factors influencing QWL of bus drivers of public transport.

#### Methodology

A structured questionnaire was framed after reviewing the existing measures of QWL and adapted for the

requirements of present study. Each statement was measured on a five point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The reliability coefficient of scale was found to be .892 by alpha method which is considered as fairly acceptable (Malhotra and Dash, 2012). Appropriateness of data for application of factor analysis was assessed using KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value was found to be .830 (refer table 2) which is considered meritorious (Kaiser, 1974). Similarly, value of Bartlett's test of sphericity was also found significant. Thus, data was found to be fit for factor analysis.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of	.830					
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Fest of Sphericity   Approx Chi-square					
	Df	1770				
	Significance	.000				

# Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Source : Calculated through SPSS.

#### Universe

Universe of the study consisted of 3356 bus drivers employed, during the period of study, in state road transport undertakings (SRTUs) in Punjab that comprises Punjab Roadways, PUNBUS and PEPSU Road Transport Corporation.

#### Sample

Data were obtained from a sample of 483 bus drivers of SRTUs by using purposive and convenience sampling technique. Most of the respondents were 10th pass and belong to the age group of 31 to 40 years and had driving experience of 10-19 years. Also, most of them worked on contractual basis with monthly earning up to Rs. 10,000

and spent 58-67 hours per week on driving.

#### Results

Principal Component Analysis of factor analysis was applied to extract minimum number of factors which explain maximum variance (Malhotra and Dash, 2012). Orthogonal rotation technique using varimax rotation was applied. Factors with eigen values greater than one were considered important and all variables which have factor loading of .45 or above were considered for inclusion in final solution of the study. Final factor solution resulted in fourteen factors which contained 60 items and accounted for 66.759 per cent of total variance

Labels	Items	Factor	Communalities	Mean	Cronbach's	Explained
		Loadings		Value	Alpha	Variance
				(SD)	(Eigen	(%)
					Value)	
	Factor 1: Ade	quate Pay and	Job Security			
A <sub>3</sub>	Compensation is provided according to	.829	.734			
	experience.					
A <sub>2</sub>	Compensation is provided according to	.821	.763			
	responsibility.					
$A_4$	My total compensation package is fair.	.798	.744			
A <sub>1</sub>	I get adequate compensation to maintain	.766	.706			
	reasonable standard of living.					
A <sub>6</sub>	My organization provides retirement benefits to	.708	.669			
	its employees.					
A <sub>5</sub>	My organization has a fair overtime wage policy.	.644	.618	31.50	0.912	11.792
A <sub>51</sub>	Employees in this organization are not terminated	.635	.695	(10.280)	(7.075)	
	without proper reasons.					
A <sub>50</sub>	My job security is good.	.584	.672			
A <sub>8</sub>	I am getting fair amount of house rent allowance	.578	.762			
	from the organization.					
A <sub>7</sub>	Group insurance scheme facility is provided to	.540	.644			
	employees.					
A <sub>10</sub>	I am getting fair amount of mobile allowance	.529	.767			
	from the organization.					
A <sub>9</sub>	I am getting fair amount of medical allowance	.510	.639			
	from the organization.					
	Factor 2	: Work Envir	onment			
A <sub>73</sub>	Grievance handling procedure enables to sort	.723	.709			
	grievances effectively.					
A <sub>72</sub>	Grievance handling procedure enables to sort	.703	.716			
	grievances timely.					
A <sub>25</sub>	My physical work environment is comfortable	.675	.556			
	from viewpoint of space.					
A <sub>26</sub>	My physical work environment is comfortable	.672	.695	26.39	0.828	7.228
20	from viewpoint of temperature level.			(6.229)	(4.337)	
A20	Proper washroom facility is available for	.636	.686			
-20	employees.					
A77	Rules regarding taking leave are fair.	.595	.586			
A12	Canteen facility is provided to employees	.580	.690			
Δ	While performing the job my state of mind	534	.508			
<b>A</b> 62	remains neaceful					
	i chiano percetui.					

# Table 4: Summary of Factors Influencing QWL of Bus Drivers

	Factor 3: Advancemen	t Opportunitie	es and Career Gr	owth		
A <sub>53</sub>	Advancement opportunities available in this organization are better than opportunities available elsewhere.	.763	.737			
A <sub>52</sub>	I am satisfied with career opportunities available for me.	.737	.743	9.58 (3.720)	0.866 (3.311)	5.518
A <sub>54</sub>	It is not difficult for employees to move to higher positions.	.736	.693			
A55	Promotions facilities are fair.	.604	.738			
	Factor 4: Phy	sical Working	Conditions			
A <sub>28</sub>	My work place is free from air pollution.	.814	.774			
A <sub>29</sub>	My work place is free from noise pollution.	.754	.751	12.00	0.702	
A <sub>24</sub>	My work place is overcrowded.	.535	.566	(3,780)	(2.969)	4 948
A <sub>36</sub>	My work does not affect my health badly.	.522	.516	(3.780)	(2.909)	4.940
A <sub>22</sub>	I am contended with the physical work environment in which I work.	.475	.611			
	Factor 5:	Safety at Wor	·k Place			
A <sub>33</sub>	The risk of life hazards at the work place due to accidents is low.	.814	.776			
A <sub>32</sub>	Ambulance facility is provided during emergency.	.728	.662			4 885
A <sub>34</sub>	The risk of life hazards at the work place due to diseases is low.	.597	.560	11.26	0.745	<b>T.00</b>
A <sub>17</sub>	Proper sitting facility is provided when not performing the duty.	.570	.617	(3.493)	(2.931)	
A <sub>16</sub>	When away from home, facility for night stay is provided.	.516	.652			
	Factor	6: Social Sup	oport			•
A <sub>64</sub>	My colleagues are important source of personal support.	.663	.710			
A <sub>65</sub>	My superior pays attention to what I am saying.	.631	.665			4.648
A <sub>66</sub>	People at the workplace are helpful in getting the work done.	.604	.649	12.57 (3.603)	0.754 (2.789)	
A <sub>63</sub>	Relations between management and employees are good.	.471	.595			
	Factor 7: Clothi	ng Facilities a	nd Attendance	1		1
A <sub>14</sub>	Facility for storing clothes is provided.	.705	.712			
A <sub>15</sub>	When away from home, facility for washing clothes is provided.	.697	.693	6.28	0.736	4.490
A <sub>78</sub>	My organization is very particular about attendance of the employees.	.575	.503	(2.181)	(2.694)	

	Factor 8: In	adequate Res	t Intervals						
A <sub>41</sub>	Total rest breaks are less in number.	.692	.600						
A <sub>40</sub>	Break periods in my work are of short time.	.680	.594	6.12	0.676	3.952			
A <sub>48</sub>	My job involves repetitive work.	.586	.594	(1.803)	(2.371)				
Factor 9: Time Pressures									
A <sub>69</sub>	My job requires to do work at night hours also.	.802	.748						
A <sub>68</sub>	My organization is very particular about	.635	.714	1					
	punctuality of the employees.			8.72	.635	3.810			
A <sub>61</sub>	My job requires high attention continuously for long time.	.509	.610	(2.721)	(2.286)				
Act	My job requires me to work at weekends also	501	.695	-					
2 10/	Factor 10: Parti	cination in De	cision Making						
A <sub>58</sub>	Management consults employees whenever a	.720	.696						
38	decision affecting their day to day work life is		1050						
	made.								
A <sub>56</sub>	I am able to voice my opinion in matters affecting	.693	.667	7.71	.676	3.675			
	my area of work.			(2.518)	(2.205)				
A <sub>57</sub>	I am involved in decision making that affect my	.664	.621	-					
	area of work.								
	Factor 11: Need f	or Stress Reli	eving Programs						
A <sub>60</sub>	I think my organization should design stress	.827	.747						
	relieving programs for employees.			2.08	*	3.042			
				(.777)	(1.825)				
	Fac	tor 12: Leisur	·e						
A <sub>18</sub>	When not performing the duty, recreational	.731	.704						
	facility is provided.			3.76	.497	3.040			
A <sub>19</sub>	Holiday home facility is provided to employees.	.605	.535	(1.200)	(1.824)				
	Factor 13: Wo	rk and Home	Life Balance						
A <sub>45</sub>	I have to face difficulties with family due to long	.725	.748						
	working hours.								
$A_{42}$	Time pressures keep me away from developing	.654	.676	10.78	.672	2.984			
	good social relations.			(3.064)	(1.790)				
A <sub>43</sub>	I am able to achieve a healthy balance between	.527	.583						
	my work and home life.			4					
$A_{46}$	My work leaves me enough time to discharge	.495	.694						
tamily responsibilities.									
	Factor	14: 1ranster l	roncy			2.5.5			
A <sub>75</sub>	My job involves frequent transfers.	.759	.676	5.93	.533	2.747			
$A_{76}$	Equitable treatment is given to employees	.665	.670	(1.211)	(1.648)				
	regarding transfer policy.								

Source: Compiled from the results of SPSS.

Note: \*Only one variable has loaded on Factor 9 so its Cronbach's alpha cannot be calculated.

#### Assessment of Extracted Factors

#### Factor 1: Adequate Pay and Job Security

Factor one represents the most important dimension of QWL of bus drivers and was named as adequate pay and job security. This factor explained 11.792 per cent of variance with highest eigen value of 7.075 and  $\alpha$  =.912. Twelve items loaded on this factor with factor loadings ranging from .510 to .829. It contains items like compensation is paid according to one's experience and responsibility. Pay is often considered as most important factor for those jobs which offer less chances of promotion like that of bus drivers. Findings of this study are in conformity with earlier studies (e.g. Garg and Dhingra, 2014; Arora & Randhawa, 2019; Singh & Maini, 2019).

#### Factor 2: Work Environment

This factor explained 7.228 per cent of variance with eigen value of 4.337 and  $\alpha$  = .828. Factor loadings for this factor ranged from .534 to .723. Eight items loaded on this factor which includes items related to comfortable work environment, proper washroom and canteen facilities etc. These findings are supported with the studies of Saklani (2004), Arif and Ilyas (2013) and Sharma and Jyoti (2013).

# Factor 3: Advancement Opportunities and Career Growth

This factor explained 5.518 per cent variance, with an eigen value of 3.311,  $\alpha = .866$  and factor loadings varied from .604 to .763. Four items loaded on this factor related to availability of career advancement opportunities and fair promotions. A just promotion system enhances employee morale. These findings are in agreement with the study of Mohamad and Mohamed (2012).

#### Factor 4: Physical Working Conditions

This factor explained 4.948 per cent of variance and is a combination of five items with an eigen value of 2.969 and  $\alpha$  = .723. The factor loadings on this factor ranged from .475 to .814. Job of bus drivers has been considered as challenging job with variations in temperature, noise, pollutants, exposure to dangerous machinery etc. Existence of good working conditions lead to reduction in fatigue of bus drivers thereby prevents accidents (Abdullah and Von, 2011) and also significantly contribute to health and well-being of workers (Kalimo et al., 2003) and increased productivity (Ajala, 2012).

#### Factor 5: Safety at Work Place

This factor explained 4.885 per cent of variance with an eigen value of 2.931 and  $\alpha = .745$ . Factor loading on this factor ranged from .516 to .814. Five items loaded on this

factor related with risk of life hazards at work place due to accidents and diseases. The findings of this study are supported by Krishna and Murthy (2015), Kwahar & Iyortsuun (2018) and Useche et al. (2018).

#### Factor 6: Social Support

This factor explained 4.648 per cent of variance, having an eigen value of 2.789 and  $\alpha = .754$ . The factor loadings ranged from .471 to .663. The four items loaded on this factor highlight the significance bus drivers' attach to support from colleagues, superiors and top management. Support system at workplace can prepare an individual to face strenuous situations without much difficulty and infuse feelings of belongingness and helpful in relieving stress and mitigating feelings of inequity at work (Truchot and Deregard, 2001). Past studies also confirmed the finding (Leiter and Maslach, 2004; Stephen and Dhanpal, 2012).

#### Factor 7: Clothing Facilities and Attendance

This factor explained 4.490 per cent of the variance and have an eigen value of 2.694 and  $\alpha = .736$ . The factor loadings ranged from .575 to .705. Three items loaded on this factor relates to availability of washing and storing facility at workplace along with organizations' particularity about attendance of bus drivers. Provision of clothing facilities are very much essential for bus drivers as they have to perform their duty in proper uniform and may have to stay away from their home for long durations.

#### **Factor 8: Inadequate Rest Intervals**

This factor comprised of three items and elucidated 3.952 per cent of variance with eigen value of 2.371 and  $\alpha = .676$ . The factor loadings ranged from .586 to .692. The items draw attention to less number of rest breaks and that too of very short duration. Considering the fact that job of bus drivers is of repetitive nature and requires continuous attention and alertness for long time, importance of appropriate rest breaks cannot be overlooked. Evans (1994) and Kanten and Sadullah (2012) also found rest intervals to be a major constituent of work life of bus drivers and Tse et al. (2006) concluded that improper rest breaks lead to stress.

#### **Factor 9: Time Pressures**

This factor explained 3.810 per cent variance with four items loaded on it with eigen value of 2.286 and  $\alpha = .635$ . The factor loadings ranged from .501 to .802. Time pressures are one of the main constituent of work environment (Karasek, 1976) and it act as source of stress and depression (Gospel, 2003; Taylor and Dorn, 2006) and may also lead to physiological and psychological ill health

(Sparks et al., 1997).

#### Factor 10: Participation in Decision Making (PDM)

Three items loaded on this factor sharing 3.675 per cent of total variance with an eigen value of 2.205 and  $\alpha = .676$ . The factor loadings ranged from .664 to .720. PDM has been considered as one of important consideration in inculcating feeling of belongingness for organization. Lee and Ashforth (1993) and Agwu and Olele (2014) also emphasised that when employees are allowed to participate in decision making it increases their efficacy, lowers exhaustion and hence improves their productivity.

#### Factor 11: Need for Stress Relieving Program

Only one item loaded on eleventh factor that emphasised need for appropriate stress relieving programs for employees. This factor explained 3.042 per cent of variance and eigen value of 1.825 and factor loading of .827. Job of a bus driver is stressful due to reasons mostly beyond their control, for instance, ergonomic conditions in which they work. In this context, provision of stress relieving programs may help them in coping with stressful situations (Dorn, 2005).

#### Factor 12: Leisure

This factor explained 3.040 per cent of variance with eigen value of 1.824 and  $\alpha$  = .497. Two statements loaded on this factor showing significance employees attach to provision of recreational facilities as these facilities inculcate feeling among employees that organization value their free time. This finding is in agreement with study of Krishna and Murthy (2015) that also identified recreational facilities to be an important variable of QWL. Further, Dhar (2008) suggested that get together parties should be arranged for relaxing drivers.

# Factor 13: Work and Home Life Balance

Thirteenth factor explained 2.988 per cent of variance with eigen value 1.790 and  $\alpha$  = .672. Four items represented this dimension of QWL and factor loadings varied from .495 to .725. Irregular work schedules and rotating shifts have been recognized as one of the major reasons of disruptive home life of bus drivers (Evans, 1994). Other studies also reported work-home life balance as an important dimension of QWL (Rethinam and Ismail, 2008; Saad et al., 2008; Kwahar & Iyortsuun, 2018).

# Factor 14: Transfer Policy

Two statements are loaded on this last factor which explained 2.747 per cent of variance with eigen value of 1.648 and  $\alpha = .533$ . The factor loadings ranged from .665 to .759. Certain jobs require transfer of employees in a

routine manner and bus driving is one of them. Bus drivers have to perform duty on different routes as allotted to them by their supervisors. In this regard, Evans (1994) suggested that rotation of employees on different shifts should be as limited as possible to lower fatigue.

#### **Conclusions and Managerial Implications**

To conclude, the study identified fourteen key factors influencing QWL of bus drivers of SRTUs. All these factors reflect different aspects of work life of bus drivers which are essential to be taken care. The public transport undertakings are required to draft driver friendly policies that ultimately imbibe these factors and augment their QWL. For instance, efforts can be made to ensure regularisation of their contractual services so that they can enjoy a dignified life. Special attention should be paid to their physical work environment so that they can operate under reasonably comfortable conditions. Bus drivers spend most of their time in polluted, noisy and unsafe environment that wrecks their schedules, disrupts family life, makes social activities hard to plan and execute (Whitelegg, 1995; Dhar, 2008). Thus there is an imperative need to create space for drivers so that they can take a break from their regular hectic work schedules. Drivers' job stress can be minimised with the help of even small efforts like organising periodic yoga classes, celebrating their anniversaries, organising health and safety awareness camps, workshops etc. Furthermore, as bus drivers' working hours are long thus organizational policies need to provide sufficient space so that they can maintain the workfamily balance.

# Limitations and Agenda for Future Research

The major limitation of the present study is that it is confined to public road transport of only one state of India. Future research may explore the other states of India. Also, other variables can be examined in relation to QWL like stress, absenteeism, fatigue, organizational climate etc.

# Weblinks

1. https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/morethan-2000-people-killed-in-road-accidents-caused-bypotholes-3-states-account-for-maximum-deaths/1782391/

2. https://scroll.in/article/930305/unreliable-vehicleslong-hours-low-pay-what-it-is-like-being-a-bus-driverin-india

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