

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF EMPLOYEES' IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SELECT TEXTILE UNITS OF LUDHIANA (PUNJAB, INDIA)

Preet Kanwal* and Aneet**

Abstract: *Quality of work life (QWL) possesses great significance in today's Corporate World. There are tremendous changes in the corporate World leading to increase in lucrative job offers for the talented workforce, resulting into increase in Employees' expectations. Employee turnover vis-a-vis employee retention has become an important HR issue which requires dire need to be addressed upon by the human resource professionals. In such scenario, QWL is an important aspect of HR that should be looked upon religiously so as to ensure proper talent management.*

The purpose of the study is to analyze the QWL of workforce of textile sector. Respondents have been chosen from various textile units established in Ludhiana District in the state of Punjab, India. Ludhiana is known as hub for textile production in Punjab. A structured questionnaire (via convenient sampling technique) was administered to the respondents (Sample Size =180) to collect primary data. Descriptive analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Reliability test (Cronbach Alpha) has been used in order to analyze the primary data.

Key Words: *Quality of Work Life, Textile Industry, Employee, Job Satisfaction, Turnover*

JEL Classification: *J3, J5, L6*

INTRODUCTION

Human Capital is a vital asset of an enterprise; high turnover doesn't only negatively affect the quantum of work force available in the organization. In fact, those leaving the organization take away the expertise and competencies they have developed within organization. Thus QWL is one of the important concept that need to be looked upon by the management in order to ensure proper employee retention, develop strong workforce that can strategically work upon the holistic development of the organization. With the inception of idea of QWL in early 1970's, the concept has become one of the main thrust research areas in the organizations. The concept got attention due to excessive importance given on philosophy of capitalism, materialistic and economic development that led to sheer neglect of humanistic and environmental values, Saklani (2003). The concern for QWL grew

* Assistant Professor, School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Punjab and Research Scholar, I. K. Gujral Punjab Technical University

** Dean Academics, Gian Jyoti Institute of Management and Technology

due to the attention given to the concept of quality of life in many countries, as work place life and personal life are the main components of the total life space (Lawler III *et al.* 1980). Various research scholars have found many parameters that have proven the growing importance for the development required to be done in the field of QWL. The identified parameters include increasing employees' expectations, awareness, role of workers education, changing attitude towards work, poor productivity, and increased turnover ratio, ineffective utilization of workforce, job dissatisfaction, and employee poaching. Improvement in the area of QWL will provide many benefits to the individual as well to the Organization. Individual gets many intrinsic benefits as enhanced self-esteem, improves job satisfaction and ensures employee engagement. Better QWL will help in ensuring healthier organization citizenship behavior. In nutshell it will help all the stakeholders. Even it will assist state in performing its role towards society by countering the social concerns like society unrest, psychological issues, drug and alcohol abuse (Hackman *et al.*, 1977). Lawler, 1978 has mentioned in his study that work places organized on the basis of QWL principles are more effective in contrast to traditionally managed companies. In nutshell, it can be concluded that working professionals carry their work thoughts beyond attendance, which in turn affects their personal life. Compensation, work relationships, power and politics, games people play etc. perform a major role in affecting QWL of an Individual. Thus Need of the hour is to improve work life of the working masses, hence rigorous work is required to be done in the area of QWL.

Significance and need of QWL Practices in Textile Industry

If we talk about Indian textile industry, it is highly labor intensive. The workforce employability is second highest in this sector after agriculture. Due to the nature of industry, the workforce is facing problems like poor working conditions, safety issues, environmental pollution, occupational disease etc. It's not easy to survive for workers at production floor in such industries as artificial humidification is required to ensure smooth production. As a result, the climate in the production floor is not that conducive to work for people at work. Majority of textile factories don't even use clean water for artificial humidification as specified in the factories Act 1948. Thus, one of the major bottlenecks in the Textile sector is that the working conditions at production plant are not amicable for the workforce.

Compensation package at lower level are not as per market pricing i.e. not lucrative enough to retain labour. The workers are not satisfied from the job due to excessive burden of work, obsolete technology, strict supervision, politics at work, trade unionism, lack of worker participation etc. Lack of recognition, poor benefits, monotonous work, fatigue, tight deadlines, no job security has increased frustration among workers. The concept of QWL talks about development of workforce from all angles. It involves employee empowerment by allowing worker

to have say in important decisions affecting them. It is concerned with bringing employee engagement so as to improve the organization citizenship behavior. This will definitely improve the performance at all levels. The prime motive is to design jobs, ameliorate working conditions that are best suited for workforce as well as for the overall development of the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Various researchers have worked upon QWL in different Industrial sectors and have tried to explore the major factors affecting the QWL as well as its relationship with the employee performance in the said sector. Nature of the industry does have a significance influence on deciding about the QWL of the workforce, but there are other factors that make the QWL conducive for employees or vice a versa.

In order to reduce the absenteeism due to unsatisfactory conditions, QWL need to be improved Kavoussi (1978). Manga *et al.* (1981) adds that there is a gap between what the managers expectations' and the facilities provided to them. They said that traditional management styles and bureaucracy are the major hurdles in the path of QWL. Job redesigning, work restructuring, employee engagement, participatory management can further the goals of QWL.

Sengupta *et al.* (1985) in their study conducted in banking industry concluded that greater decentralization and more autonomy, performance and competency based reward system are the basic requirements for the enhancement of QWL. Anitha *et al.* (1998) stated that QWL in public and private sector banks differ on certain parameters like economic and HRD, whereas there is same degree of agreement as far as other concerned areas. Batra *et al.* (2000) have added that QWL can be viewed from two different facets: one is organizational point of view as what is being contributed by the system for the improvement of QWL, for instance job enrichment, democratic supervision, employee engagement, employee involvement and safe working conditions. The other way is to measure the perception of employee on various factors as occupational health and safety, opportunities for overall development of employees and various intrinsic benefits available to them in the organization.

Elis *et al.* (2002) have worked upon various factors associated with QWL that affect satisfaction level of nurses in health sector. Various components highlighted by them are lack of employee involvement, overload, work life balance issues, negative affect on quality of life, long night shift, no recognition, lack of role clarity, ineffective training and absence of learning culture. Wilson (2003), in his study has observed that satisfaction level in relation to QWL was high among the public sector workers in comparison to workforce of private sector in parameters related with reward, human relations, behavior of coworkers and the nature of job. Both sectors had full contentment with the style of supervision, but were not satisfied

with promotion and involvement in decision making. Ismail (2008) has examined in his work that work environment is one of the factor that gives meaning to the QWL concept. Due to tremendous dynamic changes at work Information, QWL of technology professionals is greatly affected. The main parameters discussed in the study are quality of life, involvement in decision making, relationship with supervisor/peer and role conflict. Kanten *et al.* (2012) in their study have founded that there is an important association between QWL and employee engagement. Dhurup *et al.* (2013) propounded in his study that in the SMEs, QWL has favorable impact on employee's attitude towards job, employee's commitment towards organization as whole and consequently their intention to stay in organization. Basically he has studied about the existence of relationship between employees' perceptions of QWL, their attention to stay within organization and the positive influence of job satisfaction and job commitment in this relationship in SMEs in Zimbabwe. Nadler and Lawler (1983) reflected in their study that QWL programmes assist in furthering worker satisfaction, commitment and performance. It has been established fact on the basis of research conducted in cross nations that improvement in QWL has direct impact upon productivity improvement and overall effectiveness of the organization (Lawler *et al.*, 1982; Levitan *et al.*, 1984; Buchanan *et al.*, 1982); reducing grievances, turnover, absenteeism and occupational health and safety hazards, (Havolovic, 1991; Voos, 1989; Gani *et al.*, 1995). Anuradha *et al.* (1995) said that QWL has high correlation with Organizational commitment of managers.

The literature review of the concept depicts that in comparison to India, theoretical and empirical research has been done in Western nations where as in Indian context more of conceptual work is done. Moreover if empirical research has been conducted, implementation of the QWL program by the industry has not been done in true spirit. Thus the present research paper is an attempt to assess the QWL of workforce of textile industry in Ludhiana District of Punjab, India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To examine the factors affecting the QWL of workforce in the textile industry.
- 2) To identify the effect of QWL on the satisfaction level of employees

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Respondents had been selected as per convenient sampling technique from major well-known textile industries in Ludhiana. Data was taken from 180 respondents.

Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

78 percent of the samples were males and rest 22% were female respondents. 41 percent of the respondents were between 36-45 age groups. 89% of the respondents

were married and 11% of them were single. 65 percent employees had more than 15 years of experience. 36% employees were from urban area, 41 % from rural area and 23% belonged to semi urban area. Thus the sample has appropriate composition of demographic characteristics. Executives, Supervisors and Workers were the part of the sample. All the major units were covered to get an overall idea about QWL of the textile sector.

Construct Development

The collection of data has been done on the basis of the structure questionnaire designed after an extensive literature review. QWL is measured on the basis of 32 variables. 5 point Likert scale has been used to indicate a degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with QWL variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity of data for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

In order to test the validity of data for EFA, Kaiser-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity has been used. KMO score of 0.9 indicates the sample to be suitable for factor analysis.

Table I
Result of KMO and Barlett's Test of Sphercity

<i>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</i>	
<i>Bartlett's test of Sphericity</i>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>
	<i>d.f</i>
	<i>Sig.</i>

The Barlett's Test of Sphericity depicts that there is sufficient correlation between items as required for factor analysis. The results of the table I reveal the validity of data for EFA.

With help of Initial Analysis, Eigen Value for each parameter has been obtained. The result indicates that eight factors have eigen value as per Kaiser's criterion of 1. These said factors explain 43.12% variance in combination. The variables included in each QWL factors have been identified on the basis of its factor loading. The collected data indicates that eight factors affect the QWL in textile Industry. Data reveals that the most important factor is related with salary ie Adequate and fair remuneration, explaining an eigen value and percent of variation by 8.931 and 8.371 respectively. Whereas last three QWL factors on the list have eigen value of 1.167, 1.083 and 1.011 respectively. The percentage of variance shown by these factors is 4.712, 2.792 and 2.151 respectively.

Table II
Results of factor Analysis for the parameters having an impact on QWL

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Name of Factors</i>	<i>Name of Items</i>	<i>Loading</i>	<i>Eigen Value</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Com. % Variance</i>
1	Adequate and Fair Remuneration	Internal and external fairness	0.685	8.931	8.371	8.371
		Fringe Benefits	0.667			
		Allotment of Performance benefits	0.847			
		Proportionality between wages	0.612			
2	Provision of Safe and Healthy Conditions at Work	Implementation of Law	0.425	2.017	7.483	15.759
		Safe and healthy physical environment	0.416			
		Technological Support	0.387			
		Safety Training	0.329			
3	Opportunity for Continued Growth, Learning and Development	Career Planning and Development	0.691	1.925	6.778	22.537
		Equal Employment Opportunities	0.581			
		Competency Development	0.562			
		Training and Development	0.506			
4	Job Design	Work Role Ambiguity	0.476	1.537	5.581	28.120
		Work Value	0.404			
		Challenging Task	0.317			
		Shift Task	0.726			
5	Social Support in the Work Place	Absence of prejudice	0.569	1.343	5.535	33.656
		Equality	0.436			
		Team Work	0.337			
		Social aspects and Human Relations	0.621			
6	Constitutionalism	Employee Protection Rights	0.517	1.167	4.712	38.371
		Personal privacy of Employee	0.400			
		Faith in Management	0.381			
		Freedom of expression for employee	0.721			
7	Work Life Balance	Leisure Time for family	0.711	1.083	2.792	40.168
		Health and Well-Being	0.513			
		Quality of Life	0.431			
		Balance between Professional and Personal Goals	0.356			
8	The Social Significance of Work Life	Reputation of the company	0.531	1.011	2.151	43.121
		CSR Activities	0.421			
		Quality Products and Services	0.380			
		Business Ethics	0.315			

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis has been conducted to ensure the inner consistency of the present instrument.

Table III
Cronbach results for the extracted factors of QWL

<i>SNo.</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Number of Variables</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha (a)</i>
1	Adequate and Fair Remuneration	4	0.804
2	Provision of Safe and Healthy Conditions at Work	4	0.712
3	Opportunity for Continued Growth, Learning and Development	4	0.707
4	Job Design	4	0.761
5	Social Support in the Work Place	5	0.680
6	Constitutionalism	6	0.705
7	Work Life Balance	3	0.612
8	The Social Significance of Work Life	4	0.467
		34	0.821

Alpha values in the Table IV depict that only one factor i.e. The Social Significance of Work Life is indicating low consistency. Adequate and Fair Remuneration shows highest consistency of 0.804. The other six factors show moderate consistency. Overall alpha score is 0.821 assuring high inner consistency.

5.3. Satisfaction Level of Workforce in Relation to QWL Dimensions

Table IV
Satisfaction Level of Employees in relation to QWL dimensions (n=180)

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Mean Scores</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1	Adequate and Fair Remuneration	3.64	Satisfied
2	Provision of Safe and Healthy Conditions at Work	3.4	Moderately Satisfied
3	Opportunity for Continued Growth, Learning and Development	3.04	Moderately Satisfied
4	Job Design	3.80	Satisfied
5	Social Support in the Work Place	3.43	Moderately Satisfied
6	Constitutionalism	3.12	Moderately Satisfied
7	Work Life Balance	3.5	Satisfied
8	The Social Significance of Work Life	3.6	Satisfied
	Overall QWL	3.45	

Table IV shows that none of the QWL factor has scored more than 4. The workforce is satisfied with salary, opportunities for growth, Work Life Balance and the social significance of work life. The overall score depicts that workforce is moderately satisfied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Executive level in general was satisfied on the job. They don't neglect their health, social and individual needs due to their job. But discontentment is prevailing due to absence of fair wages. Supervisory Level was found most dissatisfied class among all the levels. Although there was lack of contentment, but still they believed in team work. Workers were dissatisfied with their wages. They are intelligent, aware and love to participate in technical planning of their work. If we look at overall study, we find that job satisfaction varied from person to person. Many are satisfied with jobs, some want to leave them. Due to lesser job options, people are not able to change their workplace. Generally, Executives are found more satisfied in comparison with supervisors and workers.

People from allied divisions like IR, Personnel, Spinning, Worsted, Dye House, Electrical, Electronics, Civil, Commercial, Costing, Material and R& D were found more satisfied in comparison to Security, Transport, Mechanical and Accounts. Transport Department feels isolated from Organization in terms of total task. Moreover their work is quite hazardous. Another complaint by the Transport people is that more emphasis is given on the machines and people don't work as a team. Their view is not taken in resolving the working problems. The Security Department said that they are so busy in their work that they can hardly spend time for their co-workers. The members of the organization don't have a sense of one community. The Security Personnel says that they don't get any opportunity to participate in technical planning of work.

The Mechanical People are not satisfied with their salary; as it does not satisfy their personal needs. The members are so busy that they can hardly spare time for others. **The Account Executive** said that less emphasis is given to individuals and they can't implement decisions regarding their jobs. If we talk of the **supervisory** level, then the people of Mechanical, Civil, Commercial, costing, Accounts, and R&D were found unsatisfactory with their jobs. In the worker class different type of personalities were found, some new entrants (especially of young age) were very happy with their job. Fireman were also not satisfied with their job. They have risk of serious injuries which may even lead to death. They felt isolated from the whole organization. They don't have an opportunity to take independent decisions for their job. They don't have any growth opportunities. Drivers also had same issues, they don't have any promotional opportunities. Their life is ignored. But these people were happy and enjoyed good interpersonal relations. They were proud of the fact that from start of purchasing of raw materials to the

sale of finished goods to taking their bosses on tours, everything is done through them. So they have full information about what is happening outside and inside the factory. They loved to go outside the cities in groups, because this provided them moral support, especially when their tours extended for days.

The security inspector again was quite zealous about his job. Worker in dye house said that there is a risk of lethal chemicals, related hazardous processes etc. Any faulty procedure, defect in machinery can lead to serious occupational accidents. In spinning and worsted, the temperature and humidity levels were so high that it was not easy for an outsider to stay for more than five minutes. When asked, the workers said that they have become habitual. But this can have bad long term effect. This can lead to various lung diseases. The temperature and humidity is high in spinning and dye units. The Dye House had the additional risk of dangerous chemicals.

The clothes of the workers were filled with cotton, which even went inside their body through nostrils and mouth. This is bound to cause them the diseases to lungs. In winter also the temperature was so high that there was no need to wear warm clothes. But while talking to some of the incumbents I found that textile units are providing good working conditions, rest is inherent in the nature of the production process. **Many units** have taken special care in beautifying their factory with provision of well-maintained lawn in front of the factory. Worker Participation in management in form of quality circles provides assistance to the workforce to solve their problems in order to enhance the quality. Moreover, this has proved to be successful forum for solving their grievance. They also go occasionally for suggestion schemes in which a person giving the best suggestion is awarded. This helps in enabling organization to grow and motivating employees to be more initiative and enterprising. Women in the units commented that although salary is less, but the working environment is safe for women, thus compensating for lower compensation.

The present study is able to find out those areas where there is utmost need for attention. The most important factor which comes in limelight is that the textile industries should increase the pay packages of its employees. More emphasis should be given on labor Welfare measures. Employees want that efforts should be made for Social Security measures. Transport people should be made involved in decision making process so that they feel that they are the part and parcel of the Organization. Working in Dye House is a risky job; hence more training can be arranged for semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Special attention should be given on effective employee counseling. Textile Industry, involves occupational diseases, hence apart from the facilities given under Workmen Compensation Act 1923, medical facilities should be provided to the workers so that proper precautionary measures can be taken on time.

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