Quality of Work Life and its essence in the present scenario

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ABSTRACT: *Quality of work life deals with various aspects of work environment which facilitates the human development efficiently. This, it is one of the important functions of HRD. It motivates the employees to learn further for present and future roles. QWL is the perception of employees towards work. There will be some variations in individual perception levels. Finally others take a broad view of changing the entire organizational climate by humanising work and changing the structural and managerial systems. Every employee has to balance his personal and professional life so that he can achieve success easily in any job.*

Key words: *Work-life, Job security, Job satisfaction, Worklife balance*

INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life refers to the level of happiness or dissatisfaction with one's career. Those who enjoy their careers are said to have a high quality of work life, while those who are unhappy or whose needs are otherwise unfilled are said to have a low quality of work life. Quality of work life is viewed as an alternative to the control approach of managing people. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. 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:

1. "QWL is a process of work organisations which enable its members at all levels to actively; participate in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed towards meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organisations and improved quality of life at work for the employees. "

—The American Society of Training and Development

2. "QWL is a way of thinking about people, work and organisations, its distinctive elements are (i) a concern about the impact of work on people as well as on organisational effectiveness, and (ii) the idea of participation in organisational problem-solving and decision making. " —Nadler and Law

Quality of Work Life in Organizational Work Designs

"Quality of work life", as a philosophy, holds that employees are the most important resources an organization can have and so seeks to have an important concern for the creation of an environment devoid of stress and management of stress. The concept emphasizes the importance of employees having a positive attitude to work. When employees become less satisfied, they are less committed to the goals of the organization and this definitely can have an impact on organisational performance. The management of stress is both an organisational and individual responsibility. Employees must have relaxation,
Exercising, managing their time and role, developing and maintaining support groups. Most organisations have also seen the importance of getting involved in the process of managing stress. The "quality of work life" concept is multi-dimensional and can include many programmes. What has been stated in the literature, employers or managers have a duty to identify other needs of employees as they evolve at the workplace. The prevailing organizational environment and culture as well as the socioeconomic influences on the needs and expectations of employees can have either a positive or negative effect on the way they perceive the quality of their organizational life, with a consequential impact on their commitments to the organization.

Work Scheduling and the Sociology of Work Life

Work life balance involves the ability of an employee to have a meaningful daily work life in a state of self-achievement, satisfaction, and enjoyment derived from the positive association between the employees' emotional-self and his/her work, friends, family. Work should be designed so that employees' work schedules, career demands, and travel requirements do not take up leisure and family time on a regular basis. A job design consists of a job's content, the methods that are used on the job and the way in which the job relates to others in the organization. The job design typically is a function of the work to be done and the way in which management wants the job to be carried out a good job design creates opportunities for workers to achieve high levels of job performance (and is therefore, a good approach for improving the quality of work life of employees. Alternative work schedules attempt to increase productivity or decrease cost. These schedules are a trend toward responsiveness to employee needs.

Objectives of Quality of Work Life:
1. To increase in commitment and individual productivity.
2. It enhances better team work and proper coordination in between employees.
3. Morale of the employees will be increased.
4. Organizational stress can be decreased.
5. To improve both on the job and off the job levels.
6. To provide safety working conditions...
7. To provide adequate Human Resource Development Programs.
8. To improve employee satisfaction and learning
9. To welcome change factor every time.
10. To shape the organization in such a way that it can develop.

The following aspects improve the QWL:

1. Recognition of work life issues:

Issues related to work life should be addressed by the Board and other important officials of the company should know why people are not happy, do they need training, why employee morale is poor and numerous other issues. If these are addressed properly, they will be able to build, "People-Centred Organisations".

2. Commitment to improvement:

QWL can be improved if the staff is committed to improvement in productivity and performance. This issue can be taken by the board through staff recognition and support programmes. Board should prepare QWL reports on periodic basis to boost the system. They can also introduce reward system which will be helpful to them.

3. Quality of work life teams:

Board members should form the combined team of managers and workers and all the issues and common themes must be identified.

Work Life Teams = Managers + Staff

All issues must be addressed like loss of morale, lack of trust, increased intensity of work, reward, recognition etc. and commonly, managers and staff should arrive at solutions.

4. Training to facilitators:

Both the leader and staff can assess the job requirement and decide jointly what type of training is required to improve the quality of work life for the employees.

5. Analyze information from focus group:

After the formation of focus groups and their discussion on different issues and collection of information, the information should be analysed to give right direction to organisational activities.

6. Identify and implement improvement opportunities:

It is important to identify and implement improvement opportunities like communication, recognition and non-monetary compensation. Improving support structure, constant review of reward and recognition system etc. would help in formulating communication strategies, focusing on linkages between managers and staff.

7. Flexible work hours:

The diverse work force of today does not want to work for fixed hours or days. They want flexibility in their work schedule so that professional and personal life can be managed together.

8. Autonomy to work:

Delegation is an essential element of organisation structure. People want freedom to work in their own way, in terms of forming teams and making decisions. If they are allowed to do so, it enhances the QWL. An organisation with high quality of work life is "an organisation that promotes and maintains a work environment that results in excellence in everything it does – by ensuring open communication, respect, recognition, trust, support, well being for its development.

Principles of Quality of Work life

Principle of Security: Quality of work cannot improve unless and until employees are relieved from fear, frustration and anxiety. The working conditions must be safe and job security and surety should be provided to the employees so that they can work whole heartedly for the development of the Company.

Principle of Equity: There should be a direct and positive relation between effort and reward. All types of discrimination between people doing similar work and with the same level of performance must be eliminated.

Principle of Individualism: Employees differ in terms of their attitudes, skills and potentials. Therefore every individual should be provided the opportunities for development of his personality and potential. Humanisation of work requires that employees should be given equal status.

Essentials of work life

Self managed work teams: these are also called autonomous work groups or integrated work teams. These are formed with 10 to 20 employees who plan, coordinate and control the activities of the team with the help of team leader who is one among them. Each team performs all activities including selecting their people. Each team has authority to make decisions and regulate the activities.

Salaries are fixed on the basis on individual and group achievement. Creation of autonomous work groups helps in creating positive feelings among employees. They should be given freedom to select their own teams and decision making regarding the choice of work and distribution of tasks among group members and designing of work schedules.

Career Development: Career development is very important for ambitious and achievement oriented employees. If employees are provided with opportunities for their advancement and growth they will be highly motivated and their commitment in the organization will increase. Therefore provision for career planning, communicating and counselling the employees about the career opportunities, career path, education and development and for second careers should be made.

Participative Management: People in the organization should be allowed to participate in the management decisions affecting their lives. A Participative management style improves the quality of work life. Workers feel that they have control over the work processes and they offer innovative ideas to improve them. Recognition also helps to motivate employees to perform better. Quality circles, Management by objectives, suggestion systems and other forms of employee's participation in management help to improve the quality of work life.

Job security: Employees want stability of employment. Adequate security of job is a high priority of employees and it should be taken care of. Adequate job security provided to the employees improves the quality of work life to a large extent.

Responsibilities in Quality of Work life:
1. Provision of physical amenities at the workplace, health and safety and welfare provisions.
2. Involving workers in decision making on all matters.
3. Initiating suitable forms of work design.
4. Formalization of QWL experience for future use.
5. Re-examination of policies of work.
6. Developing an appreciation of changing environment.
7. Educating and making workers aware of QWL
8. Identifying ways and means to satisfy workers needs through monetary alternatives.
9. Organize workshops and seminars to get awareness of QWL

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