

# A Study on Review of Quality of Work Life on Employee Retention in Private Companies

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**Abstract:** Talented employees are the greatest value for any organisation. In this competitive world companies are facing several challenges to retain the best employees and for that, Effective employee retention program is required to create and foster an environment that encourages employees to remain employed by having policies and practices in places that address their diverse needs. The success of any organization depends on how it attracts recruits, motivates, and retains its workforce. Quality of work life (QWL) installs in employees the feeling of security, pride, family, democracy, ownership, responsibility and flexibility. The private companies have to realise, creating Quality of work life balance among the employees is the best way to retain the talented employees. Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggested that Quality of working life was associated with satisfaction with wages, hours and working conditions. He described the “basic elements of a good quality of work life” such as safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement. Thus this paper aim to discuss on dimensions of Quality of Work Life and factors influencing quality of work life in private companies.

“Quality of working life’ is the secret to attracting and keeping the best employees”

**Keywords:** Quality of work Life, Employee retention, Job Enrichment, Job Enlargement

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of work life (QWL) is a relatively new concept in organizational behaviour. The term Quality of Work Life began to be used in a broader perspective after the Arden house meeting in New York in 1972, which led to the formation of the International Centre for QWL (Gain and Ahmad, 1995) and the term was introduced by Dr. Louis Davis.

Quality of Work Life is a generic phrase that covers the feelings of the workers about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, Organizational and interpersonal relationships and its intrinsic meaning in a person’s life.

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the factors influencing quality of work life in private companies
2. To discuss on various dimensions of quality of work life
3. To suggest some points for the company to add in quality of work life policies.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Richard Walton (1977) quality of work life is the work culture that serves as the corner stone. Hence, work culture of an organization should be recognized and improved to enhance the quality of work life of an organization.

Warr and colleagues (1979) in an investigation of Quality of working life, considered a range of apparently relevant factors, including work involvement, intrinsic job motivation, higher order need strength, perceived intrinsic job characteristics, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, happiness, and self-rated anxiety.

**Hackman and Oldham (1980)** highlighted the constructs of QWL in relation to the interaction between work environment and personal needs. The work environment that is able to fulfill employee's personal needs is considered to provide a positive interaction effect, which will lead to an excellent QWL. They emphasized the personal needs are satisfied when rewarded from the organization, such as compensation, promotion, recognition, meet their expectation.

**(Danna & Griffin, 1999)** Quality of Working Life is not a unitary concept, but has been seen as incorporating a hierarchy of perspectives that not only include work-based factors such as job satisfaction, satisfaction with pay and relationships with work colleagues, but also factors that broadly reflect life satisfaction and general feelings of well-being.

**Bhatia, S.K. And Valecha, G.K. (1981)** in their paper on "A Review of Research Finding on Absenteeism" observed the absenteeism rates of textile factory and recommended that closer attention should be paid to improve the quality of work life.

**American Society for Training and Development [ASTD] (1979)** defined QWL as a process of work organisation which enables its members at all levels of to actively participate in shaping the organisation's environments, methods and outcomes.

**Cascio (1998)** involves the opportunity to make decisions about their jobs and the design of their workplaces. He argued that employees who work in organizations where QWL exists will like their organizations and feel that their work fulfils their needs.

**(Kotze, 2005)** Quality of work life is often considered in two direction, one is to removal of negative aspects of work and working conditions and other direction is the modification of work and working conditions to enhance the capability of employees and to promote behaviour which important for individual and society .

#### IV. QUALITY OF WORK LIFE DIMENSIONS

**Kameswara Rao and Venugopal (2009)** illustrated their perceptions concerning Quality of Work Life of employees in India. They suggested on four dimensions of Quality of Work Life and labelled as "favourable work environment", "personal growth and autonomy", "nature of job", and "stimulating opportunities and co-workers".

1. Adequate and fair compensation - "The wage which is above the minimum wage but below the living age."
2. Fringe benefits and welfare measures
3. Job security
4. Physical work environment
5. Work load and job stress
6. Opportunity to use and develop human capacity
7. Opportunity for continued growth
8. Human relations and social aspect of work life
9. Participation in decision making
10. Reward and penalty system
11. Equity, justice and grievance handling
12. Work and total life space
13. Image of organization
14. Autonomy of work
15. Organisation culture and climate

## V. FACTORS AFFECTING QUALITY OF WORK LIFE IN PRIVATE COMPANIES

### 1. Working Environment

The job may involve dealing with customers who have varied tolerance level, preferences, behavioural pattern, level of understanding; or it may involve working with dangerous machines like drilling pipes, cranes, lathe machines, welding and soldering machines, have to be observed which needs lot of concentration, alertness, presence of mind, quick with involuntary actions, synchronization of eyes, hands and body, sometimes high level of patience, tactfulness, empathy and compassion and control over emotions. **Kavoussi, N. (1978)** investigated on “The Effects of unsatisfactory working condition on the epidemiology of unauthorized absenteeism in an old textile factory”, hence companies have to concentrate on creating good environment for the employees to work in an effective way.

### 2. Opportunities for development of employees

“So learn that you may full and faultless learning gain,

Then in obedience meet to lessons learnt remain”

Thirukkural verse 391

Let a man learn thoroughly whatever he may learn, and let his conduct be worthy of his learning. Training is imparted by someone while Learning is imbibed by oneself. Learning is a continuous process which will start from the day the human being is born and will continue till the death

Some jobs offer opportunities for learning, research, discovery, self-development, enhancement of skills, room for innovation, public recognition, exploration, celebrity-status and loads and loads of fame. Others are monotonous, repetitive, dull, routine, no room for improvement and in every sense boring.

If an organization does not give chance for growth and personal development it is very difficult to retain the talented personnel and also to find new talent with experience and skill.

### 3. Home – work interface

Home-work interface is related to work life balance and is about having a measure of control over when, where and how you work. It is achieved when you feel you have a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work, to the mutual benefit of you and your work. A poor work-life balance can have negative effects on employee’s well-being.

### 4. Stress factor:

The UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE) define stress at: “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. Work pressures and demands can be a positive of aspect of our work experience, providing challenge and stimulation, but where we see them as excessive and beyond our ability to cope, we are likely to feel overloaded and stressed. “Stress may be less important than people think. General well-being, working conditions, management support and relationships appear to be more important factors than stress in determining quality of working life.”

“When you find yourself stressed, ask yourself one question: Will this matter in 5 years from now? If yes, then do something about the situation. If no, then let it go”. – Catherine pulsifer

### 5. Career growth & Guidance for development:

Every job should offer career development. That is an important factor which decides the quality of work life. Status improvement, more recognition from the Management, appreciations is the motivating factors for anyone to take keen interest in his job. According to **Buchanan and Boddy** “The human force is more important than economic market forces”. It is, therefore, important that work is organized to develop skills and motivation for organizational effectiveness. The work atmosphere should be conducive to achieve organizational goal as well as individual development. It is a win-win situation for both the parties;

## 6. Control at work

It reflects the level to which you feel you can exercise what you consider to be an appropriate level of control within your work environment. That perception of control might be linked to various aspects of work, including the opportunity to contribute to the process of decision making that affects you. Leading authors in the field suggest that perception of personal control can strongly affect both an individuals' experience of stress and their health. Research also suggests that there is a strong link between personal control and job satisfaction.

## 7. Interpersonal relations

“The quality of life is the quality of our relationships” by Anthony Robbins

According to (Davis 1985) Quality of work life is seen as the quality of the relationship between employees and total working environment. Harmonious supervisor-worker relations gives the worker a sense of social association, belongingness, achieve of work results, etc. This in turn leads to better QWL.

## 8. Recognition for accomplishment

Recognising the employee as a hum 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 recognise the employees.

## 9. Pay and Stability of Employment

Good pay still dominates most of the other factors in employee satisfaction. Various 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. Stability to a greater extent can be provided by enhancing the facilities for human resource development.

## 10. Organisational Health Programmes

The companies are facing problem in production and other departments because of absenteeism, hospitalisation, disability, excessive job turnover and premature death of employees. Organisational health programmes can educate employee's health problems, means of maintaining and improving of health, etc. These programmes cover drinking and smoking cessation, hypertension control, other forms of cardiovascular risk reduction, family planning, etc.

## 11. 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.

## 12. Participative Management

Raghvan (1978)<sup>38</sup> the ex-chairman of BHEL, (a public sector organization) stresses the need for worker's participation in management. According to him, “participation of workers in the management of undertakings, establishments, or other organizations engaged in any industry is underscored by the constitution of India”.

Trade unions and workers believe that workers' participation in management and le improves WL. Workers also feel that they have control over their work, use their skills and make a real contribution to the job if they are allowed participate in creative and decision-making process.

## 13. Adequacy of Resources

Resources should match with stated objectives; otherwise, employees will not be able to attain the Objectives. This results in employee dissatisfaction and lower QWL

## 14. Seniority and Merit in Promotions

Seniority is generally taken as the base for promotion in case of operating employees. Merit is considered as the basis for advancement for managerial people whereas seniority-c is preferred for promotion of ministerial employees. The promotional policies and activities should be fair and just in order to ensure higher QWL.

**15. Employment on Permanent Basis**

Employment of workers on casual, probationary basis gives them a sense of insecurity. On the other hand, employment on permanent basis gives them security and leads to higher order QWL.

## **VI. THE SUGGESTIONS FOR PRIVATE COMPANIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WORK LIFE FOR THE EMPLOYEES**

Job enrichment, Job enlargement, job rotation, counselling, Mentoring, considering personal issues of the employees, creating safety and healthy working condition, providing fair salary and compensation, Flexi timing, flexible work, organising office trip, family engagement trip, common lunch, party, yoga, meditation, Gym, Stress management workshop, offering membership in clubs and associations, outbound training.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

A high quality of work life (QWL) is essential for all organizations to continue to attract and retain employee and it will positively nurture a more flexible, loyal, and motivated workforce leads to reduce the employee retention in private companies. The company need to be more flexible so that they develop their talented workforce and gain their commitment and to gain competitive advantage the organizations must be concerned about their human resources who are their most important assets and take consistent and steadfast measures to improve them and employ high-quality work-life experiences. Thus, private companies are required to retain employees by addressing their work life issues hence by adopting these factors we can improve employee satisfaction and good working suitable working conditions.

A happy and healthy employee will give better turnover, make good decision and positively contribute to the organisational goal. An assured quality of work life will not only attract young and new talent but also retain the existing talent.

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