



## DOES QUALITY OF WORK LIFE MAKE SENSE TO UNIVERSITY TEACHERS? CASE OF ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY AND ANDHRA UNIVERSITY INDIA

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### **Abstract**

*This paper is an attempt to uncover the understanding of concept of Quality of Work Life in relation to public university teachers in India. Based mainly on primary data which were collected through structured questionnaire from a sample of 312 teachers, authors have examined various dimensions of Quality of Work Life in relation to university teachers. The study was descriptive in nature and both quantitative and qualitative information were solicited and analyzed. Multiple tools of data analysis including Simple frequency, Reliability test, Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA, t-Tests, Chi-Square and Factor analysis were adopted. The findings indicate that all the 21 components that researchers identified were found relevant to university teachers and thus they do have impact to their career. It was further revealed that teachers are satisfied with the prevailing status of the Quality of Work Life dimensions and therefore have no intention to quit their current job. Similarly the study reveals that universities are facing challenges emanating from within and external the universities. One among the major challenge is the conventional inclination to government financing, as such universities unable to adequately and timely meet the needs of teachers. It is recommended that the government and universities management to keep on improving parameters of Quality of Work life of teachers from time to time so as to retain them and attract superb performance of universities.*

**Key words:** *Quality of Work Life, University, Teachers.*

### **Introduction**

More often than not organizations peg their success to number of issues including amount of capital, machines, technology, strategies, productivity level, profit margins, market share, etc. In a way, if nothing is likely to be realized, non-of these would be accountable except one resource that is 'human resource'. Thus human resource to organizations is the most indispensable resource and in fact inseparable from success and failure of organizations. There is an increasing recognition among management thinkers and practitioners of the potential of human resources in providing competitive advantage. Two organizations using the same technology may show different levels of performance. Why? The quality of human resources and their contribution to the organization determine the performance, and therefore the success of the organization. Organization may have huge capital and the most advanced machinery, but if does not have capable, motivated and high performing employees, the organization is not likely to demonstrate sustained levels of high performance.

The employees of educational institutions are more connected with the society than the other industries employees. Edwards et al. (2009:208), acclaim that the assessment of quality of working life assists organizations in the identification of factors that influence employees at work. Staff can be surveyed using a valid and reliable quality of working life measurement tool to elicit their experience of a broad range of workplace factors encompassing stressors such as control and demand, as well as outcomes such as psychological well-being, job satisfaction and the work-home interface. Information gained from assessing employees' quality of working life can be utilized by employers to determine what appropriate action might be taken to enhance general quality of working life or specific aspects of this. Louis (1998:22) concludes that, if teachers' quality of work life is associated with variables such as commitment and sense of efficacy (which are demonstrably associated with effort and work effectiveness in school and non-school settings), ignoring it is short-sighted.

### **Conceptualization of Quality of Work Life**

The Quality of Work Life (QWL) as a wider concept bears varied explanations and outlooks from people of different backgrounds. However lack of formal definition does not mean to neglect its importance and contribution in enhancing management of organizations. Luthans (1981) once uttered that QWL is the socio-technological approach to job design. However, QWL is not based on a particular theory, nor does it advocate a particular technique for application. It is concerned with overall climate of work. It has been defined as a process of joint-decision-making, collaboration and building mutual respect between management and employees. The purpose is to change the climate at work, so that the human technological organizational interface leads to a better QWL. Feuer (1989) opines that QWL can be described as the way an individual perceives and evaluates the characteristics intrinsic to his/ her past experience, education, race and culture. Lau and Bruce



(1998) defined QWL as the workplace strategies, operations and environment that promote and maintain employee satisfaction with an aim to improving working conditions for employees and organizational effectiveness for employers.

### Review of Literature

Literature reveals that many studies have linked QWL with various aspects of HRM domain such as QWL and QL, QWL and job satisfaction, QWL and employee engagement, QWL and employee commitment, QWL and performance, QWL and efficacy, QWL and employees loyalty, QWL and employees retention, QWL and organizational development, QWL and happiness, QWL and productivity, etc. Similarly, the literature indicates that previous studies covered employees in manufacturing industry as well as service industry of both public and private sectors.

The study on QWL on university teachers is very relevant when thinking on broader prospect of the national development spectrum. The university teachers are knowledge workers. Drucker (1959) defines knowledge workers as those who create new information which could be used in the decision-making process and for problem solving. Vogt (1995) defines knowledge workers as individuals who have the capacity and motivation to create new views, who have developed communication skills, who are able to transfer knowledge and create possibilities for using new ideas. Knowledge workers are workers who have individual and personal knowledge, and organizations are increasingly seeking ways of transforming this into shared social knowledge deployed for organizational goals (Frost, 2002). These workers consider that the sharing and transfer of their knowledge and expertise is their personal and professional responsibility (Redpath et al., 2009, pp. 86). Frost et al. (2010) define knowledge workers as a critical resource to the firm because their abilities must contain firm-specific knowledge to gain a sustainable competitive advantage (Frost et al., 2010, pp 127). The university teachers being knowledge workers are vested with three major responsibilities or duties namely; teaching, research and public outreach services (consultancies).

The services of university teachers therefore are very essential to enable the operators of various economic activities to run their business in an effective and efficient manner as Bakoti and Buble (2011) affirm that the analysis of the importance of knowledge workers, their place and their role in modern companies should start from a broader range which contains general characteristics and elements of present-day society.

It is therefore an insightful argument that university teachers exert great impact to the nation and their dissatisfaction would have immeasurable implications to a number of ways. The broader concept of quality of working life has been developed in an endeavour to provide an overview of the experience of working and explain more fully the way in which various factors interact to affect individuals at work (Sirgy et al., 2001; Warr et al., 1979). Benefits associated with increased employee quality of working life include: reduced sickness absence; turnover and absenteeism and improved retention; productivity; performance; recruitment; morale and commitment (Efraty et al., 1991; Fuller, 2006; Worrall & Cooper, 2006). The highly QWL to university teachers would mean high level of job satisfaction, good work morale, organizational performance, high productivity, etc. The ill-QWL situation means low level of satisfaction, low morale, absenteeism, labour turnover, underperformance, etc.

Pandey and Jha, (2014) fortify that educational employee's behavior and work life affect their personal lives, students' careers and performance of the institute. Morale, values, motivation, positivity are pillar of an educational institute. These values can be maintained, enhanced and spread when the employees are satisfied. This can be done only when the employees are able to balance between work life and personal life.

Bharath, et.al (2010), researched on Quality of Work Life: Perception of College Teachers. The universe of the study includes 12 colleges located within the Tiruchirappalli city limit and 1279 college teachers were working during May 2008 – February 2009. A sample of 239 respondents was collected from the universe. The collected data after being coded were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social sciences Research (SPSS) and various statistical tests were applied based on hypotheses and matching variables. The findings from the study indicate that there is a significant association between quality of work life total and quality of life in teaching environment total. It was further revealed that QWL of college teachers was in low level.

Shahbazi, et al (2011) identified the relationship between the quality of work life and performance of Esfahan University and Esfahan medical University employees. According to this study, performance was directly related to adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy work environment, development of human capacities, growth and security, social integration and work environment, constitutionalism (rule of law), work life space, and social relevance of work life. Out of these constructs developments of human capacities, social integration, constitutionalism, and work and life space were more

effectively related to performance. They concluded that level of quality of work life was different from university to university.

Tabassum and Khan, (2011) did their study on Quality of Work Life (QWL) among the faculty members of private universities in Bangladesh. The study aimed to make a comparative learning of the existing QWL between the males and female faculty members of the private universities through quantitative survey on 36 male and 36 female faculty members. The study reveals that a significant difference exists between male and female employees overall perception regarding QWL and particularly in one dimension of QWL relating to adequate and fair compensation. No statistically significant disparity is found in terms of the other dimensions, i.e. safe and healthy working conditions, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in the work organization, constitutionalism in the work organization, work and total life space, and social relevance of work life. It is also explored that a higher QWL can lead to an increased job satisfaction among the faculty members.

Begas (2012) did a research on faculty of higher education institutions in CAPIZ state province of the Philippines. Data is gathered through descriptive survey, informal interviews and documentary analysis. The significance of differences and relationships between QWL and productivity were tested by t-test, ANOVA and Pearson tests. He took age, gender, year of experience and income as parameters for the analysis. This study revealed that the degree of QWL was very good and level of productivity was "satisfactory in these institutions. He analyzed and found that there is a positive relation between QWL & satisfaction and QWL & productivity. This study recommended that the more FDP (Faculty Development Program) should be run on these institutions for research and community service.

Pandey and Jha, (2014) did an interesting study based on desk research method to review and redefine literature on quality of work life for educational employees. The secondary data was drawn from books, journals and various reports published by the agencies working in this field. They found that there are only few researchers conducted studies to analyze the QWL of educational institutions across the world. These studies suggested that different types of industries have different impact and importance of QWL dimensions. The educational institution is an exclusive place of work; not any industry environment matches with its work pattern, culture and yield. Its employees' working conditions are also quite different from other industries. So there is need to understand the importance of QWL construct for educational institutions. Educational employee's behavior and work life affect their personal lives, students' careers and performance of the institute. Morale, values, motivation, positivity are pillar of an educational institute.

Rehan and Arora, (2014), conducted a study which covers permanently employed teachers of Punjabi University Patiala campus only aiming to explore the overall QWL. The sample of 110 permanent teachers was selected. Gap between perceived importance and perceived satisfaction has been studied. The study concludes that all the factors (except job related policies) clearly revealed that perceived satisfaction scores are lower than perceived importance. The null hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> has been rejected which shows that there exists a significant gap between perceived importance and perceived satisfaction. The study also finds that respondents were dissatisfied by the teaching and research arrangements and general facilities which may be improved by taking appropriate steps. Further, overall satisfaction score shows a moderate satisfaction of the respondents which predict a need for quality of work life of university teachers.

A recent research was conducted by Damodharan and Ganapathi, (2015), on Quality of Work Life of Faculty Members in Higher Educational Institutions in Tamil Nadu. The sample size was 1200. In order to study the quality of work life dimensions of the faculty members of higher educational institutions, mean and standard deviation have been worked out. In order to study the relationship between quality of work life dimensions and overall quality of work life of the faculty members of higher educational institutions, the correlation analysis has been applied. The study concludes that, the quality of work life dimensions of adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunities for growth and security, opportunities for development and social integration are positively and highly associated with overall quality of work life of the faculty members of higher educational institutions. To improve quality of work life of the faculty members of higher educational institutions, the management should ensure the faculty members with sufficient income and periodical salary increment.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:-

- i. To determine the key dimensions of QWL for public university teachers in India.
- ii. To analyze the extent to which the dimensions of QWL affect the quality of work life of university teachers in India.
- iii. To assess the prevailing situations of teachers QWL at the selected universities in India.



#### 1.4 The Need for the Study

With the advent of resource centric organizations in recent decades, it has become imperative to put “people first” as well as secure management objectives of maximizing the ROI (Return on Investment) on the resources. This has led to the development of the modern HRM function which is primarily concerned with ensuring the fulfillment of management objectives and at the same time ensuring that the needs of the human resources are taken care of.

Realizing the importance of Quality of Work Life, public universities have been from time to time trying to respond to the needs of its human resource. This is because the performance of universities (students academic performance, innovations, public outreach services, etc) largely rest upon willingly and committed university teachers. Since the universities are the springs of pure knowledge, it therefore assumed that teachers working environment to support their motives toward this end. If teachers experience poor QWL it means that they will not be able to discharge their noble duties (teaching, research and consultancies) productively. Student’s performance will suffer horribly, the awfully deterioration of quality of education, industries underperformance due to the availability of half-cooked human resources at the national labour market, economy deterioration, lack of innovations and technological advancements, persistence of socio-political, economic underdevelopment, etc. It has been further envisaged that faculty members play the key role in manipulating their services through providing better education and building the nation, as Hasan, Chowdhury and Alam (2008) mentioned that faculty turnover has an imperative effect on the ultimate education system.

#### Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. Multiple research methods were adopted to capture necessary information. The qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches have necessitated the study to arrive at robust conclusion. It can be noted that university teachers spend substantial time seeking for new information and solutions to the existing problems thus they tend to be very much occupied with tight schedules throughout their career. Having this in mind, structured questionnaires were adopted for data collection that permitted respondents to give their views at their convenient time and consequently a sample size of 312 teachers responded. Multiple tools of data analysis including simple frequency, reliability test, Mean, S.D, ANOVA, t- Tests, Chi-Square and Factor analysis were adopted.

#### Findings and Discussions

##### Objective one

**Null Hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant effect of dependent variables (the factors of Quality of Work Life related variables) on socio economic variable (working organization).

**Alternate Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant effect of dependent variables (the factors of Quality of Work Life related variables) on socio economic variable (working organization).

The findings reveals that by means of ANOVA test, different university teachers have the same opinions on three(3) factors of Quality of Work Life since their p-value > .05, hence **null hypothesis has been accepted at 5% level of significance**. The three variables identified were, Work Environment as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(p-value 0.163), Working conditions as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(p-value 0.776), and Interesting, meaningful and challenging job as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life (p-value 0.100). Similarly the t-Test results depict the same findings whereas Work Environment as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(p-value 0.166), Working conditions as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(p-value 0.776), and Interesting, meaningful and challenging job as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life (p-value 0.102). Hence the **null hypothesis has been accepted at 5% level of significance**, that is to say there is no significant effect of working organizations on the factors of Quality of Work Life related variables. In other words, different university employees have same opinion on the factors of Quality of Work Life related variables.

Using factor analysis tests, first six prime components were identified; with Eigen value stood at 63%.

- (i) Interesting, meaningful and challenging job as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.794)
- (ii) Promotions as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.776)
- (iii) Work Environment as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.769)
- (iv) Working conditions as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.748)
- (v) Organization culture and climate as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.743)
- (vi) Adequate and fair salary as a factor affecting Quality of Work Life(0.740).

It can therefore be deduced from these findings that university teachers recognize various parameters that can be used to measure QWL since they have impact toward their job performance. The findings therefore are in support of the

understanding that QWL is an emerging concept; which may be understood differently by different people depending upon their situations and differing roles (Edwards et al., 2009; Sashkin and Burke, 1987).

### **Objective two**

**Null Hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant effect of dependent variables (the factors of QWL affect the quality of work life of university teachers in India) on socio economic variable (working organization).

**Alternate Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant effect of dependent variables (the factors of QWL affect the quality of work life of university teachers in India) on socio economic variable (working organization).

It was found the reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) stands at 0.930 that which is very close to '1' hence support that all the 21 selected variables affect QWL of public university teachers in India. Both (ANOVA and t- Test) yielded the same results. Eight (8) factors found with p-values < 0.05, thus Null Hypothesis has been rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence, **alternate hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> is accepted at 5% level of significance** showing that there is significant effect of working organizations on the factors of QWL affect the quality of work life of University teachers in India. In other words that is to say, different university teachers have different opinions on the extent factors affect the QWL of university teachers. The Eight factors identified were: Working condition, Adequacy resources, Adequate and fair salary, Opportunities for advancement, Promotions, Leadership and management style, Supervisory behaviour and Effect on extra work activities. Similarly, thirteen (13) factors were found having p-value > .05, hence **null hypothesis has been accepted at 5% level of significance**, that is to say there is no significant effect of the factors on QWL of university teachers. In other words, different university teachers have same opinion on the extent the factors affect the QWL of university teachers in India. The factors include:- i)Work environment ii)Organization culture and climate, iii)Work -life Balance, iv) Job satisfaction and job security, v)Relation and cooperation, vi)Needs satisfaction, vii) Participation in decision making, viii)Interesting, meaningful and challenging job, ix)Autonomy, x) Feedback, xi)Social support, xii)Equal employment opportunities, xiii) Respect and protection of individual rights. Factor analysis indicates the KMO value of 0.905 at 5% level of significance. Three prime factors were identified with highest extracted values as Adequate and fair salary (0.752), Job satisfaction and job security (0.723) and Work environment (0.679) stood at 57% Eigen value. The findings are consistent to Andrews & Withey, (1976) who opined that people have different values and the implication may be that they evaluate differently with regard to work related factors.

### **Objective three**

**Null Hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant effect of dependent variables (the prevailing situations of employees QWL at the selected universities in India) on socio- economic variable (working organization).

**Alternate Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant effect of dependent variables (the prevailing situations of employees QWL at the selected universities in India) on socio- economic variable (working organization).

The study sought to tape information regarding the existing situation on QWL of public university teachers in India. The findings indicate that the reliability value 0.958, and the variable mean values are less than or equal to 3.32, signifies that majority of respondents are towards "good" to "very good" on all the 21 variables. Likewise, the combined mean (64.27), variance (369.866) and standard deviation (19.232) also indicate that the respondents' views are inclined towards "good" to "very good" on the existing situation on QWL of public university teachers in India. In other words, this implies that the majority of public university teachers are satisfied with the prevailing situations of QWL at their respective universities. More explicitly, the ANOVA test, t-Tests and Factor analysis test have yielded more findings. Both ANOVA and t- Tests produced the same results that among the twenty one (21) variables, respondents had different perception on six factors while the remaining fifteen (15) components, the respondents had the same or identical opinions. Hypothesis testing using ANOVA and t- Tests has shown that the null hypothesis has been rejected and **alternate hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> has been accepted at 5% level of significance** on the five factors since their respective p-values < 0.05 and One factor 0.01 < p-value < 0.05 **alternate hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> has been accepted at 1% level of significance**; meaning that the different university employees have different opinions on the prevailing situations of QWL in the public universities in India; whereas **null hypothesis has been accepted at 5% level of significance** for the remaining fifteen factors since their respective p-values > 0.05, meaning that different university teachers have same opinion on the prevailing situations of employees QWL in the public universities in India. The five (5) factors p-values < 0.05 are i)The work environment, ii) work-life Balance, iii)The work conditions, iv)The opportunities for advancement and v)The promotions. It was also found that one (1) factor "organizational culture and climate at University" is 0.01 < p-value < 0.05. The rest fifteen (15) factors p-values > 0.05 are:-The adequacy of resources, The adequate and fair salary, The Job satisfaction and Job security, The relation and co-operation, The satisfaction of

important personal needs, The participation in decision making, The interesting, meaningful and challenging job, The leadership and management style, The autonomy, The communication and feedback, The social support, The supervisory behaviour, The effect of extra work, The equal employment opportunities and The respect and protection of individual rights.

Similarly, Factor analysis test was made. The KMO value found to be 0.941 at 5% level of significance which necessitates factor analysis on the prevailing situation of QWL in India public universities. Three prime/priority components were also identified as their Eigen value and extraction sum of squared loadings and rotations sums of squared loadings stood at 68% of Eigen value. In a nutshell, based on factor analysis on the third Objective: *“To assess the prevailing situations of QWL for university teachers in India, priority components are:*

- (i) The work environment at University(0.834)
- (ii) The adequate and fair salary at University(0.799)
- (iii) The promotions at University(0.783)

Generally the findings of objective three indicate that the respondents appreciate the presence of favourable QWL in the public universities. The results also indicated that 75% were inclined toward ‘good’ to ‘excellent’ on their perception regarding the prevailing current situation of QWL in their universities. This is an indication that university teachers are satisfied with the prevailing situation of QWL at universities. More interestingly, teachers showed high level of commitment to their universities. This can be proved from the results when asked on their intention to quit their current job and organizations, 81% showed high interest to remain with their current employers i.e. universities. In other words, this implies that the public universities are in good position to retain its talented employees. However the three prime components identified( work environment, adequate and fair salary and promotions) are seems to be pressing issues that teachers would like see government and university leaders pay great attention.

These findings are in consistent with previous ones like Seema and Ilyas, (2013) who opine that QWL is all about the conducive and congenial environment created at the workplace, as it is one of the main reasons for better performance and productivity. Better quality of work-life leads to increased employee morale, minimizes attrition and checks labor turnover and absenteeism. Rosser (2005) also suggested that the perception faculty members have of their work life has a direct and powerful impact on their satisfaction. Lee et al., (2007); Sirgy et al., (2008) QWL has been associated with basic job characteristics such as salary, wages or compensation; physical or psychological environment at work; workload and stress at work; and equitable chances of promotion and professional growth. Monkevi ius, (2014) insists that, investing in the quality of working life can bring great benefits to both individuals and the organization as a whole. It was found that happier people at work are more inclined to innovations, better reveal their creative potential and have higher labour productivity. Happier staff helps create and maintain an optimistic mood and efficient work-friendly climate. Compared to unhappy employees, they do less absenteeism, have less bad habits and they are in better health. In the words of Walton (1975), “dissatisfaction with working life is a problem which affects almost all workers at one time or another, regardless of position or status. The frustration, boredom, and anger common to employees disenchanted with their work life can be costly to both individual and organization.” Chandranshu (2012:37) concluded that, hence, if organizations are concerned about developing their human resources and gaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace, it seems necessary that they attend to one of their most precious assets, namely, their human resources by employing high-quality working-life experiences in consonance their various needs eliciting favorable job-related responses in return.

### **Recommendations**

The study has come up with number of implications that need be taken into consideration for better QWL for university teachers.

1. Concerted efforts need be made by government in ensuring universities are given high priority in terms of sufficient budget to enable pursuance of their roles in an effective and efficient way.
2. It has been found that university teachers have good intention to continue their services in spite of challenges ahead them. It is therefore recommended that government should acknowledge this positive attitude by offering some incentives like salaries increment and other fringe benefits.
3. There have been noted some dissatisfactions regarding universities staffing procedures. It has been reported that public universities are understaffed due to delay or and reluctance of government in issuing employment permits. This has compelled universities to engage contract and guest faculty. These two categories of staff are the victims in terms of salaries, job security and other benefits thus a demoralizing factor. Thus government should consider re-examine its recruitment policies so that universities are adequately staffed by permanent/regular teachers.



4. Universities need more autonomy and therefore call for minimal government interference and control. Teachers opine that, university leaders have been more responsible to government than the universities they are working for as such it affects work climate of universities.
5. It has been also noted great concern from teachers regarding lack of transparency in the operations of universities. Thus it is recommended that universities' management to adhere to good governance practices so as to enhance congenial working environment.

### 6.1 Conclusion of the Study

Many studies have indicated that human resource is the most vital asset of any organization without which the organizations cannot survive. To appreciate the role and contribution of this resource, organizations engage into various programmes and initiatives to ensure maximum attention to the wellness of this asset. Organizations have realized that QWL plays an important role in shaping the functions of human resource management. This current study has found that public university teacher perceive their working life interesting and meaningful to their life. The majority of respondents had positive perceptions to the existing QWL at their respective universities. The findings therefore support the assertion that the satisfied employees are the productive employees. Identifying the factors related to university teachers QWL is of great importance, because it has positive and significant relation with job satisfaction. Also, low job satisfaction could cause employees to recede from their jobs, seek new jobs, or change their current jobs and careers. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs have greater organizational loyalty than the dissatisfied employees (Kim et al., 2005). When employee job satisfaction increased, the degree of organizational loyalty of employee is higher thus great assurance for retention of its key talents. Teaching is a valued service, having an important role in creating future human and social capital. The satisfied teaching staff will have enormous impact to the performance of students for future wider national interest.

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