QUALITY OF WORK LIFE-AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

To retain the employees in organization is become a major challenge in present scenario. Quality of work life is consider for both the employees and organization and it is involved with job satisfaction, productivity job involvement, job enrichment etc. This study is made to attempt to analyses "the importance of Quality Of Work Life among employees .In order to improve QWL, various coping technique have been suggested to upgrade the employee's attitude towards their job and the working environment in the organization. To satisfy the new generation workforce organizations need to concentrate on job designs and organizations of work. Further today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives.

Keywords: QWL, Work force, Job satisfactions, Productivity.

INTRODUCTION

"A great place to work is where you trust the people you work for, have pride in what you do, and enjoy the people you work with".

Robert levering

The success of any organization is highly dependent on how it attracts recruits, motivates and retains its workforce. Organization that adopts a control approach may not be able to deliver only consistent results however today do organizations need to be more flexible so that they are equipped to develop their workforce and enjoy their commitment. Therefore organizations are required to adopt a strategy to improve the employees' 'quality of work life' (QWL) to satisfy both the objectives and employees needs.

DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Quality of work life may be defined as "The quality of relationship between employees and the total working environment".

Quality of work life (QWL) program can be anything from union management efforts to bring about a decrease in the process in the number of accidents and avoid health problems a painting the workplace walls improving lightening facilities and cleaning the work place .They can anything from providing a recreational centre to the employees to paying their monthly bills.

What is Quality? "Quality is the ability of a product or service to consistently meet or exceed customer expectations.

What is work? Work can be defined as the application of discretion within limits in order to produce a result.

What is work life? Work life does not merely means the facilities provided to the employees during office hours. It comprises of all the collusive feelings, which reside in the mind of the employee while he works in the organization, he is in the office or away from it.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

- To improve the standard of living of the employees.
- To increase the productivity.
- To create a positive attitude in the minds of the employees.
- To increase the effectiveness of the organization (profitability, goal accomplishment etc.,)
- To improve better teamwork and communication.
- To improve the morale of employees.
- To reduce organizational stress.
- To improve relationships both on and off the job.
- To improve the safety working conditions.
- To provide adequate Human Resource Development Programs.
- To improve employee satisfaction.
- To strengthen workplace learning.
- To participate in management at all levels in shaping the organization.

EVOLUTION OF QUALITY OF WORKLIFE

A number of legislations were passed in all parts of the world including India to protect and safeguard employees from job accidents, exploitations in the hands of the employer and also to provide welfare and security and safety measures.

In the modern scenario QWL, has become a buzzword of the modern time .It was in the year 1970 that the idea of QWL was conceived in the American research journals. The contribution of Maslow's, Herzberg and McGregor in improving QWL cannot be undermined. The QWL has now come to be known as humanization of work .The basic idea of this concept is to treat employees as a human being. Almost all large scales concerns are trying to make the work environment more humane.

The various terms which have now come to be associated with knowledge with knowledge workers are Intellectual capital Social capital Human capital Human resource asset Talent investors etc. Individuals possess bundles of energy which is not responsible.

These employees can become a most tangible assets of an organizations if the concerns take care of their QWL. Management now-a-days have started showing utmost respect to employees ,in all multi- national companies the employees are work better quality of work life.

REASONS FOR THE STUDY OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

1. Division of work and specialization has made the workers socially isolated from their fellow workers.

2. Overdependence on rules procedures and hierarchy has made the workers just like various parts of the machine.

3. In many organizations workers are working 14 to 15 hours a day against the accepted norms of 8 to 9 hours. This has brought the workers under stress and tensions.

4. Burnout work stress health hazards monotony etc are the natural offshoots of the modern way of life .Job pressure may results in poor health on account of drinking, smoking and drug addictions.

5. Many organizations are keeping employees on temporary or adhoc basis. There is no job security for the employees in such organizations. Such persons over work resulting in reduction in their general happiness.

6. Globalization has lowered national boundaries and mobility of workers has increased causing great changes in the work environment at factories and offices.

7. The changing workforce of literate workers is more concerned with non economic aspects such as self respect recognitions ,flexi hours and organizations privacy etc.

8. Conflicts can be prevented if workers enjoy better QWL.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cohen and Rosenthal (1980) describes QWL as an intentionally designed effort to bring out increased labour management, and co-operation to jointly solve the problem of improving organizational performance and employees satisfaction.

According to Walton, (2005). He proposed eight major conceptual categories relating to QWL as (1) adequate and fair compensation, (2) safe and healthy working conditions, (3) immediately opportunity for continued growth and security, (4) Opportunity to use and develop human capacities, (5) Social integration in the work organization, (6), Constitutionalism in the work organization, (7), Work and total life space and (8), Social relevance of work life. Several published works have addressed the constructs that make up the QWL domain and key elements of QWL programs.

Baba and Jamal (1991) listed what they described as typical indicators of quality of working life, including: job satisfaction, job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role conflict, work role overload, job stress, organizational commitment and turn-over intentions.

Cherg.S says in a High Quality of work life there should be a positive impact on personal life, an opportunity to be involved in decision as well as acceptable level of physical comfort.

Bertrand and Scott (1992) in their study ―Designing Quality into Work Life‖ found that improvements in the quality of work life are achieved not only through external or structural modifications, but more importantly through improved relations between supervisors and subordinates.

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor."

                                   - Vincent Lombardi

Hack man and Oldham (1976) drew attention to what they described as psychological growth needs as relevant to the consideration of Quality of working life. Several such needs were identified: Skill variety, Task Identity, Task significance, Autonomy and Feedback. They suggested that such needs have to be addressed if employees are to experience high quality of working life.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE

Through good human resource management and practices this self motivation chip can be installed in the organizational behavior leading to excelling performance. The HR department can develop a bundle of systems that can together create a highly motivational culture such as:

Reducing Time Spent at Work: The goal here is to help employees work smarter rather than harder and establish a life work balance for more job satisfaction

Fringe Benefits: Business has probably outdone the most welfare minded of welfare states in dispensing cradle to grave adoption of their employees the cost of fringe benefits has reached approximately 30-35% in average of the total wages now-a-days .

Human Relations Training: Advanced form human relations sensitivity training teamwork diversity management training is more needed than ever in order to harmonize human interactions in the workplace

Sensitivity Training: A more serious help to attempt the individual understand himself and others trust and cooperate more effectively with others. A lot of this training success and effectiveness and applicability depend on the transparency and open communications channels.

Job Participation: To design a job for own self and become accountable for doing them. This approach giving an employee to determine in some measures what he does in his job i.e., provide a 'sense' of achievement in his task.

WHY NEED QUALITY OF WORK LIFE?

In current scenario every organization wants more output in comparison of less input, it can be possible when working employee find its working place comfortable as per the job requirement. So its very important for an organization to make a Quality relationship between its employees and working environment. Now-a-days, there is no balance between the family and work life due to job pressure and conflicting interests and over-socialization that lead to too much of interest about the co-workers for satisfaction of their ego, creating problems in the minds of neighbors.

MEASURING QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

1. Adequate and Fair compensation

2. Safe and healthy working conditions

3. Opportunity to develop human capacities

4. Opportunity for career growth

5. Social integration in the workforce

6. Constitutionalism & Work and Quality of Life

7. Social relevance

8. Flexi place and working hours & Alternate work schedule.

9. Reduce Occupational stress

10. Avoid Organizational health programme

MEASURES TO IMPROVE QWL

A) QWL THROUGH EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT (EI): One of the most common methods used to create QWL is employee involvement. Employee involvement (EI) consists of a variety of systematic methods that empower employees to participate in the decisions that affect them and their relationship with the organization. Through (EI), employees feel a sense of responsibility, even ownership of decisions in which they participate.

Some companies have had this philosophy ingrained in their corporate structure for decades; Hewlett-Packard, IBM, General Motors, Ford, etc.

B) QUALITY CIRCLES: Quality circles are small groups of employees who meet regularly with their common leader to identify and solve work-related problems. They are a highly specific form of team building, which are common in Japan and gained popularity in North America in the late1970s and early 1980s. By the 1980s most medium- and large-sized Japanese firms had quality control circles for hourly employees. This effort began as a quality improvement program but has since become a routine procedure for many Japanese managers and cornerstone of QWL efforts in many Japanese firms. Several characteristics make this approach unique.

When employees are allowed to select the problems they want to work on, they are likely to be more motivated to find solutions. And they are also more likely to be motivated to stay on as members of the circle and solve additional problems in the future.

C) SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEMS: Another intervention to improve QWL is the use of socio-technical systems. Socio-technical systems are interventions in the work situation that restructure the work, the work groups, and the relationship between workers and the technologies they use to do their jobs. More than just enlarging or enriching a job, these approaches may result in more radical changes in the work environment.

D) AUTONOMOUS WORK GROUP: A more common, still rare, approach to employee involvement is the use of autonomous work groups. These are teams of workers, without a formal company-appointed leader, who decide among themselves most decisions traditionally handled by supervisors. The key feature of these groups is a high degree of self-determination by employees in the management of their day-to-day work. Typically this includes collective control over the pace of work, distribution of tasks, organization of breaks, and collective participation in the recruitment and training of new members. Direct supervision is often necessary. QWL is more likely to improve as workers demand jobs with more behavioral elements.

BARRIERS TO QWL

- ✓ Resistance to change both by management and employees.
- ✓ There is a general perception that Q.W.L. implementation will cost much to the organization
- ✓ Continuous increase in QWL may result in less productivity, i.e.., after a certain level the productivity will not increase in proportion to the increase in QWL.
- ✓ Widespread unhappiness due to comparison with colleagues.
- ✓ Regional prejudice
- ✓ Skepticism about the performance appraisal system and promotion criteria.

COUNTRIES PRACTICING Q.W.L.

- ✓ Sweden
- ✓ Denmark
- ✓ Holland
- ✓ Switzerland
- ✓ India
- ✓ Australia
- ✓ USA

COMPANIES PRACTICING Q.W.L.

- ✓ **GENERAL MOTORS** - Faced labour problems like high ratio of absenteeism and labour turnover and also high cost of operations.
- ✓ **FORD MOTORS AND CHRYSLER**- It gave the excellent results like absenteeism and labour turnover and also high cost of operations.
- ✓ **BHEL**, Hardwar
- ✓ **TISCO**

CONCLUSION

The above discussion has helped me to conclude that the identification of the measures of quality of life is indeed a difficult task, though there is a sort of common agreement on its concept of employee wellbeing. Quality of Work Life plays a very important role in Human Resource Management. QWL creative awareness of workers in successful Organization.QWL in India can be improved through a variety of instrumentalities like education and training, employee communication, union participation, research projects, and appreciation of changing environment. A good human resources practice would encourage all employees to be more productive while enjoying work. Therefore, QWL is becoming an important human resources issue in all organizations. The Quality of Work Life intends to develop enhance and utilize human resource effectively, to improve Quality of products, services, productivity and reduce cost of production per unit of output and to satisfy the workers psychological needs for self-esteem, participation, recognition, etc., Improved Quality of Work Life leads to improved performance. Performance means not only physical output but also the behviour of the worker in helping his colleagues in solving work related problems, team spirit and accepting temporary unfavourable work conditions without complaints. An assured good Quality of Work Life will not only attract young and new talent but also retain the existing experience talent. At last we can say that when there will be a high degree of Quality of work life then there will be high degree of job satisfaction and work force retention.

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