

Linkages Between Quality of Work Life and Work Alienation among Private School Teachers – An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT:

This research aims to find out how college and school teachers perceive their work-life quality and feelings at work. The research involved 144 participants. Information was collected with the help of a questionnaire. Teachers' perceptions regarding work-life quality were evaluated through the Walton (1975) "Quality of Work Life Scale," and their alienation level was determined through the Elma (2003) "Work Alienation Scale." The results indicated that teachers held negative perceptions about some topics of the Quality of Work Life scale, particularly regarding fair and satisfactory remuneration and the connection between work and life in general. All the sub-dimensions of both the Work Alienation and Quality of Work Life scales were found to be strongly and primarily negatively related.

Keywords: Dimensions, Perception, Quality of Work Life, Teachers, Work Alienation.

INTRODUCTION:

The life of every individual is highly impacted by his or her occupation. As individuals invest lots of time and energy in work, businesses need to enhance Quality of Work Life (QWL) so that employees will be more contented. Workers are the most valued asset for organizations in today's world due to the nature of the global economy. Technology and services have become more significant, and employees are the actual assets behind an organization. They're more like the invisible strengths that make an organization successful. Nowadays, organizations are paying greater attention to individuals rather than products or services to face changes in the business world. QWL is extremely significant. The concept of QWL began in the 1960s and 1970s in Scandinavia and the United States. It made its initial appearance at an International Labor Relations conference in 1972. As demands on businesses and families increase, QWL is a key issue today. Yes, it is also the case that talking about QWL may not always be simple, and if it is not attended to, it can generate alienation in the workplace, and the other way around.

Workplace alienation may take many forms. It may feel like solitude or isolation from co-workers. It could also be a feeling that your work doesn't matter or is routine. Another indicator is when employees feel their work isn't appreciated or noticed. Regardless of how it manifests, alienation is extremely detrimental. It can cause things such as reduced job satisfaction and decreased productivity. Job dissatisfaction typically stems from work alienation. With increasing families being dependent on two incomes, where both members of the couple divide domestic chores and work, there has been growing concern for work-life balance. That is why the need to enhance QWL is critical for the general welfare of employees. If a movement is evoked to enhance QWL, it will transform the entire system, work values, capitalism, and society as a whole.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Quality of Work Life

In making work more human-oriented, individualizing the workplace, and transforming the manner in which management and structure's function, the concept of Quality of Work Life (QWL) attempts to transform the work environment as a whole.

It takes into account the psychological and social requirements of the employees. It seeks to develop a culture of work commitment that promises higher job satisfaction and productivity.

Quality of work life" is a description of how well or poorly the working conditions are in an organization for its staff.

It's a broad term encompassing how one feels about every aspect of a job, such as pay, security on the job, the work environment, and interpersonal relationships with persons and the organization. The definition of QWL can vary from person to person. Some key definitions of Quality of Work Life (QWL) are as follows:

Definitions:

1. "Quality of Work Life is the extent to which work within an organization contributes to members feeling well in terms of both material and psychological factors." - Harryson.
2. "Quality of Work Life is a process of mutual decision-making, cooperation, and creation of mutual respect among management and workers." - D.S. Cohan.
3. "The degree to which members of an organization can satisfy their significant personal needs through their experience in the organization." - Lloyd Suttle.

In 1979, the American Society of Training and Development established a "Task Force" on working life quality. They also described QWL as: "QWL is a process by which work organizations enable all members to actively and effectively participate in structuring the environment, methods, and outcomes of the organization. It is a value-oriented process intended to accomplish two fundamental objectives: enhance the effectiveness of the organization and upgrade the quality of working life for employees."

Employee productivity is impacted by the quality of their work-life. Research has indicated that employees with high QWL are healthier and happier, both emotionally and physically.

Walton Model

There are eight general standards to define a quality work life, according to Richard E. Walton. He suggested applying these same standards to assess QWL. These standards are:

1. **Reasonable and adequate compensation:** Individuals have varying notions of what amounts to fair and enough compensation. Fair compensation is greater than the minimum wage but lower than the living wage.
2. **Safe and secure work environments:** All organizations have safe and healthy work environments based on legal or ethical obligations. It is also in the interest of the organization to do so.
3. **Ability to utilize and develop human potential:** Contrary to general assumptions, good work-life is enhanced as employees exert more control over their work and have jobs that consist of important tasks rather than pieces of them. QWL also provides scope for utilizing and developing human potential, such as autonomy at work and involvement in planning.
4. **Career advancement opportunities:** Because there are few higher-level jobs or education-based barriers, most groups have few opportunities for advancement. QWL offers opportunities for future development and stability through skill, knowledge, and credential enhancement.
5. **Workforce social integration:** Facilitating upward mobility, developing a sense of community and openness, fostering teamwork, and eradicating discrimination all assist in accomplishing social integration in the workplace.
6. **Work-life balance:** QWL makes sure work, non-work, and family life are in equilibrium. Work hours, such as overtime, unusual hours, traveling, transfers, and holiday time, should not intrude on social and family life.
7. **Social applicability of work:** QWL is interested in making work applicable to society in a manner that is good for people. When an individual's labor serves society well, they experience a great sense of self-esteem, and vice versa.
8. **Constitutionalism within the organizational work:** QWL provides constitutional protection to workers when it doesn't constrain them. Bureaucratic rules have to be adhered to, and managerial actions are

frequently challenged. Workers are constitutionally protected against factors such as due process, equality, freedom of expression, and privacy.

Work Alienation:

Work alienation is an adverse psychological condition in which employees feel disconnected from their work, responsibilities, or fellow workers. It may result in feelings of isolation, powerlessness, or lack of purpose in their work.

Reasons for work alienation may include a lack of control over day-to-day work, an absence of a sense of purpose, failure to receive personal gratification through work, and company policies or management styles that leave employees feeling undervalued.

This state may lead to decreased job satisfaction, lower performance, and increased employee turnover. Based on Karl Marx's alienated labor theory, workplace alienation is the process of becoming disconnected or distanced from oneself in the workplace.

It occurs when an individual is isolated from colleagues or feels that their occupation is not meaningful.

Marx recognized four forms of alienation in the workplace: feeling disconnected from the work itself, feeling remote from the product of one's labor, feeling disconnected from fellow workers, and feeling estranged from oneself. Some examples of work alienation are feeling detached or apathetic in your job, feeling neglected or insignificant in your workplace, and having strained relations with managers or co-workers.

Ways to minimize feelings of exclusion and enhance the general work environment:

1. Make open conversation by providing an environment where employees feel safe to express their opinions. Facilitate teamwork and embrace feedback.
2. Offer opportunities for employees to learn and develop. This makes them feel appreciated and included.
3. Reward employees for their efforts and appreciate their work.
4. Provide time for individuals to get together socially, such as team-building or social gatherings, to establish relationships. If frequently feeling disconnected becomes an issue, hire someone outside of the organization, such as a specialist, to assist with sessions or training.
5. Be more attentive to employees and not constantly correct them.
6. Don't speak to staff as if they are children who must be guided every minute.
7. Trekked them as competent adults.
8. Praise the good work employees do and recognize their strengths.
9. Inform employees about the goals of the company and how it is financially doing.
10. Empower workers to be given more responsibilities so they can grow and accomplish more.
11. Ensure everyone is treated justly, with equal opportunities and respect.

Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Work Alienation:

The relationship between work alienation and the quality of work life indicates that there is a need for a properly organized and adjustable company structure in order to have a good workplace. This, in turn, leads to employees being healthy, productive, and content. But when employees become unproductive and lack a sense of belongingness to their work, with an ineffective organizational framework, it reduces the quality of work-life balance. In order to secure or enhance the quality of work life, six essential factors are recommended by (1977), and these are fair remuneration, reasonable hours of work, appropriate tasks, healthy and safe working conditions with good administration, proper promotion avenues, and workers' rights to unionize.

Political, social, and economic circumstances, and physical features such as temperature, light, pollution, and noise are also crucial factors. For school leaders, establishing sound work conditions is key to enhancing the quality of work life among teachers. This involves providing opportunities for professional development, career advancement, high motivation levels, workplace autonomy, and an open and friendly organizational culture.

Through this, work alienation can be prevented, and if it happens, work alienation can bring negative impacts on both individuals and the organization.

Objectives of the study:

The majority of society is impacted by the degree to which educational institutions achieve their objectives. It's essential to take into account concepts such as Quality of work life and work alienation, which have the potential to affect the manner in which organizations function. These concepts are central to school goal attainment, student success, and enhancing the quality of education. Hence, knowing the extent to which teachers experience Quality work-life and experience work alienation is the beginning of taking the appropriate measures to enhance their work-life quality and decrease the perception of alienation. This research provides a significant contribution towards this endeavour. It's also anticipated that the research will offer practical recommendations for enhancing the teachers' work environment.

Research Design:

Sample Size

Private school and college teachers were randomly selected through cluster sampling. Out of the 150 selected teachers, 144 were considered for analysis since some data were missing.

Data Collection Tools

The "Quality of Work Life Scale," developed by Walton in 1975, was utilized to gauge the quality of work life in this study. This scale comprises eight distinct areas. In order to measure work alienation, the "Work Alienation Scale" of Elma C, created in 2003, was employed.

Data Analysis Tool

The Standard Deviations and the Arithmetic Mean were utilized to comprehend teachers' perceptions of work alienation and quality of work life. As the data was not normally distributed, the Spearman Brown Rank Correlation Coefficient was utilized in order to determine the relationship between work alienation and quality of work life.

FINDINGS

Table 1 Arithmetic Mean (AM) and Standard Deviation (SD) of the Teacher's Perception about Quality of Work Life

Walton Standards	N	$\bar{X}$ (AM)	SD
Reasonable and adequate compensation	144	7.289	0.330
Safe and Secure work environments	144	7.604	0.325
Ability to utilize and develop human potential	144	7.441	0.309
Career advancement Opportunities	144	7.436	0.302
Workforce Social Integration	144	7.478	0.341
Work life balance	144	7.418	0.335
Social applicability of work	144	7.561	0.346
Constitutionalism within the organizational work	144	7.600	0.327

Table 1 indicates that teachers placed " Safe and secure work environments " as the highest reason for a good work-life balance, with a score of 7.604. This was followed by "Constitutionalism within the organisational work" with a score of 7.600, then "Social applicability of work" with a score of 7.561. Next was "Workforce Social Integration" with 7.478, "Ability to utilize and develop human potential" at 7.441, "Career advancement Opportunities" at 7.436, "Work Life balance" at 7.418, and lastly "Reasonable and adequate compensation" at 7.289.

Table 2 Arithmetic Mean (AM) and Standard Deviation (SD) of the Teachers' Perception about Work Alienation levels

Dimensions	N	$\bar{X}$ (AM)	SD
Isolation	144	5.513	0.310
Powerlessness	144	5.833	0.318
Meaninglessness	144	5.796	0.291
Alienation from school	144	6.560	0.226

Table 2 indicates that the teachers' mean level of perception regarding work alienation was highest in the aspect of alienation from school, with a mean value of 6.560. It was followed by powerlessness with a mean value of 5.833, meaninglessness with 5.796, and isolation with 5.513.

Table 3 Correlation analysis to ascertain the relationship between teacher perceptions of Quality of Work Life and work alienation

	Walton Standards	Work Alienation				
			Isolation	Powerlessness	Meaninglessness	Alienation from school
QWL	Reasonable and adequate compensation	N	144	144	144	144
		R	-0.2157	0.1635	-0.0385	-0.0025
		P	0.0094	0.0502	0.6464	0.9759
	Safe and Secure work environments	N	144	144	144	144
		R	-0.4259	-0.4026	-0.4208	-0.352
		P	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	Ability to utilize and develop human potential	N	144	144	144	144
		R	-0.447	-0.188	-0.388	-0.3568
		P	0.0000	0.0234	0.0000	0.0000
	Career advancement Opportunities	N	144	144	144	144
		R	-0.3686	-0.328	-0.413	-0.212
		P	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0105
	Workforce Integration	N	144	144	144	144
		r	-0.3500	-0.5122	-0.3991	-0.2185
		P	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0085
	Work life balance	N	144	144	144	144
		r	-0.0354	-0.5829	-0.0203	-0.0188
		P	0.6735	0.0000	0.6980	0.7250
	Social applicability of work	N	144	144	144	144
		r	-0.553	-0.5722	-0.3965	-0.1867
		P	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0249
	Constitutionalism within the organizational work	N	144	144	144	144
		r	-0.4467	-0.2157	-0.3925	-0.0333
		P	0.0000	0.0094	0.0000	0.0000

$P < .05$

Table 3 indicates there were no significant relationships between Reasonable and adequate compensation and the powerlessness sub-dimensions of work alienation, meaninglessness, and school alienation. Nonetheless, there was a negative, low-level, and significant association with the isolation sub-dimension. It further states that no significant relations existed between Reasonable and adequate compensation and the sub-dimensions of work alienation for isolation, meaninglessness, and alienation from school. Once more, a low-level, negative, and significant correlation was found with the powerlessness sub-dimension. A medium-level, negative, and significant correlation was found between the perceived sub-dimensions of Quality of Work Life of constitutionalism of the work organis Constitutionalism within the organizational work and safe and secure work

environment, and the work alienation sub-dimensions of isolation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, and alienation from school.

Moreover, there existed a medium-level, negative, and significant correlation between the perceived Quality of Work Life sub-dimensions of social integration among workers and social significance of work, and the work alienation sub-dimensions of isolation, powerlessness, and meaninglessness. Low-level, negative, and significant correlation was also obtained with the sub-dimension of alienation from school. Low-level, negative, and significant correlation was seen between the sub-dimension of QWL of reasonable and adequate compensation and safe and secure work environment, and all work alienation sub-dimensions.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Teachers reported negative attitudes toward compensation, additional benefits, participation, and responsibility, but reported positive attitudes toward other components of the Quality of Work Life scale. The mean scores indicated that teachers reported alienation from school, powerlessness, meaninglessness, and isolation. Negative and significant correlations were found between all Quality of Work Life sub-dimensions and the work alienation sub-dimensions.

From the study, the following recommendations are made

Give recognition for their contributions. To enhance teachers' satisfaction with compensation, a performance-linked salary system may be initiated. The career advancement opportunities of teachers must be enhanced by school leadership to minimize teachers' feelings of alienation from the school. The quality of work-life needs to be modified to remove adverse opinions from the teachers. Quality of Work Life (QWL) is enabled by paying attention to it, which makes the workplace a more humane place. It is meant to satisfy employees' basic and higher-order requirements. It seeks to have more capable employees and create an atmosphere that encourages them to advance professionally. Human resources are not merely to be used, but to be created, as per the theory. The work environment is not supposed to be excessively stern. Employees are not to face too much stress, and their humanity should not be overlooked or destroyed. It is not supposed to be frightening or excessively perilous. Finally, it must enable, or not prevent, the worker from meeting other roles in life, that is, parent, spouse, or citizen. That is, work must be part of the general development of society.

In conclusion, the extent to which employees in a firm can meet their individual needs while at work is referred to as work-life quality. Its primary objective is to provide a working environment in which employees work together and assist the company's goals.

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