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RESEARCH ARTICLE

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE SUSTAIN ROBUST WORK CULTURE: A FIELD EXPERIENCE SAMPLING STUDY ON SAGO INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Quality in work life is important for individual, for growth, employment and a sustainable and competitive economy. Quality work life is a prescriptive concept, it attempts to design work environments so as to maximize concern for human welfare. To create quality of work life, there has to be balance between organization leadership, organization structure and individual employee. The present study attempts to prevailing quality of work life conditions in SAGO mills and how the QWL sustains health and strong work culture. Quality of work life includes adequate and fair remuneration, safe and healthy working conditions and social integration in work organization that enables an individual's to develop and use all his or her capabilities. It is an attempt to identify role of QWL to sustain a robust work culture to the employees of the SAGO mills. Primary data were collected through a well structured undisguised questionnaire. This study has highlighted some positive aspects of QWL and the main finding is that employees of different status differ in their preference of QWL factor. The result of this study reveals that the expectation of the flexi-working condition and alternative work schedule is high. The employees perception towards the facets of the QWL was different and the employees have high dissatisfaction with existence of some facets of the QWL, such as welfare measures, recognition and physical working conditions. The strategies which are recommended here is to divergent facets of the QWL to the employees in different status and improve the interpersonal relations, participatory management and physical working conditions to ensure robust work culture.

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Introduction

Louis Davis introduced the term quality of work life (QWL) in 1972 in an attempt to establish that performance is linked to involvement and satisfaction of employees at work places. Quality of work life is the overall quality of human experience in the work place. Quality of work life (QWL) refers to the Favorableness or unfavorableness of job environment for people. It refers to the quality of relationship between employees and the total working environment. The basic purpose is to develop work environment that are excellent for people as well for the work culture of the organization. Many experts define quality of work

life as "a process of joint decisions making, collaboration and building mutual respect between management and employees". It is concerned with increasing labour - management co-operatives to solve the problems at improving organizational performance and employee's satisfaction. Quality of Work Life (QWL) is a multifaceted concept, implying the concern for the members of the organization irrespective of the level they belong to. QWL covers a person's perception or feelings about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relationships and intrinsic meaning in a person's life. The basic concept underlying the QWL is what has come to known as

"humanization of work". It involves the development of an environment of work that stimulates the creative ability of the employees and generates cooperation and a strong work culture. Culture is made up of the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors shared by a group of people. In many ways, culture is like personality. In a person, the personality is made up of the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, interests, experiences, upbringing, and habits that create a person's behavior. A norm of accountability will help make your organization successful. A strong (Robust) work culture helps the organization to realize its business goal easily and effectively.

RATIONALE OF STUDY

India acquires significance in the global cassava (tapioca) scenario due to its highest productivity in the world (34.37 t ha⁻¹) (FAOSTAT, 2009). Similarly within India, Tamil Nadu prides itself in having the highest productivity of 38 t ha⁻¹. Also 70% of the sago produced in India is from Tamil Nadu as 90% of the tapioca produced in the state is produced in the state is processed into sago and starch. As high as 60% of the sago produced in Tamil Nadu is marketed through SAGOSERVE. In India, It is an important food crop in Kerala. Due to its diversified uses, tapioca has become an important commercial crop in the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Tamil Nadu stands first in respect of processing of tapioca into sago and starch throughout the country, meeting about 80% of country's demand. Salem has traditionally been the land of sago and starch. The cultivation area and processing units are concentrated in Salem and adjoining districts. The Salem Region offers good raw material, cheap labour and good sunshine for a longer period of the day throughout the year, helping manufacturers to produce more tapioca based products eg. Sago and starch and therefore this area is known as the Land of sago/starch, even at the International level. In 2008-09 there were about 359 sago industries located in Tamil Nadu. In Salem District alone 120 units are located in Attur and Gangavalli area. It makes the net revenue to the state government of Rs.228.70 (Rs. in lakhs) in the year of 2011-2012. Over 7000 industrial employees were employed, so, a specific study is essential to identify the need and existence of QWL in this sector. This study is designed to explore the prevailing conditions of QWL and to suggest for ensuing robust work culture to the sago employees. The suggestions help the policy makers to improve the quality of work life for promoting a strong work culture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hackman 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. **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. They discussed a range of correlations derived from their work, such as those between work involvement and job satisfaction, intrinsic job motivation and job satisfaction, and perceived intrinsic job characteristics and job satisfaction. In particular, Warr et al. found evidence for a moderate association between total job satisfaction and total life satisfaction and happiness, with a less strong, but significant association with self-rated anxiety.

Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggested that Quality of working life was associated with satisfaction with wages, hours and working conditions, describing the "basic elements of a good quality of work life" as; safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement. **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. Baba and Jamal also explored reutilization of job content, suggesting that this facet should be investigated as part of the concept of quality of working life. **Sirgy et al.; (2001)** suggested that the key factors in quality of working life are: Need satisfaction based on job requirements, Need satisfaction based on Work environment, Need satisfaction based on Supervisory behavior, Need satisfaction based on Ancillary programs, Organizational commitment. They defined quality of working life as satisfaction of these key needs through resources, activities, and outcomes stemming from participation in the workplace. Maslow's needs were seen as relevant in underpinning this model, covering Health & safety, Economic and family, Social, Esteem, Actualization, Knowledge and Aesthetics, although the relevance of non-work aspects is play down as attention is focused on quality of work life rather than the broader

concept of quality of life. **Report of National Commission on Labour (2002)**, Government of India, made recommendations in the area of labour welfare measures which includes social security, extending the application of the Provident Fund, gratuity and unemployment insurance etc. **Shobha Mishra & Manju Bhagat**, in their "*Principles for Successful Implementation of Labour Welfare Activities*", stated that labour absenteeism in Indian industries can be reduced to a great extent by provision of good housing, health and family care, canteen, educational and training facilities and provision of welfare activities. The principle for successful implementation of labour welfare activities is nothing but an extension of democratic values in an industrialized society. **P.L. Rao**, in his "*Labour Legislation in the Making*", opines that professional bodies like National Institute of Personnel Management should constitute a standing committee to monitor the proceedings in the Parliament regarding the labour welfare measures. **John creedy, Guyonne kalb(2005)**:this paper examines the computation of welfare measures for use with labour supply.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The major objectives of this study are to identify prevailing quality of work life conditions in SAGO mills of Tamilnadu and to sustain a robust work culture through QWL. This study was confined to the permanent employees of SAGO Mills in Tamilnadu. The research was in descriptive nature. The methodology involved collecting primary data

and secondary data and analysed with suitable statistical tools for interpretation. Primary data were collected through a well structured undisguised questionnaire. The questionnaire was of multiple choice types and Likert scale was used as the rating scale. The required secondary data have been collected from reference books, websites and brochures related to this industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data gathered were analysed by using the methods of 'Z' test, Correlation, Chi-square and other tools. Totally 09 facets of QWL was taken, The method of 'Z-test' analyses shows (Table -1) that sago company employees perceived different facets of QWL with different intensities of influencing their work culture. They perceived the following facet of QWL positively contributing to strong work culture. They were: Interpersonal relationship, Recognition, Participatory Management, Work load and Physical working conditions. The respective mean score of these facets are 4.12, 4.07, 3.78, 3.65 and 3.33, respectively. The remaining four factors of QWL: Training facilities, Job security, Welfare facilities and Duration of work preferred with the mean score of 2.59, 2.34, 1.91, and 1.46, respectively. It is found that 18 percent of the sago company employees were highly satisfied with available QWL factors and remaining 34 and 48 percent of the employees had indicated moderate and low satisfaction respectively (Table-2). In general, most of them are dissatisfied with the prevailing conditions of QWL factors.

Table 1 : mean value of the specific QWL factors sustain robust work culture

S.No	QWL Factors	Mean Value	Standard Deviation	Z
1	Physical working conditions	3.33	1.00	1.54
2	Training facilities	2.59	0.95	1.63
3	Welfare measures	1.91	0.82	1.98
4	Interpersonal relationship	4.12	0.37	1.99
5	Recognition	4.07	0.46	1.87
6	Work load	3.65	0.77	1.19
7	Participatory management	3.78	0.74	1.85
8	Duration of work	1.46	0.68	2.92
9	Job security	2.34	0.89	0.82

Source: primary Data

Table 2: Differences in the overall satisfaction on the availability of QWL factors

Level of satisfaction	Range	Total no. of employees in percentage
Low	38-51	48
Medium	52-65	34
High	66-79	18

Source: primary Data

Table 3: “work culture” and job satisfaction and QWL measures”

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
I	40	68	20	400	-15	238	-308
II	30	72	10	100	-11	130	-114
III	20	83	0	0	0	0	0
IV	10	0	-10	100	-83	6960	834
$\Sigma =$			20	600	-109	7328	412

[A-Culture, B-midpoint X, C- job satisfaction and QWL measures, D- $dx = x - 20$, E- $(dx)^2$ F- $dy = y - 83$, G- $(dy)^2$, H- $dx \cdot dy$]

The correlation value (Table-3) in this study is +0.6575 and research shows that “Culture” and “Job satisfaction and QWL measures” are factors that prove to be significantly correlated to each other. A Chi-square test applied to find the significant relationship between QWL measures and employee’s Work culture (H1). It is calculated that the Chi-square value (135.70) is greater than the tabulated value (9.488), therefore it is significant. In general, most of the employees prefer Industrial relations is the main QWL factor to sustaining robust work culture.

CONCLUSION

It is suggested that the employees who have great in culture tend to have high expectations in the quality of work life and Job satisfaction. Thus SAGO companies can concentrate on organization culture by providing adequate QWL conditions. It has been proved that the QWL factors are essential for promoting a strong work culture. A good human resource climate, work culture can cause to develop a feeling towards the company and also that would motivate them to do the job well.

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