

A Study on Quality of Work Life (Qwl) With Reference To Marine Industry Employees'- Shipping Crews

S. Revathi

Date of Submission: 25-09-2020

Date of Acceptance: 12-10-2020

ABSTRACT: The principal aim of this study is to determine the relationship between stress and Employees' Quality of Work Life in shipping industry with reference to Marine crews. This study discussed factors influenced Quality of Work Life and Quality of Working Life Models. This study briefly described the sailing employees work life on the companies which operated in India. Two models viz. Taylor and Hackman and Oldham models were highlighted for factors which influencing QWL. This study survey comprises 50 crews of selected shipping industries working in various positions. Sample has drawn from the shipping industries situated in Tamil Nadu mostly in Chennai. Questionnaire were distributed randomly and collected data entered in excel work sheet for data analysis. Data analysis has been made mostly on Stress related factors how impact Quality of Work Life in Marine Industry employees especially Shipping crews. Findings of the results and suggestions from the Marine crews conclusion has been drawn. Finally how to overcome the stress also briefed

Key Words: Stress, Quality of Work Life, Marine Industry, Shipping crews.

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work Life is a Person's life. It covers a person's feelings about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, Organizational and interpersonal relations and its intrinsic meaning in person's life. Therefore, simply say Quality of Work Life is a concern not only to improve life at work, but also life outside work.

Quality of Work Life can be defined as the environment at the work place provided to the people on the job. QWL programs is the dimension in which employers have the responsibilities to provide congenial environment i.e., excellent working conditions where people can perform excellent work also their health as well as economic health of the organization is also met. Now a day to retain the employees in the organization providing healthy QWL is the key

factor. QWL programs usually emphasize on development of employee skills, the reduction of occupational stress and the development of more co-operative labour-management relations.

Stress is an inevitable part of today's fast life. In this age of globalization and liberalization of the economy, increased competition among the organizations leads employees stress. Human Resources managers attempt to outperform to reveal the employees stress. Therefore modern organizations are facing the problems of employees stress and low productivity. Stress is a pressure condition causing hardship. It is an internal phenomenon and a mental attitude. Stress is generally believed to have a deleterious effect on health and performance, but minimum level of stress is necessary for effective functioning and peak performance. Hans Selye the father of stress, believes that stress is the spice of life and absence of stress is death.

Factors of Measuring Quality of Work Life

The Richard Walton, an American Professor, played a major role in developing the concept of Quality of Work Life. The eight factors he proposed to measure Quality of Work Life has made the task easy worldwide.

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
7. Grievance Mechanism
8. Timings

Background.

They load and unload cargo, help passengers as requested, and handle lines during docking or departing. They may steer the ship; perform routine maintenance, such as painting and sweeping; and perform repairs, such as fixing plumbing and creaking hatches.

They include a Master, First Mate, Second Mate, Bosun, Chief Engineer, Second Engineer, Medical Purser, Cook and Watch Leader. A high quality of work life (QWL) is a crucial issue for

Marine crews It is common for people to experience a sense of meaningless in sailing life yester years. Sailors experience this meaninglessness in the workplace as alienation from their work. This occurs regardless of the fact that today they are healthier, life expectancy is higher and they possess material goods far superior to those of a few years ago. The challenge today is to bring meaning; stress free and job satisfaction back

Significance of the Study

Mariners industry shipping crews are generally poorly paid, poorly qualified and have to complete contracts of approximately 9 months before returning home on leave. They often come from countries where the average industrial wage is still very low, such as the Philippines or India. Officers however, come from all over the world and it is not uncommon to mix the nationality of the officers on board ships. Officers are often the recipients of university degrees and have completed vast amounts of training in order to reach their rank. Officers' benefits e.g. by having larger, more comfortable cabins and table service for their meals.

Contracts average at the 4 month mark for officers, with generous leave. Most ocean-going vessels now operate an unmanned engine room system allowing engineers to work days only. The engine room is computer controlled by night, although the duty engineer will make inspections during unmanned operation. Engineers work in a hot, humid, noisy atmosphere. Communication in the engine room is therefore by hand signals and lip-reading, and good teamwork often stands in place of any communication at all.

Findings by the Seafarer's International Research Center indicate a leading cause of mariners leaving the industry is "almost invariably because they want to be with their families." U.S. merchant ships typically do not allow family members to accompany seafarers on voyages. Industry experts increasingly recognize isolation, stress, and fatigue as occupational hazards. Advocacy groups such as International Labour Organization, a United Nations agency, and the Nautical Institute are seeking improved international standards for mariners.

Restrictions on shore leave, coupled with reduced time in port, translate into longer periods at sea. Mariners' report that extended periods at sea living and working with shipmates, who for the most part are strangers, takes getting used to. At the same time, there is an opportunity to meet people from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Recreational opportunities have improved aboard some U.S. ships, which may feature gyms and day rooms for watching movies, swapping sea stories, and other activities. And in some cases, especially tankers, it is possible for a mariner to be accompanied by members of his family. However, a mariner's off-duty time is largely a solitary affair, pursuing hobbies, reading, writing letters, and sleeping

Today, we don't think of stress as "the salt of life," as Selye once called it. "The word has become a catch-all phrase for anything that's bad," says Heidi Hanna, executive director of the American Institute of Stress, "and yet we know that stress can be caused by positive situations and even bad stress can have positive outcomes. "

People's daily experience rarely produces a balance between challenges (perceived in a given situation) and skills (that a person brings to it). This is attributed to the fact that their either too much to do, which causes tension (stress), or too little to-do which causes boredom.

Types of Stress

All the above mentioned factors are interrelated and interdependent. Stress level need not be directly proportional to the compensation. Stresses are different types mental stress, physical stress and psychological and emotional stress. A managing director of a company will have a mental stress an employee has a physical stress and politician have a emotional stress. Mental stress and emotional stress cause more damage than physical stress.

Work life balance:

Employer should provide the relaxation time for employees and offer tips to balance their personal and professional lives. They should not strain employees' personal and social life by forcing on them by demanding working hours, overtime work, high supervision, Poor working conditions, untiming transfers. Quality of Work Life indicates that the work should not have excessively negative conditions. It should not put workers under **undue stress**. It should not damage or degrade their humanness. It should not be threatening or unduly dangerous. Employees in several companies that instituted Quality of work life experienced better health and greater safety on the job.

Need of the study

Today, the engagement and retention of high potential talent is a competitive advantage to

all organisations. On an average we spend major time daily at the workplace; which is almost one-third of our life; it does influence the overall quality of our life in many ways. It should yield job satisfaction, give peace of mind, a fulfillment of having done a task, as it is expected without any flaw and having spent the time fruitfully, constructively and purposefully. To require QWL having stress free environment and good supervision, good working conditions, good pay and benefits.

Scope of the study

The term Quality of work life in its broader sense covers various aspects of employ men and non-employment conditions of work. This study is to find whether the Marine (sailing) crews Quality of Work Life. .

Objectives of the Study

- To study the present status of the Indian Marine crews Quality of Work Life
- To study the variables pay, work nature and training programmes for help to improve their QWL.
- To analyse the factors which stress relief for Marine (sailing) crews to improve their QWL.

Limitations of the Study

Result of the study depends upon the information furnished by the Marine industry ship crews. The information provided by them is subject to personal bias. Only a sample of 50 Marine crews was interviewed through schedule.

Models of Quality of Working Life

Selected Models and relevant to this study furnished below:

Hackman and Oldham (1976) described as psychological growth needs as relevant to the consideration of Quality of Working Life. Several needs were identified Skill variety, Task Identity, Task Significance, Autonomy and Feedback etc. They suggested that such needs have to be

addressed if employees are to experience high quality of working life.

Taylor (1979) has contradicting to the above, he developed pragmatically identified the essential components of quality of working life as basic extrinsic job factors of wages, working conditions and intrinsic job notions of nature of work and work itself. Taylor suggested that relevant quality of working life concepts may vary according to organization and employee group.

Warr and colleagues (1979) in an investigation of quality of working life, they founded intrinsic job motivation, higher order need strength, perceived intrinsic job characteristics, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, happiness and self rated anxiety.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Structured questionnaire was prepared questions comprises of pay packages, work related factors and Relationship with their superiors and subordinates, working conditions, Grievance handling Mechanism, Leisure time, Training programmes etc. Further, how their stresses relieved for alienate sea travelling manage and improve the Quality of work life. Based on the secondary data information, questionnaire has been evolved. Primary data has been gathered from directly and indirectly related with Marine Industries engaging shipping crews from top to bottom level. Great Eastern Shipping Company, Essar Shipping, Benline, Chakkia, Shipping Corporation of India. Shreyas Shipping Company. Varun Shipping. Mercator Limited. 82 Questionnaires were circulated, it's hard to collect the questionnaire from marine industry shipping crews most of the time they were busy schedule, but manage to make a survey successful manner. Final sample size of the study after qualifying all the criteria is 50. The researcher adopts random sampling method to collect the responses from the employees with direct accessibility. The researcher uses frequency and multivariate analysis.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Quality of Work Life factors

Aspects	No of respondents	% of respondents
Nature of work	10	20
Work load	12	24
Timings	11	22
Salary/Wages	17	34
Total	50	100

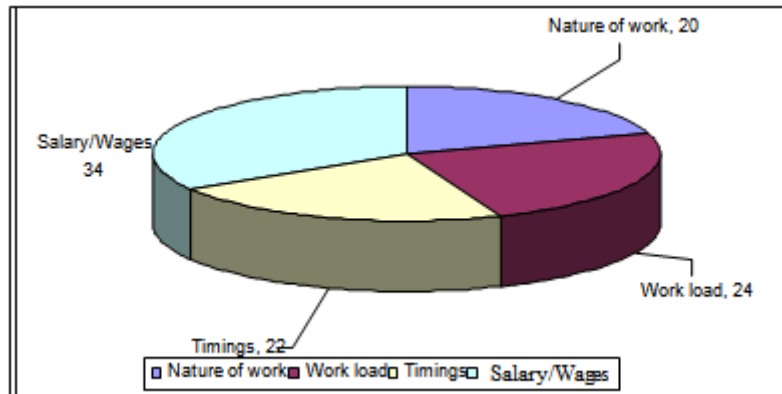


Fig-1- QWL Factors

Inference: The above chart and table shows that 34% of employees salary/wages dominating QWL factor followed by 24% work load 22% Leisure Timings and 20% Nature of work.

Table : 2 Relationship with other Crews

Relationship	No of Respondents	% of respondents
Superior	24	48
Subordinate	19	38
Peers	07	14
Total	50	100

Inference: 48% of employees relationship with Superiors is cordial, 38% of employees good relationship with subordinates and 14% respondents relationship with peers is good.

Table 3: Stress Relief Activities

Stress Relief Activities	No of respondents	% of respondents
Yoga/Meditation	08	16
Music	15	30
Games	12	24
Cultural Activities	8	16
Training classes	7	14
Total	50	100

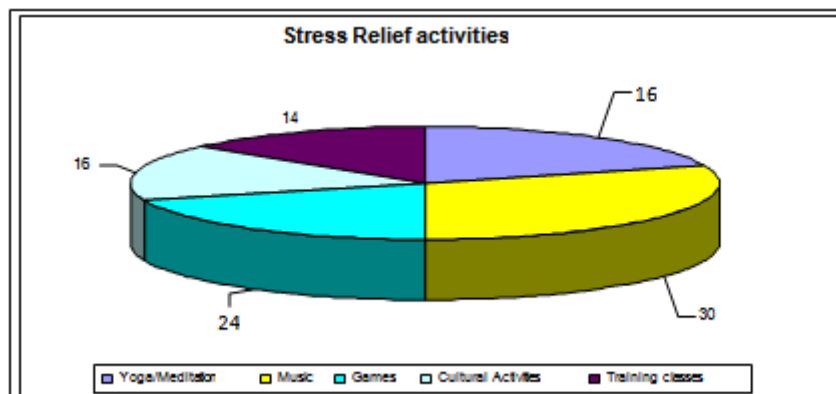


Fig-2- Stress Relief Activities

Inference: 30% of employees are able to overcome the stress by listening to music. 24% of employees are over come the stress through games, Yoga and meditation and Cultural activities 16% and Training classes helped 14%.

Respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Nor	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Management Support	27	19	3	1	0
Wages	32	12	06	0	0
Superior support	21	17	5	4	3
Welfare facilities	14	29	4	3	0
Grievances Handling mechanism	7	14	11	8	10
Productivity	18	16	8	3	5

Inference: 27 employees strongly agree and 19% agree that management support has overcome stress, Wages has dominating factor for stress relief in the above table 32 of them strongly agree and 12 agree for their wages has reduced their stress, while 6 of them not to say anything. 21 employees strongly agree and 17 agree that they are encouraged by superior, whereas 5 has neutral and disagree with 4 and 3 strongly disagree. 29 employees Agree and 14 were strongly agree for their welfare facilities boost and 4 no comments and 3 were disagree with existing welfare facilities. Grievance handling Mechanism 14 agree and 7 were strongly agree whereas 11 didn't give any

comment 10 were strongly disagree and 8 give disagree for this factor. As far as productivity concerned 18 strongly agree and 16 agree but 8 were not given any comment 5 stated strongly disagree and 3 were disagree.

Chi-Square Test

H0: There is no significant difference between the Superiors and Subordinate Marine crews opinion on factors influencing Quality of Work Life.

H1: There is a significant difference between the Superiors and Subordinate Marine crews opinion on factors influencing Quality of Work Life.

Table: 5 Association between Superiors and subordinates and factors influencing Quality of Work Life.

Factors influencing QWL	Category		Total
	Officers	Workers	
Salary	12	24	36
Welfare measures	06	08	14
Total	18	32	50

Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig (2 sided)	Exact Sig. (2 sided)	Exact Sig. (1 sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.820(b)	1	.007		
Continuity Correlation(a)	5.964	1	.015		
Likelihood Ratio	6.888	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test				.014	.007
Linear by-Linear association	6.952	1	.008		
No of valid cases	50				

Inference: As the exact significant value=0.007, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is significant difference between the Officers and Workers benefits.

ANNOVA

H0: There is no significant difference between the Category and the Career Growth and development in job

H1: There is a significant difference between the Category and the Career Growth and development in job.

Table-6: ANNOVA showing difference between the Category and the Career Growth and development in job.

Components	N	Mean	SD	Std.error	95% conf. interval for mean		Min.	Max
					Lower limit	Upper Limit		
Highly Agree	15	2.16	.501	.115	1.92	2.40	1	3
Agree	20	2.39	.659	.115	2.16	2.63	1	3
Neither Nor	7	2.20	.561	.145	1.89	2.51	1	3
Disagree	5	2.48	.750	.164	2.13	2.82	1	3
Highly dis.agree	3	2.25	.452	.131	1.96	2.54	2	3
Total	50	2.32	.618	.062	2.20	2.44	1	3

Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Levene statistics	Df1	Df2	Sig.
3.548	4	95	.010

ANNOVA

Components	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.562	4	.372	.963	.423
Within Groups	36.208	95	.342		
Total	37.770	99			

Inference: It is observed from the table F=0.963, as the significant value 0.423, at the 5% level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

IV. FINDINGS:

- Salary is the highest in Quality of Work Life factor at the same time Nature of work not attracted by Marine crews.
- Cordial Relationship with Superiors maintained by Marine crews and subordinate also cooperated.
- Wages, Management support and Welfare facilities make reduce their stress other factors also too contribute. Grievance Handling Mechanism not helpful and some employees were disagree with their superior support and productivity pressure
- There is significant difference between the Officers and Workers for their benefits like wages and welfare facilities.
- There is no significant difference between the category and career development and growth in job.

Suggestions:

The respondents have given some suggestion for better QWL and reducing Stress.

- ❖ More Leisure time required (i.e every four hours rest instead of continuous 8 hours work)
- ❖ Subordinates(workers) employees also provide more welfare facilities at par with officers
- ❖ Officers suggest long duration of voyage is family commitments not fulfilled, so frequent short trips may help to attach family.
- ❖ During the voyage time in ships itself arrangement of big TVs, indoor sports may relief stress.

V. CONCLUSION

Stress related complaints do not only cause individual misery. A potential cost of stress to organization are numerous interms of Poor morale, Low Quality product and services, poor internal communication and conflicts, losing angry and indignant customers, bad publicity, missed

opportunities, high turnover and sick leave, high cost for (working in temporary) replacements and, permanent vacancies. As such, the occurrence of frequent stress related complaints can be and indicator of underlying factors that may negatively affect vital organizational goals. So investing in human potential may well be the most profitable and wise approach in order to survive as an organization.

Though the intervention mentioned above can mitigate or even present some of the undesired effects of change, changing too much and too quick can provide the foundation stones for ill health and lower productivity. Interms of issues such as personal identity and relationships at work, creativity and development, prestige and pride, motivation and pleasure, and lost but not least, effectiveness and efficiency. QWL is viewed as an alternative to the control approach of managing people. The QWL considers people as an “asset” to the organizational rather than as “cost”. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. This approach motivates by satisfying not only their economic needs but also their social and psychological ones. To satisfy the new generation workforce organizations need to concentrate on job designs and organizational of work. Further, today’s workforce is realizing the importance of the relationship and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives.

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