

Quality of Work Life in Indonesian Public Service Organizations: The Role of Career Development and Personal Factors

Zulkarnain Amin

Dept. of Industrial & Organizational Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, University of Sumatera Utara, Medan, 20155, Indonesia

Abstract This study investigated an integrative of Quality of work life in public service employee. This study was involving the role career development and personal factors to predict outcome in quality of work life. Questionnaires were administered to 429 white-collar workers employed at five public service organizations in Medan, Indonesia. The results found that career development was related to quality of work life of employee. Furthermore, personal factors such as; employees' age, sex, educational level, length of service and marital status were correlated significantly to quality of work life. These findings appeared to confirm, career development and personal factor could enhanced quality of work life of employee. The implication of this study is that it does contribute to understanding of the ways by which the management can endeavor to increase quality of work life on the needs of the employee and the needs of the organization.

Keywords Quality of Work Life, Career Development, Personal Factors, Public Service Employee

1. Introduction

Indonesia is developing to achieve a developed country within the next decades. This country still faces many problems in order to achieve its intended purpose. Companies and government have invested vast amounts of time and effort in recent years in policies and initiatives to improve work life balance. The effort to improving work life balance, both of government and private sector have been made some various efforts. These efforts include providing a salary increase, paying an annual bonus, giving grace to the brilliant workers in jobs and providing various facilities for workers. But these efforts are still not able to fulfill the will of some workers, because each worker has a different assessment in assessing their respective interests[1].

As a developing country, Indonesia needs some productive workers. The existing problems at the level of both organizations in the non-business or business is that they have people who are intellectually capable of good, but often a good intellectual ability is not manifested in the achievement of work for the organization where they work less support to be able to realize their potential[2]. The fulfillment of individual's and organizational objective are independent but they are linked by the motivation. Individuals motivate themselves to work hard for the

achievement of personal goals which is only possible when the organizational objectives are also met[3].

The existence of various changes that occurred in the organization influenced to workers behavior. Workers feel threatened, anxious, and uncomfortable because of the potential influence changes in working condition. Instability of employment status and income level allowed to work pressure, job dissatisfaction, strike, skipping, changing jobs and so on can affect and cause phase decreased quality of work life (QWL).

Improving the QWL is an important thing because the contribution can increase organizational effectiveness and reduce the negative behavior of workers[4]. In several empirical studies, the implementation of the quality of work life led to increased compliance and employee satisfaction, increase confidence, improve relationships between workers and supervisors, improving safety and health. In addition, can reduce labor complaining, reduce the conflict between labor and management, improve productivity and strengthen the organization's position in market competition[5]. The basic objectives of an effective QWL program are improved working conditions (mainly from an employee's perspective) and greater organizational effectiveness (mainly from an employer's perspective). Positive results of QWL have been supported by a number of previous studies, including reduced absenteeism, lower turnover, and improved job satisfaction[6];[7].

QWL contribute to a company's ability to recruit quality people, it also enhances a company's competitiveness. Common beliefs support the contention that QWL will

* Corresponding author:

zulkarnain3@usu.ac.id (Zulkarnain)

Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/ijap>

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positively nurture a more flexible, loyal, and motivated workforce, which is essential in determining the company's competitiveness[8];[7]. Other studies also found positive associations between progressive human resource management practices, such as training and staffing selectivity, and common firm performance measures[9]. Quality of work life in general could be compensation systems, social relations and career development[10]. Some literature also states that environmental factors (such as physical, security and work conditions), relationship factors (such as relationships in the working group, the relationship between workers and management), demographic factors, social change, technology and labor markets is important related to the quality of work life[2]. The good working conditions and opportunities for growth are the main considerations in the quality of work life of workers[11].

2. Literature Review

2.1. Career Development and Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life does not only affect job satisfaction, but it will also affect life satisfaction, such as family life, social life, financial and well-being of workers[12]. Quality of work life as a concept which are life satisfaction at the highest level, and job satisfaction in the middle[13]. Job satisfaction can be obtained from work satisfaction with wages, coworkers, and supervisors. Quality of work life is an important thing. Some studies mentioned the fact that a happy worker is a productive worker; a happy worker is a worker who devoted and committed to the organization[14]. The quality of work life also aims to make work more attractive and provide benefits to workers[15].

There are three distinctive elements of quality of work life related interventions: (1) a concern about the effect of work on people as well as organizational effectiveness, (2) the idea of worker participation in organizational problem solving and decision making and (3) the creation of reward structures in the workplace which consider innovative ways of rewarding employee input into the work process such as gain sharing[16].

Worker will stay in the organization depends on how they see their future in the organization. Worker will stay in the organization when he/she felt that work designs provided by the organization useful for work and careers[17]. The existence of a clear career advancement within their working lives are also profoundly influenced a worker to survive in an organization. At the beginning, career activities are conducted by the organization, but the career development will be effective if carried out jointly between workers and organizations[18]. The employee satisfaction on the career development was strongly influenced by level of the workers' need. The organization should offer a pattern of career development to fulfilling these workers purpose[19]. Pattern of career development offered by organization to the aim of fulfilling the employees need, not necessarily be perceived

as such by the workers[20]. In other words, acceptance of career development workers will depend on how they respond to and perceive this career development. Workers' perception of career development is influenced by the interaction between the values, hopes, and purposes of workers conducted through work experience.

Encompasses the career development practices used within the organization such as placing clear expectations on employees on their expectations and succession plans. Quality of work life is linked to career development and career is evolving from such interaction of individuals within the organizations. Career arises from the interaction of individuals with organizations and society. Career is not primarily a theoretical construct but is used in meaningful ways, given meaning and it creates meaning and also experience. Careers are typically defined as a 'sequence of work roles or a sequence of a person's work experiences over time[1].

Career development is a process and activities to prepare workers for positions in the organization, which will be done in the future. Career development one needs to be done because a worker not only wants to get what belongs but expect change, progress and opportunities to progress to higher. Some of the things that encourage career development within a worker are: first, the desire to develop themselves according to their intellectual abilities; second, to obtain greater compensation than usual; the third to get freedom in the job; fourth, to guarantee safety at work and the last to pursue achievement in work[21].

According to[22], it is important to realize that career planning and development process involves assessment of workers and organizations that will enhance success in one's career and also can reduce negative behavior and improve the quality of workers in the organization. Thus career development program which will be able to meet organizational needs and the workers needs. The form of career development can be done by the organization in three ways, namely through career education, providing career information and guidance[23]. To drive a profitable career development for organization and worker, organizations need to conduct and development training programs, mastering the law, provide feedback to workers and to build a cohesive working environment to enhance the ability and willingness of workers in implementing career development. Feedback on career development efforts needed to achieve career goals of workers, ensuring that workers are not promoted will be considered for further promotion[24].

2.2. Personal Factors and Quality of Work Life

The QWL also associated with personal factors. Personal factors such as age, income, education level associated with the quality of work life[25];[26]. In addition, some studies showed that marital status, educational level and age correlated with work involve[27]. Another studies reported that length of service associated to QWL[28];[29]. Gender, length of service and education correlated with quality of

work life components such as work satisfaction, supervisor support and work environment[30]. Meanwhile, sex, age, education of and marital status also correlated to quality of work life[31];[32];[27].

3. Research Method

3.1. Participants

The sample of current research was the full time employees of 5 public service organizations in Medan, Indonesia. Five hundred and ten questionnaires (including scales of Quality of work life and career development) were distributed among employees. The four hundred twenty nine questionnaires of the employees returned the questionnaires. In this regard response rate was 84.11%.

3.2. Instruments

Quality of Work Life

The instrument was the quality of work life scale designed to some aspects of work life quality[33]. There were some aspects of work life quality namely; adequate and fair compensation, 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. The subjects of this study were requested to respond using four-point scaled response options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Higher scores will signify elevated degree of quality of work life. This scale consists of 44 items and the Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability is 0.928.

Career Development

The instrument was career development scale designed using some aspects of career development[34]. There were some aspects of career development namely; the individual's role, supervisory role, and organizational role. The subjects of this study were requested to respond using four-point scaled response options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Higher scores will signify elevated degree of career development. This scale consists of 32 items and the Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability is 0.936.

3.3. Statistical Analysis

Correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships between career development, personal factors and quality of work life. A series of regression analyses was used to test the hypotheses of the study.

4. Result

The detail descriptive statistical findings on career development, aspects of career development and personal factor, were displayed in the Table 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1. Personal Factors

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	225	52.4
Female	204	47.6
Age		
Below 30 Years old	206	48.0
31 - 40 Years old	64	14.9
41 - 50 Years old	115	26.8
Above 50 Years old	44	10.3
Education Level		
Senior High School	91	11.8
Diploma	102	13.3
Bachelor	236	55.0
Length of Service		
1 - 10 years	248	57.8
11 - 20 years	77	17.9
21 - 30 years	104	24.2
Marital Status		
Married	263	61.3
Unmarried	166	38.7

The analysis of data was using Pearson correlation using SPSS 17.0 for Windows. Pearson correlation showed a significant relationship between career development and quality of work life, $r = 0.629$; $R^2 = 0.396$, $p < .01$. It means that the positive perception of career development the higher the quality of work life. In addition, Pearson correlation showed a significant relationship among aspects of career development and personal factors with the quality of work life. Overall results seen in Table. 2. To find out the determinants of quality of work life, a stepwise regression method was used. Based on the stepwise method used, the three predictor variables were found to be of significance in explaining quality of work life. Overall results seen in Table.3.

The five predictor variables are individual role, age organizational role, marital status and educational level. The R-squared is 0.253; it implies that the five predictor variables explain about 25.3 of the variance in the QWL. This is quite a respectable result. As depicted in the coefficients table (Table 2), the estimates of the model coefficients for β_0 is 62.494, β_1 is 1.592, β_2 is .178, β_3 is .581, β_4 is 3.265 and β_5 is 1.379. Therefore, the estimated model is as below:

$$Y(\text{QWL}) = 62.494 + 1.592(X_1) + 178(X_2) + .581(X_3) + 3.265(X_4) + 1.379(X_5) + e$$

Where:

X1 = Individual role

X2 = Age

X3 = Organizational role

X4 = Marital status

X5 = Educational level

Table 2. Correlations among variables

No		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	QWL										
2	Career Development	.629**									
3	Individual role	.338**	.129**								
4	Supervisory role	.183*	.120*	.393**							
5	Organizational role	.311**	.225**	.437**	.336**						
6	Sex (male =1, female =0)	.138**	.102*	.086	.009	.082					
7	Age	.285**	.215**	-.107*	.049	.100**	.271**				
8	Education Level	.196**	.047	-.017	-.091*	.113*	.011	.335**			
9	Length of Service	.259**	.199**	-.092	.071	.098**	.178**	.949**	.378**		
10	Marital Status (married = 1, unmarried =0)	.262**	.205**	.096*	.047	.048	.250**	.728**	.207**	.672**	

** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table 3. Summary of estimates of coefficients for the model

	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	Df	F	t
Constant	62.494	7.328		5	28.659	8.528**
Individual role	1.592	.244	.309	423		6.629**
Age	.178	.068	.167	428		2.599*
Organizational role	.581	.196	.141			2.965**
Marital status	3.265	1.402	.143			2.328*
Educational level	1.379	.619	.100			2.227*

** p<0.01, * p<0.05; R = 0.503; R² = 0.253

5. Discussion

Based on statistically analysis, there is a significant correlation between career development and quality of work life. Thus, it can be concluded that the quality of work life of work depends on how these workers perceive career development in organizations. If workers feel that they can develop themselves in the organization, they feel that the organization can fulfill their personal need. Conversely, if workers unable to develop themselves, so the organizations are not able to fulfill their personal need. The results is consistent with the proposed[1];[35], that nowadays people no longer work mere physiological needs, but also require an increase in non-material as a manifestation of self-actualization in the form of career development. Career development is all kinds of activities undertaken within the organization in order to implement a career plan that can be achieved the career goals. How the workers perceive their career development may affect to work attitudes and behavior in organizations, because individual perception of a thing that needs is one factor that indicates the formation of attitudes and behavior.

There are three reasons that could explain the relation of career development and quality of work life. First, the

effectiveness of career development will be obtained if the career development activities carried out jointly between the workers, employers and organizations. Workers, who have a positive perception of career development and supported by the organization, tend to have high motivation to achieve the goals[16]. Thus, workers who are satisfied with the job and his career will be loyal to the organization and work to improve profitability and productivity of the organization. Second, relation of career development and quality of work life can be explained. Career development is an attempt to adapt the purposes and objectives of workers with career opportunities available at present and in the future in an organization. Individuals will have career opportunities in line with the offerings provided by the organization[36]. Career development pattern offered by the organization will be accepted by workers as a support for the forward. A good working condition, the support and the opportunity to develop is a major consideration in the work life of workers. Acceptance of career development will depend on how they respond to and perceive this career development. Workers' perception of career development is influenced by the interaction between the values, hopes, and purposes of workers, through positive experiences gained during the running of work.

Third, a positive relationship between career development and quality of work life can be explained. The organization manages and develops human resources effectively, will have a high level of productivity, high market value and higher profit growth. In other words, these organizations can meet the needs of the organization, shareholders and investors[37]. In addition, the effective of human resource management can meet the needs of workers with a variety of ways consistent with organizational capacity. Thus the human resources in the organization will be able to develop themselves in an optimal. Study showed that workers were willing to make sacrifices for the organization, so that the workers will be willing to work and do some effort for the success of the organization. Willingness is only going to grow and develop if the workers believe that the success of the organization is also the success to achieve their desired career[21].

The results of this study reported a significant relationship between personal factors and the quality of work life. The results of this study showed that male workers have a high level of QWL than female workers. The female employees have had to overcome more barriers than have their male counterparts. Consequently, it seems reasonable to expect that a perception of inequality can affect female employees' opportunities[38].

In addition, the older workers and have high education levels also have a high quality of work life. Older employees are better able to balance personal needs and job/organization than are younger employees. They are more likely to cognitively justify remaining in the organization, as they may have limited alternative employment opportunities and greater cost than do younger employees. As a result, the older employees likely to developed more positive attitude toward their jobs[38]. Employee with greater levels of education experience more growth opportunities, concern with the quality of their work performance than do those with lower level of education[39]; [40].

The results also showed that the length of service significantly correlation to quality of work life. This result is consistent with previous study[41], that showed work experience, is closely linked to the quality of work life. Another study also supports the results of this study[28]. The length of service has a significant relationship with the quality of work life. Workers who have a higher length of service have of quality of work life than the new workers. Employees with more work experience have more respect for their job and can apply their experience to their job; they were also more likely to enjoy the physical work environment[39]. Lengths of service appear to affect the areas of present job, pay, supervision and coworker. It could conclude that those who have more experience tend to be more satisfied, to be higher performer and more productive than those who are new in the organization[38].

Some studies also showed that worker who has been married more able to survive in a work environment than unmarried. Those who are married and have children have a

higher level of quality of work life as compared to the singles[42]. Past researchers have observed that in early stages of their careers, individuals are often willing to sacrifice their personal lives in the interests of their career progression. However, as individuals advance in age to the maturity stage of their career, they have been found to place a greater emphasis on a balance between their work and family lives that individuals place on their family role as they age. Prior research has found that being married leads individuals to give their personal lives priority over their work lives. Similarly, being a parent increases the importance that individuals place on their family role. Some research indicates that a happy family life correlates with high levels of job satisfaction and objective career achievement[16].

6. Conclusions

The findings on current study explain that increasing of QWL of public service employees in Medan, Indonesia through improved working conditions and greater opportunities for expression and self-development for participating employees. Organizations can contribute to the development of employees' sense of coherence by providing information in a consistent, structured, ordered and understandable format. In order for employees to perceive that work expectations are manageable and within their, or important other peoples power, employers should ensure that employees are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, material, instruments and other resources, and that there is a balance in the load of tasks to be handled. Employees should also be given the opportunity to perform work that requires thought and independent judgment. Employees will regard their work as meaningful when a degree of independence and freedom of choice is allowed in the performance of their tasks. Participation in decision making will enhance the employees' feeling of membership and contribute to the meaningfulness component of sense of coherence. Moreover, the employee should have the freedom to disagree with his/her supervisor, to be able to discuss what to do with his/her supervisor and to act autonomously. The degree of satisfaction in quality of work life is related to the degree to which the individual believes his or her success criteria have been met, especially if the individual places great importance on these criteria which include organizational climate, pay, respect, personal growth and family life balance. It can also be concluded from the data, that the individual's family life correlates significantly with his/her level of quality of work life. This further suggests that a successful family life carries over into one's career and makes one more satisfied with personal achievements. The fact that is worthy of conclusion is the importance of career achievement in quality of work life. In the current context, the emphasis is on income, position and personal growth and opportunity in career mobility as potential success indicators.

7. Limitation of Study

The present study has the following limitations. The research was cross-sectional (all the data were collected at the same time), which means that it is not possible to draw conclusions about cause and effect among items based on employee responses. Future longitudinal research is therefore needed to confirm the conclusions drawn by this study. Another limitation is the exclusive use of self-report measures, a strategy often associated with method variance. Sample size further limits the research results in such a way that results cannot be generally applied to public service employees in Indonesia.

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