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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HAPPINESS (CASE STUDY: AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF KERMANSHAH PROVINCE)

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ABSTRACT

The present study identified the relationship between the quality of work life and organizational happiness in Agriculture organization of Kermanshah province in 2015. The statistical population of this study included all the employees of agriculture organization in Kermanshah province (n=1521). According to Cochran's formula, 307 employees were selected as the statistical sample. The research method is descriptive-correlational and sampling method was simple random sampling. Data collection tool was questionnaire. The measurement tool of organizational happiness in employees was Oxford standard questionnaire that was designed based on Argyle model 2001 and work life questionnaire was standard questionnaire designed on the basis of the Walton model's factor. The reliability of the quality of work life questionnaire was obtained 0/88 and the reliability of organizational happiness questionnaire was 0/92. The data were calculated and analyzed by using SPSS20 software and the statistical tests of Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression analysis by Step-by- Step method. The results of testing hypotheses showed that the variables of the fair compensation of salaries and benefits, legal positivism,, providing growth opportunity and continuous security, social dependency of work life, development of personal capabilities, safe and healthy work environment and total life atmosphere have a direct and significant relationship with organizational happiness. The results of regression analysis indicate that the four dimensions of the quality of work life (legal positivism, fair compensation of salaries and benefits, development of personal capabilities and total life atmosphere) explain 31% in the equation and among the variables which entered the equation, the development of personal capabilities, total life atmosphere and fair compensation of salaries and benefits.

Keywords: *The Quality of Work Life, Organizational Happiness, Agriculture Organization*

INTRODUCTION

One of the concepts that are considered as a main social issue throughout the world is the quality of work life. (Lothans, 1998) while in the past decades, only personal (non-work) life was emphasized. The advocates of the theory of the quality of work life look for new systems to help employees to establish a balance between their work life and personal life. Beaudoin and Edgar consider the quality of work life as the set of real work conditions in organization and believe that the quality of work life specifically shows the attitude and feeling of employees toward their works. They believe that the quality of work life includes a wide aspect of work environment which affects the learning and health of employees (Cole *et al.*, 2005). Among positive feelings, happiness has created a lot of interests among researchers. Employees' happiness is one of the tools that can be considered both personal tool and organizational tool of managers. According to the above facts, this study attempted to examine the relationship between the quality of work life and organizational happiness of employees in agriculture organization of Kermanshah province and identify some factors of the quality of work life which affect organizational happiness.

Problem Statement

Happiness is a term which includes different meanings such as immediate joy, long-term joy and joy of the total life (Sharifi *et al.*, 2010). Scientific resources believe that creating happiness is providing a context and atmosphere to produce energy, happiness and joy in ourselves and others (Pourjafari, 2010),

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so that the expected results and goals can be achieved with lightness, vivacity and energy. It should be noted that creating this atmosphere is affected by some factors like job, organization and management (Talebi and Zahedi, 2006). Argil *et al.*, (1995) believe that happiness is comprised of 3 main elements of positive emotion, life satisfaction and the lack of negative emotions. In organizations with high quality of work life, work is meaningful and self-regulatory. It is done with a systematic arrangement and needs complex skills. In these organizations, managers are interested in explaining the meaning of work and conditions for employees. Thus, it is very important to figure out the effective factors which are related to the job involvement of employees because the program of the quality of work life includes any improvement in employees' positive attitude toward work which supports the growth and development of organization. Thus, the value system considers the quality of work life and job involvement of employees as the most important variable in the study of strategic management. In other words, satisfying the needs of employees will lead to the improvement and efficiency of organization. Thus, according to the mentioned issues, the most important question of this study is as follows:

Does the quality of work life of employees affect their happiness?

Theoretical Foundations

The Quality of Work Life

The Background of the Quality of Work Life

The quality of work life was first invented in Europe during the fifties and was formed according to the studies of Eric Trist at Tavistock Institute in the field of human relations in London. The mentioned studies evaluated the technical/human dimension of organizations and the relationships between them and it created technical/social systems related to the design of job (Salmani, 2005).

The quality of work life is consistent with the paradigms of sustainable development and the emerging paradigms of modern economy. In other words, the paradigm of firm sustainability includes the following items:

1. Environmental sensitivity
2. Holistic look to firm and consider oneself as a member of social system
3. Paying attention to the needs of future generation
4. Social responsibility against primary and secondary social and non-social stakeholders
5. Environmental-social economy (Triple bottom line)
6. Inter active (integrated thinking)
7. Triple loop learning by looking forward and predicting the future (Salmani, 2005)

The Definitions of the Quality of Work Life

A program of the quality of work life is a process by which all members of organization are involved in decisions which generally affect their jobs and work environment through the appropriate and open way created for this purpose. As a result, the participation and satisfaction will become more and work stress and pressure will decrease. In fact, the quality of work life shows a kind of organizational culture or way of management by which employees feel the sense of ownership, self-regulation, responsibility and self esteem.

The Goals of the Quality of Work Life

The main goals of an effective program of the quality of work life are improved work conditions (mainly from the perspective of employees) and more organizational effectiveness (mainly from the perspective of employers). The positive results of the above program were supported by a number of previous studies which include the decrease of absence in organization, less personnel handling and more job satisfaction and promotion (Lau, 2000).

The Most Important Factors Affecting the Promotion of the Quality of Work Life

Technical-social systems-self directed work teams

The Indicators of the Quality of Work Life

The Factors of Stone's Quality of Work Life

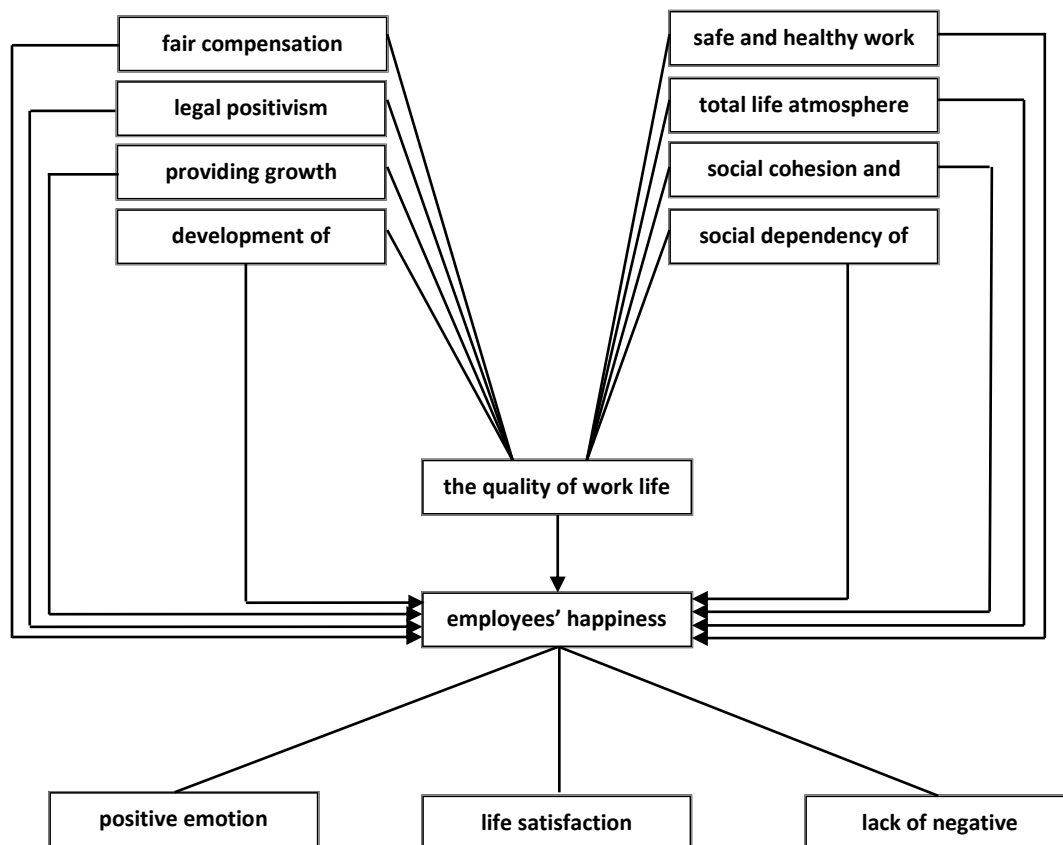
Stone describes the factors of the quality of work life as the criteria of the quality of work life. He considers the main criteria for the quality of work life as follows:

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Appropriate and enough compensation, safe and healthy environment, development of human capabilities, growth and security, social cohesion and integration, observing the basic rights of employees, total life atmosphere, social relations (Saifi, 2006)

Previous Studies

- Chaiprasit *et al.*, (2011) performed a study entitled “happiness in small and average companies in Taiwan” on 300 employees of these companies. They concluded that the level of happiness in small and average companies in Chiang Mai was high. The quality of work life, leadership and communications are 3 factors that can predict 59/4% of the ability to achieve happiness.
- Pitney (2006) in a study examined the effects of organizational commitment and the quality of work life in the employees of the faculty of educational sciences. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and the quality of work life.
- Dharmasiri (2005) in his study entitled “the effect of the quality of work life on organizational commitment in the employees of clothing industry” concluded that organizational commitment and the quality of work life have a positive and significant relationship.



research conceptual model

Source of the quality of work life model: Walton model
 (1998)

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Research Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between employees' quality of work life and organizational happiness.

Sub Hypotheses

There is a significant relationship between fair compensation and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between legal positivism in organization and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between providing growth opportunity for employees and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between employees' development of personal capabilities and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between employees' safe work environment and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between the social dependency of employees' work life and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between employees' social cohesion and integration and organizational happiness.

There is a significant relationship between employees' total life atmosphere and organizational happiness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Method

This research is applied in terms of purpose and is descriptive -correlational in terms of data collection method. It is applied because using the results of the project is in line with identifying the relationship between the quality of work life and organizational happiness. It is descriptive because the study of the effect of the quality of work life on organizational happiness in 2015 is considered and because the researcher attempts to find the relationships between the two variables, the study is correlational.

The statistical population of the study includes all the employees of agriculture organization in Kermanshah province in 2015 (n=1521).

Sampling in this study was done by simple random method. Sample size was achieved as 307 subjects by using Cochran's formula at 95% confidence level and 5% error. In the present study, questionnaire was used to collect data. The quality of work life questionnaire includes 27 items in which 8 factors of Walton model are used to measure the quality of work life. The measurement level of the questionnaire is distance and based on 5-point Liker scale. The measurement tool of employees' happiness was Oxford standard questionnaire that was designed based on Argyle model (2001). The reliability and validity of this questionnaire were measured in previous studies. The Cronbach alpha value of the questionnaire was reported as 0/92.

The measurement level of the questionnaire is ordinal and based on 5-point Liker scale. The views and opinions of professors were used to study the content validity.

Data Analysis Method

Data analysis was done at two levels which are: data description and data analysis. At data description level, the study population was described according to the desired variables and an image of the current situation was provided. At data analysis, inferential data were used to study the relationships between variables and the difference between the study groups or explain the dependent variable by independent variables. The findings and results of the study of the relationship between employees' quality of work life and organizational happiness in agriculture organization of Kermanshah province in 2015 were discussed in the form of bivariate, multivariate and conclusion of research hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The data related to respondents showed that 80/1% of the statistical samples in this study was related to male employees and 19/9% was related to female employees. 17/3% was related to the employees at the

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age group of 20-30 years, 38/4% to the employees at the age group of 31-40 years, 39/4% the employees at the age group of 41-50 years, and 4/9% to the employees at the age group of over 51 years. The results related to the education degree of employees indicate that 12/4% of respondents had diploma, 23/5% had associate degree, 58/6% had bachelor master, and 55/5% had master degree and higher. 16/3% of employees had work experience less than 5 years, 10/4% had the work experience of 6-10 years, 10/4% had the work experience of 6-10 years, 24/1% had the work experience of 11-15 years, 18/2% had the work experience of 16-20 years, and 30/9% had the work experience of over 20 years.

Testing the Main Hypothesis

The results of the main hypothesis show that there is a significant relationship between employees' quality of work life and their organizational happiness, because obtained significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$). Thus, the general result is that the higher is the quality of work life, the more will be their organizational happiness. Thus, the research main hypothesis is confirmed.

Testing the Sub-Hypotheses

First Hypothesis

The results of this test show that at significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$), the variables of fair compensation of salaries and benefits to employees and their organizational happiness are related as ($r=0/423$). It can be said that the correlation of the relationship between the two variables is 0/49 which is average. The type of correlation between these two variables is direct (positive) and the calculated significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) that shows the significance of the relationship between these two variables. Thus, the first sub-hypothesis in this study is temporarily confirmed.

Second Hypothesis

The results of this test show that at significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$), the variables of employees' legal positivism and their organizational happiness are related as ($r=0/432$). It can be said that the correlation of the relationship between the two variables is 0/435 which is average. Thus, the second sub-hypothesis in this study is temporarily confirmed.

Third Hypothesis

The obtained results show that there is a significant correlation between providing growth opportunity and continuous security of employees and their organizational happiness. Because the obtained significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$). Thus, the correlation between these two variables is at a relatively average level ($r=0/299$). Thus, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

Fourth Hypothesis

The obtained results show that there is a significant correlation between development of personal capabilities for employees and their organizational happiness. Because the obtained significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) ($r=0/290$). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed.

Fifth Hypothesis

The results of this test show that at significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$), the variables of security and health of work environment and their organizational happiness are related as ($r=0/416$). The type of correlation between these two variables is direct (positive) and the calculated significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) that shows the significance of the relationship between these two variables. Thus, the fifth hypothesis is confirmed.

Sixth Hypothesis

The obtained results show that there is a significant correlation between the social dependency of employees' work life and their organizational happiness. Because the obtained significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) ($r=0/245$). Thus, the Sixth hypothesis is temporarily confirmed.

Seventh Hypothesis

The results of this test show that at significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$), the variables of social cohesion and integration and their organizational happiness are related as ($r=0/309$). The type of correlation between these two variables is direct (positive) and the calculated significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the

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research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) that shows the significance of the relationship between these two variables. Thus, the seventh hypothesis is confirmed.

Eighth Hypothesis

The obtained results show that there is not a significant correlation between total life atmosphere and their organizational happiness. Because the obtained significance level ($\text{sig}=0/000$) is less than the research alpha ($\alpha=0/05$) ($r=0/371$). Thus, the Sixth hypothesis is temporarily confirmed. The type of correlation between these two variables is direct (positive) and is statistically significant. Thus, the eighth hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the quality of work life of the employees in agriculture organization of Kermanshah province and their organizational happiness. As the results showed, according to the opinions of employees, all the factors of the quality of work life except total life atmosphere had a direct and significant relationship with organizational happiness. In other words, the better is employees' quality of work life, the more their organizational happiness moves toward positive. The most important variables which affect employees' organizational happiness are the fair compensation of salaries and benefits, legal positivism and the social dependency of their work life.

The second hypothesis that is legal positivism in organization had the highest effectiveness on the dependent variable. In other words, legal positivism in organization in this study had more effectiveness on the dependent variable than the other variables.

The second variable that in this study had more effectiveness on the dependent variable than the other variables was the 4th hypothesis as the development of human capabilities. It means providing opportunities like the use of dependency and self-control in work and enjoying different skills and access to appropriate work information (Shirkond, 2007).

The third variable that in this study had more effectiveness on the dependent variable than the other variables was the eighth hypothesis as the total life atmosphere which means the balance between work life and other parts of employees' lives including free time, education and family life (Mir Kamali and Narenji Sani, 1999).

The fourth variable that in this study had more effectiveness on the dependent variable than the other variables was the first hypothesis as adequate and fair compensation which means equal compensation for equal work and the proportion of compensations with social criteria and employees' criteria and its proportion to other types of work (Mir Kamali and Narenji Sani, 1999).

Functional (Applied) Suggestions Based on Confirmed Hypotheses in Regression Equation

1. Suggestion Based On The Results Of First Sub-Hypothesis (Fair Compensation)

According to the importance of material and immaterial rewards, the managers of the studied organization should be aware of the effects of these rewards on individuals. They should also use some motivations rather than salary and payment like creating appropriate work conditions, complete appreciation to do work and sense of participation and belonging in order to encourage employees.

2. Suggestion Based on the Results of the Second Sub Hypothesis (Legal Positivism in Organization)

It is suggested to observe the legal positivism of the studied organization as much as possible. In other words, if there are legal regulations in the organization, the behavior of individuals decreases according to the personal interests. Nobody can make decision based on personal interests and opinions and works will be institutionalized. Individuals will speak without the fear of further revenges and also legal domination will govern instead of human domination.

3. Suggestion Based on the Results of the Fourth Sub Hypothesis (Development of Personal Capabilities for Employees)

The managers and officials of the organization are suggested to provide the access to data, context for planning and designing and decision-making in the operating field of employees in order to develop their capabilities. Also, the managers are suggested to give their employees freedom and dependency to use their potentials and have innovation in their works.

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4. *Suggestion Based on the Results of the Eighth Sub Hypothesis (Total Life Atmosphere of Employees)*

The studied organization can encourage employees to update the specialized information of their major and work area by giving them the informational sources of this task. Also, holding recreational and amusing programs for employees and their families and giving enough free time to do other family, citizen, couple and parental responsibilities can improve employees' quality of work life.

5. *Suggestion Based on the Results of the Third Sub Hypothesis (Providing Growth Opportunity for Employees)*

The studied organization is suggested to use specifically the abilities, experience and skills of employees more than ever so that they could achieve more sense of belonging and always use their abilities and creativities to improve and develop organizations.

Suggestions based on the results of the fifth sub hypothesis (safe and healthy work environment for employees).

Paying attention to the physical conditions of work environment like lighting, cooling and heating equipments according to the season of the year and also considering the opinions of employees in planning the overtime hours and etc. can help this issue.

6. *Suggestions Based on the Results of the Sixth Sub Hypothesis (The Social Dependency of Employees' Work Life)*

According to the findings of this study, social dependency in work was determined as one of the effective factors of employees' quality of work life on organizational happiness that is achieved by team work, respect, participation in thinking and decision-making. Employees expect and want the managers to respect and pay attention to their thought and ideas; organizations can provide context for their participation in decision-making and affairs of organization.

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