A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF CREATIVITY AND QUALITY OF WORK AMONG INDIAN IT SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Ajay Kumar¹

¹Department of Psychology, IIPR College, Bangalore, India

*Corresponding Author: Ajay Kumar

Article Received: 07-07-19

Accepted: 26-10-19

Published: 05-11-19

Licensing Details: Author retains the right of this article. The article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 License (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licences/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed as specified on the Journal open access page.

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to test the relationship between quality of work life and employee creativity among Indian IT sector employees. The methodology of the study was quantitative and survey based. The sample consisted of 234 employees working in the different IT sector in the city of Bangalore. The findings of the study show that there are positive effects of staff quality of work life on employee creativity. Furthermore, the stress and work demand turned out to be moderating this relationship. The study also reported that too much work demands negatively influence staff creativity level.

Keywords: Creativity, Work Life, Quality, Demands, Job Stress, IT Sector, India

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies show that workers show positive attitude when they come across interesting jobs (White & Bednar, 1991). Thus, employee's work may not be tightly controlled, deskilled, or fragmented and instead characterized by variety and autonomy for enhancing staff learning and development. Schmidt (2010) suggest that to make organization more effective, there is a need for a wellness-initiative which provide job opportunities for staff. Most participants in their study reported that their organization have some sort of wellness program in place. Besides wellness and effectiveness, important work factor in the IT sector employees is creativity. A study conducted by Rasulzada (2007) showed that employee creativity is associated with psychological wellbeing and both concepts supplement each

other. Rasulzada also suggest that for improving staff creativity, there is a required a climate of psychological safety. For staff to psychologically well, he/she should be given a psychologically safe work environment characterized by openness and flexibility. In this study, the focus is on understanding how employee creativity influence work life quality among IT sector employees in the Indian IT sector related firms.

For employee's creativity to occur, there is also required sustained investment from organization in learning activities of employees in order to develop their creativity and work-related skills (Yousie & Harjee, 2013). By focusing on employee's reflection, insight, and awareness, employee creativity can be fostered. A study by Toumi-Grohn (2003) pointed out that when organization provide staff learning opportunities, it helps in promoting creativity among staff. The work of Kerosuo and Toiviainen (2011) showed that employee creativity leads to the higher quality of work among different sector employees.

Tuomi-Gröhn (2003) pointed out that transferring learning

Kelley and Littman, (2001) work showed that employee creativity leads to the improved work performance and higher benefits for the organization in terms of organizational creativity and learning. Previous literature suggests that there is relationship between employee learning and creativity but there are fewer studies which focus on the combined influence of learning and creativity. So, in this study, we investigate the relationship between employee creativity, organizational learning, and quality of work life among IT sector employees.

Literature suggests interdependence between learning and creativity; however, limited studies have focused on this area. The study therefore investigated the interaction effect of organizational learning and employees' creativity on their QWL. The findings will be helpful in identifying how to boost employee creativity in this complex work environment. The theoretical significance of the study is that it fills the theoretical gap as previously, separate studies are conducted but no such study is conducted which investigate the interaction effect.

Previous studies on quality of work life shows that there are different demographic factors which plays their role. For example, a study showed that among the textile mill sector employees, quality of work life is different based on the public versus private ownership of the firms. Another study showed that quality of work life varies between the blue collar and white-collar workers (Hoque & Rahman, 1999). Another study looked in to the outcomes of the quality of work life and showed that quality of work life is positively leading to employee job satisfaction (Hossain & Islam, 1999). A study by Kanagalakshmi and Devi (2003) showed that quality of work life is influenced by different demographic factors. A study by Wadud (1996) showed that quality of work life is influenced by the gender of the workers. Another study by Elias and Saha (2005) showed that quality of work life is influenced by gender and women reported lower quality of work life compare to the men. Tabassum, Rahman and Jahan (2011) conducted a study on quality of work life among male and female employees and found a significant difference exist between male and female employees. Again, replicating their study using a population of lecturers in the university, they found a significant difference between gender and quality of life.

However, Gupta and Hyde (2013) found no significant difference between gender and quality of work life when conducting a study on demographics and quality of work life in nationalized banks in India. Also, literature reveals that not all employees receive the same opportunities for learning in the workplace. Research by Rainband (2000) suggests that unskilled employees are the least likely to receive opportunities for learning. More specifically, part-time employees, many of whom are women, have less access to opportunities for workplace learning than full-time employees.

The continual deterioration of quality work life and complaints by employees have drawn the attention of organizational researchers in recent time (Tabassum, Rahman & Jahan (2011). Research work also shows that poor quality of work life is negatively influencing staff creativity level (Elias & Saha, 2005). Furthermore, when there is a low level of creativity among employees, this affects the acceleration of firms in meeting their organizational objectives. A study showed that poor quality of work life relates negatively with employee creativity (Aryetey & Sanda, 2012). In this study, we investigate the influence of quality of work life on employee creativity.

Objectives of the study

The study will seek to achieve the following objectives:

- To measure the relationship of employees' quality work life on employee creativity.
- To determine whether the relationship between quality work life and employee creativity is moderated by work demands and work stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative study approach is adapted in the present study and data collection is based on survey methodology. The population of the study is IT sector employees working in the Bangalore city and expected to be in thousands.

The sample size is determined by using the sample size of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. A total sample of 255 respondents constitute the data analysis basis of the study.

Survey Measure

The quality of work life survey is adapted from Li and Yeo (2011). The employee creativity is measured by scale developed by Amabile (1996). The work demands scale is adapted from Jackson and Rothmann (2005). Job demands and resources are measured by scale adapted from Karasek (1985).

Instrumentation

In order to measure the quality of work life of employees, the researcher employed the employee quality of work life developed by Li and Yeo (2011). This is a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). Furthermore, in order to rate the creativity of employees, the study made use of the scale developed by Amabile (1996), employees' creativity. The stress risk assessment scale was adapted from Liz Greaves (2012), stress at work risk assessment for managers' scale.

RESULTS

Our results are as follows.

Table 1
Demographic

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	195	83.33
	Female	39	16.77
Age	18 to 30 Years	27	11.53
	30 to 40 Years	111	47.43
	40 to 50 Years	45	19.23
	Above 50 Years	17	7.26
Work Experience	Less than 1 Year	5	2.13
	1 to 5 Years	76	32.47
	5 to 15 Years	83	35.48
	Above 15 Years	36	15.39

The results show that there were 195 male and 39 female participated in our survey. Out of total, 27 had age group of 18 to 30 years; 111 had age group of 30 to 40 years; 45 had age group of 40 to 50 years; and 17 had age group of above 50 years. In terms of work experience, most work experience were above 1 years including 76 had 1 to 5 years work experience and 83 had 5 to 15 years work experience.

Preliminary Analysis

Statistical calculations were made in SPSS (version 21) for windows. The data was screened for missing value and violation of assumptions prior to analysis. There were no missing data. The occurrence of outliers in the solution was checked visually by inspecting the standardized residual of every case in each regression analysis. No

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics (N=234).

Variables	Mean	S.D.
Quality of Work Life	4.44	.747
Creativity	4.67	.979
Learning	4.84	.757
Work Demands	4.42	.559
Stress Risk	4.14	.947

Source: Field Data, 2017

The results shows that employees had moderate perceived lower quality of work life with mean value of 4.44; average level of perceived creativity with mean value of 4.67; higher level of learning with mean value of 4.84; higher level of work demands with mean value of 4.42; and higher level of stress risk with mean value of 4.14.

Table 3
Correlation

	1	2	3	4
Quality of Work Life				
Creativity	0.85**			
Work Demands	0.51**	0.56**		
Stress Risk	0.52***	0.968***	0.789***	

The correlation table shows that quality of work life is positively associated with creativity ($r=0.85$, $P<0.05$); work demands ($r=0.968$, $P<0.05$); and stress risk ($r=0.789$, $P<0.05$). Employee creativity is positively associated with work demands ($r=0.52$, $P<0.05$). Work demands are positively associated with stress risk ($r=0.766$, $P<0.05$).

Table 4

Role of stress and work demand on the relationship between QWL and Employee Creativity

Variables	Unstandardized coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	t-value	P value
Step 1					
Constant	44.79	4.28		10.01	0.00
Quality of Work Life	2.40	0.09	0.73	16.14	0.00
Step 2					
Constant	42.23	4.85		4.36	0.00
Quality of Work Life	2.04	0.09	0.54	11.27	0.00
Work demands	0.74	0.10	0.35	7.36	0.00
Stress Risk	0.42	0.11	0.21	3.90	0.00
Quality of Work Life *Work demands	-5.45	-1.03	0.24	-6.25	0.00
Quality of Work Life *Stress Risk	-5.75	1.21	-0.20	-4.77	0.00

Above table depicted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis conducted to investigate the moderation effect of work demands and stress risk on the relationship between quality of work life and employee creativity.

Model one (1) which included only quality of work life accounted for 53% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2=0.53$) in employee creativity. The inclusion of work demands into the variance (in step 2 of the model) resulted in an additional 9% (R^2 change=0.09). The final model, that is model two (2) also included the interaction, and this accounted for an additional 6% of the variance, thereby accounting for 67% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2=0.67$) in creativity. It was also observed that quality of work life alone significantly predicted employee creativity ($\beta=2.04$, $p<0.05$). The moderator, work demands, alone significantly predicted employee creativity ($\beta=0.74$, $p<0.05$). The interaction on the other hand significantly predicted employee creativity ($\beta=0.24$, $p<0.05$). The ANOVA results of the model summary showed an overall significance of the model at each step. Model one (1), without interaction was significant, ($F(1,232)=260.40$, $p<0.05$). Model two (2) with the inclusion of work demands was significant ($F(2,231)=187.16$; $p<0.005$). Model three (3), with the interaction, was also significant ($F(3,230)=158.35$; $p<0.05$). Quality of work life had a significant positive relationship with employee

creativity ($r=0.73$, $p<0.01$) as indicated in table. Following this, it was predicted that work demands will moderate this relationship (between creativity and quality of work life). The data supported this prediction. The interaction term between the quality of work life and work demands was statistically significant ($\beta=0.24$, $t= 6.25$, $p<0.05$). The interaction term accounted for 67% (adjusted $R^2=0.67$) of the total variance in QWL. According to Cohen (1988) this is a large effect.

Discussion

The focus of the study was to test the relationship between employee quality of work life on employee creativity. The other objective was to test the moderating relationship of work demands and work stress between the relationship of quality of work life and employee creativity. Our findings based on the data collection from IT sector employees shows that quality of work life has positive and significant influence on employee creativity and work demand and stress negatively moderate this relationship. These results are supported by previous studies which states that for employee creativity to foster, there need to be a favorable environment required which can be developed using the quality of work life framework. For example, study by Rasulzada (2007) suggested that employee creativity is influenced by different workplace related factors. Furthermore, other studies also supported this relationship such as Lokhanadha and Mohen (2010); Schmidt (2010); Amal and Awan (2011).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study is that employee creativity in the IT industry in India is partially influenced by employee quality of work life features. It implies that if employers want employees to be creative, they need to provide suitable working environment to the employees. Furthermore, it can also be concluded that different work factors such as employee stress and workload can have negative influence on employee creativity. In other words, if quality of work life is present, it is negatively influenced by workload and stress factor and can decrease the creativity level. It can also be concluded that for IT sector to become successful, there is need for employees to be creative otherwise, firm competitiveness can be reduced.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the study are given below.

- The IT sector firms need to give attention to employee's issues
- The IT sector firms need to provide employees suitable work environment
- The IT sector firms need to focus on quality of work life issues of employees
- The IT sector firms need to foster employee creativity
- The IT sector firms need to device such policies and practices which provide employees psychological safety
- The IT sector firms need to develop suitable employment practices for employees.

References

- Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to the Social Psychology of Creativity*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Amabile, T. M., Conti, R., Coon, H., Lazenby, J., & Heron, M. (1996). Assessing the work environment for creativity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39, 1154–1184.
- Amal, A. M., & Awan, A. M. (2011). Moderating Effect of Workplace Spirituality on the Relationship of Job Overload and Job Satisfaction. *Journal of Business Ethics*, DOI:10.1007/s10551-011-0891-0.
- Aryeetey M., & Sanda A. (2012). Understanding Employees perspective of QWL indicators in Ghanaian organisations. *International Journal of Contemporary Business Studies*, 3(3), 2156-7506. <http://www.akpinsight.webs.com>.
- Elias, M. S. & Saha, N. K. (2005). Environmental Pollution and Quality of Working Life in Tobacco Industries. *Journal of Life Earth Science*, 1(1), 21-24.
- Gilson, L.L. (2008). The good, the bad, and the ugly of creativity and Innovation. *Academy of Management*; Anaheim, CA.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16, 250-279.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Jackson, L.T.B., & Rothmann, S. (2005). An adapted model of burnout for educators in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 25, 100–108.
- Jackson, L.T.B., & Rothmann, S. (2005). *Work-related wellbeing of educators in a district of the North West Province*.
- Kanagalakshmi, L. & Devei, N. B. (2003). “A Study on Perception of Quality of Work Life among Textile Manufacturing Workers in Tirunelveli”. <http://www.123oye.com> (accessed 10 Jan 2010).
- Kelly, T. & Littman, T. (2001). *The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm*. New York: Currency.
- Krejcie, R.C. & Morgan, D.V. (1970). “Determining sample size for research activities”, *Education and Psychological Measurements*, 30, 607-610.
- Kumar, H. & Shanubhogue, A. (1996). Quality of Work Life-An Empirical Approach, *Manpower Journal*, 32(3), 17-32.
- Li, J., & Yeo, R. K. (2011). Quality of work life and career development: Perceptions of part-time MBA students. *Employee Relations*, 33(3), 201-220.
- Lokanadha, R. M. & Mohan, R. (2010). Quality of work life of employees: emerging dimensions. *Asian Journal of Management*, 827–839.
- Lund, D. B. (2003). Organizational culture and job satisfaction. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 18(3), 219-236.
- Mandaviya, M. (2013). A study on the perception of Quality of Work life among textile industry workers in Gujarat. *International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management*, 4(8), 89.

- Mensah, O. A., & Asamani, L. (2013). The Influence of Employees' Self-Efficacy on Their Quality of Work Life: The Case of Cape Coast, Ghana. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(2), 195 -204.
- Mpofu, E., Myambo, K., Mogaji, A. A., Mashego, T., & Khaleefa, O. H. (2006). African perspectives on creativity. In Kaufman C. J. & Sternberg J. R. (Eds.). *The International Handbook of Creativity* (p. 456-489). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nemerzitski, S. (2012). Development of creative and innovative organization – learning in organizational context as starting point: Comparison of Estonian and Finnish practices.
- Nyarko, K., Asumeng, M. & Atindanbila, S. (2012). The understanding and origin of creativity among Ghanaian basic school teachers. *Research Journal in Organizational Psychology & Educational Studies*, 1(3), 149-154.
- Rainband, H. (2000). Skilling the unskilled: access to web-based learning and the lifelong learning agenda. *Journal of Education and Work*, 13(2), 183-197.
- Rasulzada, F. (2007). *Organizational creativity and psychological well-being. Contextual aspects on organizational creativity and psychological well-being from an open system perspective*. Department of psychology, Lund University.
- Sadique, Z. (2003). Quality of Work Life among White Collar and Blue Collar Employees. *Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies*, 26, 169-174.
- Schmidt, G. (2010). Well-Being to Innovation, Creativity. *Hartford Business Journal*.
- Shalley, C., & Gilson, L. L. (2004). What leaders need to know: A review of social and contextual factors that can foster or hinder creativity. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15, 33-53.
- Shalley, E. C, Gilson, L. L., & Blum, C. T. (2000). Matching Creativity Requirements and the Work Environment: Effects on Satisfaction and Intentions to Leave. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 43(2), 215-223.
- Shalley, C. E., Zhou, J., & Oldham, G. R. (2004). The effects of personal and contextual characteristics on creativity: Where should we go from here? *Journal of Management*, 30, 933–958.
- Tabassum, A. (2012). *Interrelations between Quality of work life dimensions and faculty member job satisfaction in private universities of Bangladesh*.
- Tabassum, A., Rahman, T., & Jahan, K. (2010). Quality of Work Life among The Male And Female Employees of Private Commercial Banks in Bangladesh. *Proceedings of The International Conference on Business Competencies in a Changing Global Environment*, South East University, Dhaka.
- Tabassum, A., Rahman, T., & Jahan, K. (2011). A Comparative Analysis of Quality of Work Life among the Employees of Local and Foreign Banks in Bangladesh. *World Journal of Social Science*, 1(1), 17-33.

- Tuomi-Gröhn, T. (2003). Developmental Transfer as a Goal of Internship in Practical Nursing. In Tuomi-Gröhn, T. & Engeström, Y. (Eds.). *New Perspectives on Transfer and Boundary-crossing* (p.199-231). Amsterdam: Pergamon.
- Wadud, N. (1996). Job Stress & QWL Among Working Women". *Bangladesh Psychological Studies*, 6, 31-37.
- White, D. D. & Bednar, D.A. (1991). *Organisational behaviour: Understanding and managing people at work*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Yousie, K. & Harjee, N. (2013). *Creativity the critical linkage*. www.banffleadership.com