

# Quality of employee work-life



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Productivity and performance of an organization have a very strong relationship with quality of employee work life. Labour considered as an important factor of production compared to the other factors of production such as land and capital (Drucker, 1993). Due to this statement, employees are serving as the premier assets to organization in order to achieve organizational goals or targets.

People are a major component of any business, and the human resource management is the major part of every manager's job. Besides, labour constitutes as the most unique and special factor of production varies with non-human factors of production because of the quality and productivity of employees are involved the aspect of motivation and commitment.

Therefore, the level of quality and productivity of employees are hard to control or predict accurately.

Organization success is not only depends on how the organization maximize the capabilities of employees but also have to consider on how to maximize the employees' commitment on work by improving the quality of employee work life (Nijhof, 1998). Organizational commitment is defined as the desire on the part of an employee to remain as a member of the organization (Mowday, et al., 1979). Besides, organizational commitment influences whether an employee stays a member of the organization which is retained or leaves to pursue another job which is turnover.

According to Liou (2008), commitment is very important and acts as the interaction process between individual and the environment based on the involvement of his or her career in an organization. Therefore, every

organization has to ensure the well working environment in order to provide employees a high quality of work life and increase work commitment among employees indirectly.

## **1. 2 Background of the Study**

Recently, the world is rapidly changing and the way to manage an organization has become more complex than ever before. There are too many challenges going on between organizations to put effort as they can well attract and retain good quality human resource in order to be ahead of its competitors in a particular industry.

Also, every organization has set their own vision and mission for the purpose to achieve organizational goals and objectives. To be successful, organizations have to well organize its human resource in order to achieve the specific organizational goals or accomplishments. It means that employees of an organization have to feel satisfied with their work so that they can fully contribute their knowledge, skill and abilities to their company.

Work is very important to support people's lives, which will affect not only their physical condition but also a high level of social, spiritual, and psychological well-being. According to Wright and Bonett (2007), employees who having high level of psychological well-being are better to contribute themselves, more committed to their company, and more productive compared to other employees who having low level of psychological well-being (Chandrashu, 2012).

Employees are desire to have excellent well-being if they are enjoyed and satisfied with their job and workplace and they perceive positively on the

quality of work life (QWL) in organization, since an employee's experiences in the workplace and his or her quality of work life will influence his or her health as well as psychological well-being (Srivastava, 2007). Due to this situation, quality of work life (QWL) has become as the important benefit of a job that able to maintain a long term relationship between the employees and his or her employer.

The term of quality of work life (QWL) was introduced in the late 1960s as the way to improve the quality of employees' work life and a way of focusing on the impacts of employment on health and general well-being (Walton R. E., 1975). According to Walton (1975), the general concepts of QWL are "working environment" and "democratization of the workplace" in Scandinavia. On the other hand, the concepts of hatarakigai and ikigai are similarly used for Japan (SEE, 2005).

The concept of quality of work life (QWL) is now widely used to refer as "a philosophy of management that enhances the dignity of all workers; introduces changes in an organization's culture; and improves the physical and emotional well-being of employees (Kopelman, 1985)." For instances, organization provides opportunities for growth and development among employees either is internal or external.

There are many indicators of quality of work life which can be used by organization to measure the level of it. For examples, absenteeism rate, staff turnover rate, number of accidents at workplace and so on (Hodson, 1997). The quality of work life can be used to influence employees' motivation to work and work commitment at workplace.

One of the most pressing demands that faced by organization today is for productivity and commitment improvement, which is organization try the best to get high level of outputs with low level of inputs, doing better than what organization actually have, and work smarter rather than harder.

Nevertheless, increased employees' productivity and commitment does not preclude a high quality of work life (QWL) (Cascio, 2010).

Quality of work life (QWL) refers to employees' perceptions of their physical and psychological well-being at work (Kopelman, 1985). It means that organization giving opportunities for workers to join the decisions making on their job tasks, working environment, and also work-life balance. Its focus is on employees and superiors operating a business together.

“ Employee commitment is at the heart of employee involvement programmes.”

(Farnham, 2000)

Employee commitment and employee involvement are linked together because both of them are concerned on how employers encourage employees to determine the business interest through the human resource relation activities (Farnham, 2000). Direct participation of employees in decisions making which related to their work in the company is treat as an essential term for enhancing greater autonomy and opportunities for employees. When employees are getting involved in the decisions making process, they will become more committed towards their organization.

According to Osterman (1994), in some organizations, like Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, QWL programs are provided to employees to improve employees' involvement, trust, and commitment so as to increase both employees' job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness (Gibson. J., Ivancevich. J., Konopaske. R., 2011). Many organizations realized the importance of QWL to an employee; they have tried their best to maximizing the level of QWL among their employees through implementing improvements on QWL programs. Those company that implementing improvements on QWL programs are Ford, IBM, Motorola, DuPont, John Deere and GE (Cooke, 1990).

Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974) has defined organizational commitment as ' a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization , and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership' (Penny Dick & Steve Ellis, 2006).

Work commitment among employees can be influenced by several kinds of factors. Based on the research of Huang, Lawler & Lei (2007) , quality of work life (QWL) of employees will affect the employees' work commitment in organization; therefore, management level of organization should put effort on emphasizing the programs of QWL at workplace to obtain high level of commitment among employees.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Nowadays, organizations are continuously striving for new ways of running and manage business to meet the organizational goals in order to compete with the challenges of today's dynamic business environment. Due to the

great amount of time and energy spent from people at the workplace, it is important for employees to have the sense of gratification about their life at work.

Increased organizational productivity needs being in line with the increase in employee performance. To be able to improve employee performance, companies must create working conditions that offer incentives for employees to satisfy them with the system running in the company.

The application of Quality of Work Life (QWL) programs in a company is purposely to improve employee job satisfaction in organization. Employee job satisfaction is one of the important elements which might increase the level of human resources quality of an organization.

In today's fast-changing business environment, the future belongs to those managers who can best manage change, but to manage change, organization must have committed employees. Employees, who have high job satisfaction, will generally have a high commitment to the company (Fink, 1992). High employee commitment will give beneficial contribution to the company to increase productivity of both employees and companies.

Well-treated employees who enjoy a high quality of work life (QWL) able to make their companies successful, it is likely equal to outstanding organization provide a high QWL by treating their employees well. According to a report from Ernst & Young (1998), "institutional investors are becomes more likely to buy stock based on a company's ability to attract talented people" (Grant, 1998). Talented workers desired challenging job tasks,

opportunities for professional growth and development as well as high QWL (Cascio, 2010).

From year 1980, the application of quality of work life (QWL) programs was increasingly be implemented by organization and QWL is becomes important where employees are desire to have more remuneration in times of competitive educational requirement and occupational aspirations in today's slow economic growth (Lokanadha, R. M. & Mohan, R. P., 2010).

According to Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (1991), in unveiling Vision 2020, Malaysia government has introduced the different cultures and life style of other countries such as Japan to equalize between economy and social life in Malaysia (Norailis, 2013). He stressed that since Malaysia independence when fifty-six years ago, Malaysia has provide the high level of priority to the development of country in all dimensions, quality of work life (QWL) is one of the dimensions (Norailis, 2013).

Every individual is different from one another in terms of how we work and shape the quality of life. As a result, there are different between individuals satisfaction towards the quality of work life they experienced. Malaysian Employers Federation executive director, Shamsuddin Bardan was quoted as saying, " Working long hours does not make you a good employee. It does not mean that you can be more productive and perform quality work. You should instead practice a healthy and balanced work life" (RAHIM, 2013). It means that even an employee is working for long hours but does not having a good quality of work life, the productivity of his or her and organization will decrease.



Realizing the level of quality of work life (QWL) is very important for organizations to develop and incubate employees which are productive and efficient in the discharge of their job tasks. To achieve high level of quality of working life and commitment in organization, there are several key elements in the concept of quality of working life need to be fulfilled or performed. Therefore, organization must strive to identify the dimensions or elements that contribute to the quality of working life in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

## **1. 4 Research Questions**

This research provides answer of following questions:

1. 4. 1 What is the level of work commitment among employees?
1. 4. 2 What is the level of quality of work life among employees?
1. 4. 3 Is there any relationship between work commitment and quality of work life?

## **1. 5 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the extent to which the quality of work life has relationship with commitment of employee at (Research Company). Thus, the organization can aware on how to improve the commitment of employees to ensure the standard of the organization.

## **1. 6 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study include:

1. 6. 1 To identify the level of commitment among employees.

1. 6. 2 To identify the level of quality of work life among employees.

1. 6. 3 To examine the relationship between commitment and quality of work life.

## **1. 7 Significance of the Study**

This part of the study provides the importance to the concerned parties such as academic, organization, employees, and government.

### **1. 7. 1 Academic**

In terms of academic, this study is hoped to serve as a guide for other scientific research in the same field or other related field. Besides, this research is undergoes to help students to have better understanding in relationship between quality of work life with commitment of employee at workplace.

### **1. 7. 2 Organization**

In addition, this research is also hoped to serve as a guide for (Research Company) in order to ensure a high level of work commitment by improving the quality of employee working life. On the other hand, it also provide as a reference for other companies to increase the quality of employee working life and work commitment.

### **1. 7. 3 Employees**

This research can help all of the employees raise the awareness on the importance of quality of work life to their work commitment towards the both individual and organization. Furthermore, employees can realize the current

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level of quality of work life and work commitment in their organization.

Besides that, employees can fight for the high quality of work life from their employers in order to improve the individual growth.

#### 1. 7. 4 Government

With the information at hand, government is able to realize the importance and the effects of quality of work life towards development of country.

Besides that, the information or statistical results are provided so that the government can use as a reference or guideline in order to create the awareness towards all organizations with the intention to develop country.

Also, government can ensure all organizations are providing the high quality of work life to their human resources in order to develop growth of the country.

### **1. 8 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this research is focus on the relationship between quality of work life (QWL) and the work commitment at workplace. This study involves the opinion towards quality of work life and work commitment from staffs at Mutiara Hotel, Johor Bahru.

### **1. 9 Background of Company**

This research which focuses on the relationship between the quality of work life and work commitment is conducted in Mutiara Hotel. Mutiara Hotel is located in the heart of the city of Johor Bahru. Mutiara Hotel is the premier hotel and resorts chain cultured by the warm and friendly Malaysian hospitality, complementing with international standards of accommodation

and services. In addition, it is 15 minutes from the Causeway to Singapore and 30 minutes from the Sultan Ismail International Airport.

## **1. 10 Limitation of the Study**

There are many academic journals or researches that concerned with the relationship between quality of work life and work commitment which have been issued effectively. However, this study also has some limitations that should be improved. One of the limitations of this study is the collected data of this study is appropriate for research area only. The results of this study do not correspond to other areas of the respondents' opinion because everyone have their own opinion that maybe different with each other's. The data collected involved only certain employees' opinion of the (Research Company) in this study.

In addition, this study only focuses on the relationship between qualities of employees' work life with work commitment at workplace that does not included any other factors. In this study, demographic manipulation variables selected were age and gender. Results of the study are not suitable for future research in terms of demographics such as race, religion and so on. Besides, trustworthy of respondents are necessary to be considered by conducting questionnaires because the accuracy of the data or the results of this research relies heavily on the honesty of respondents. This will affect the integrity of the results of this study to future research.

## **1. 11 Theoretical Framework**

There are several models and previous studies showing the relationship between the quality of work life (QWL) with work commitment. For this

research, the focus is on components of quality of work life (QWL) with work commitment among employees at (Research Company) where it would explain the direct relationship between them. Figure 1. 1 shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in this study.

Independent Variable

Quality of Work Life (QWL) Dependent Variable

(Walton) Work Commitment

Components of QWL: (Meyer and Allen)

Adequate and fair compensation

Safe and healthy working conditions – Affective commitment

Immediate opportunity of use and

develop human capacities – Continuance commitment

Future opportunity for continued

growth and security – Normative commitment

Social integration in the work

organization

Constitutionalism in the work

organization

Work and the total life space

The social relevance of work life

## **1. 12 Conceptual Definition**

### 1. 12. 1 Quality of work life

Quality of work life (QWL) is the perception of employees towards their work and organization. The objectives of quality of work life (QWL) focused on two aspects, which are how to increase the effectiveness of the work performance by the employees in an organization and how the job done and workplace environment can create worker comfort (Nadler, 1983).

According to American Quality of Work Life Association at Washington, programs of quality of work life is defined as all types of activities which performed by entire employees at each level of the organization to improve the employees' development and human dignity (Lehrer, 1982).

The concept of quality of work life refers to the quality of the relationship between the employees and the overall work environment. It also refer to everything that has a relationship with the employees at work is associated with the quality of work life either directly or indirectly

(Davis, 1985).

Quality of work life emphasis on the effectiveness of the work environment to the needs of organizations and individuals that make up the value of an employee who covers health, job security, job satisfaction, good health

condition, the development of life skills and the balance between work and life (Rethinam, G. S. and Maimunah Ismail, 2008).

Quality of work life (QWL) consists of eight dimensions that are used for purposes of evaluation and measurement (Walton R. E., 1975), which including:

Adequate and fair compensation

Safe and healthy working conditions

Immediate opportunity of use and develop human capacities

Future opportunity for continued growth and security

Social integration in the work organization

Constitutionalism in the work organization

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The social relevance of work life

#### 1. 12. 2 Work Commitment

According to Salancik (1977), “ commitment is presumed to develop in an effort to justify previous decisions or to maintain a stable image”

(Howard, 2009). Commitment also refers to the loyalty and commitment to the organization’s identification (Nijhof, 1998).

Commitment is influenced by personal characteristics, work characteristics and work experiences in turn affect work performance, absenteeism and job turnover. Whereas employee commitment is refer to individual relative to the organization's identification and involvement in an organization (Mowday, et al., 1979). Conceptually, it can be classified into three factors which are:

Strong belief and acceptance of the goals and values of an organization.

Willingness to strive for the organization.

Desire to remain as a part of the organizational member.

## **1. 13 Operational Definition**

### **1. 13. 1 Quality of work life**

Quality of work life in this research is operationalized into eight elements which contained in the quality of work life programs as proposed by Walton (1975).

Adequate and fair compensation

Safe and healthy working conditions

Immediate opportunity of use and develop human capacities

Future opportunity for continued growth and security

Social integration in the work organization

Constitutionalism in the work organization



## Work and the total life space

### The social relevance of work life

#### 1. 13. 2 Work commitment

Work commitment for this research is operationalized into three components which based on Allen & Meyer (1990), which including continuance commitment, affective commitment, and normative commitment. These three important dimensions of commitment will be studied in this research.

##### Affective commitment

– Refers to the identification and involvement in the emotional attachment to the organization.

##### Normative commitment

– Commitment based on the responsibility and obligation for the organization.

##### Continuance commitment

– Commitment based on the identification of the workers against the cost when they leave the organization.

## **1. 14 Summary**

In general, this chapter explains the introduction of this research which conducted on the staffs of Mutiara Hotel, Johor Bahru. It revolves on the background of the study, scope of study, goals, objectives, and research questions as well as the importance of the study. In addition, some of the

problems mentioned in this study are given focus in conducting this study. Besides, the conceptual definitions and operational definitions are providing a clearer picture of this research. The information will be used as a guide and reference in conducting this study.

Nevertheless, there are several limitations of the study are identified in this research. By using the right methods and conducting research ethically and systematically, it were hoped that this study will then be able to achieve its objectives thus provide benefits not only to researchers but also to the involved organization.