

The Impact of Quality of Work Life on the Development of Managerial Skills in Government Organizations

Mahdi Aliyari

Management Group, Business Management Department, Islamic Azad University,
Central Tehran Branch, Iran

Abstract

Quality of work life is a process through which all the members of an organization influence one another through open channels of communication and continuous interaction. Therefore, this study examines the impact of quality of work life on managerial skills. The method carried out in this research is a survey (descriptive) and its objective is applied. The data collection tool is a questionnaire. The statistical population studied consists of all employees in the technical affairs department of the South Oil Fields Company, and random sampling was employed. The research data were collected using the questionnaire. The data were statistically analyzed using SPSS, with percentages and simple correlation coefficients. The results indicated a significant correlation between the level of managerial skills and the level of quality of work life at the 0.01 probability level. Quality of work life is one of the most influential variables in the level of managerial skills.

Keywords: quality of work life, managerial skills, cognitive skills, technical skills

Introduction

One of the main capabilities of organizations is to provide a suitable environment for the growth of talents, which is referred to in the literature as an environment that supports quality of work life. According to Straw and Hecksher (1984), quality of work life represents a philosophy—a set of principles that highlight the fact that individuals are the most important resource in an organization and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Some authors define quality of work life as the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of employees in the workplace [1].

The term "quality of work life" was coined in 1972 at the International Labor Relations Conference. Recently, quality of work life has become an important tool in the competition for the best employees. Organizations are seeking ways to enhance quality of work life in order to retain their best employees and attract the most talented ones. Some authors define quality of work life as the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of employees at work. Since the mid-1990s, this topic has faced challenges due to downsizing and restructuring of companies [2].

Today, quality of work life in organizations has gained significant importance. Since there is a direct relationship between human resource management practices and quality of work life, revitalizing employees by promoting their quality of work life is considered the key to the success of any organization [3]. Quality of work life is viewed as an alternative to the controlling approach of managing people, which considers individuals as an "asset" for the organization rather than a cost. A high level of job satisfaction is a critical factor in achieving elevated levels of commitment and productivity. Therefore, it is a primary concern for an organization to promote the creation and maintenance of a sustainable and pleasant working environment, enhance employee professional satisfaction, and discourage withdrawal behaviors (such as absenteeism and/or resignation).

- The Concept of Quality of Work Life

The term quality of work life has gained significant popularity in recent years. Quality of work life is a multidimensional concept, and a single definition cannot be provided; therefore, since the initiation of the quality of work life movement in the 1970s, numerous diverse definitions have emerged. Quality of work life refers to a set of outcomes for employees such as job satisfaction, growth opportunities, psychological issues, job security, human relationships between employers and employees, and a low incidence of accidents. In other words, quality of work life refers to a set of organizational tasks or functions such as participatory management, job enrichment, and safe working conditions. In this regard, quality of work life programs can be viewed as a human resource management strategy that includes functions related to quality of work life and aims to enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity [4].

Quality of work life is defined as "an approach or method in which specific techniques and approaches are used to improve work." Among the accepted aspects today are working conditions, professional relationships, opportunities for career advancement, protection against risks and social hazards, and other facets that contribute to employees' satisfaction and well-being. Quality of work life calls for efforts to achieve this goal through the active participation of individuals throughout the organization. It is not limited to overcoming problems and confronting obstacles and negative elements. Quality of work life includes a collection of actual working conditions in any work environment, such as factors like employee salary and benefits, welfare facilities, health and safety, participation in decision-making, diversity, and more. Employees who experience these conditions in an organization and feel that their needs are being met have, colloquially, a higher quality of work life compared to others [4].

Various perspectives on quality of work life have been discussed in the literature. For example, Feldman emphasizes the quality of relationships among employees and the overall work environment in the programs and activities aimed at improving quality of work life, focusing on human dimensions alongside technical and economic aspects in organizations.

Sarto defines participation in decision-making as providing opportunities for employees to make decisions that affect their work and working conditions, stating that the more these opportunities exist, the better the quality of work life will be.

The necessity of focusing on quality of work life and improving it has a rationale: 65% of people's productive lives are spent in the workplace. Attention to quality of work life and its enhancement generally means emphasizing methods that transform the organization to improve involvement in work and performance, thereby reducing stress, turnover, and absenteeism [5].

The components and indicators of quality of work life are essential for the development of organizations based on knowledge, which necessitates predetermined procedures that primarily focus on redesigning jobs to improve organizational performance and support organizational strategy. Based on the above, it can be concluded that the concept of quality of work life emphasizes the complex meaning of multiple dimensions and sometimes refers to interrelated factors that must be carefully examined to develop a conceptual and measurable model of professional satisfaction, work engagement, motivation, productivity, safety and security at work, comfort, happiness, and personal attributes for employees within the organization, while promoting adaptability between life, work, and beyond.

- Aspects of Quality of Work Life

Some aspects that determine the quality of work life in organizations include the following:

- 1) Social Interaction at Work: Quality of work life pertains to creating social interactions in a socially beneficial manner. If one's work is beneficial to society, their self-esteem increases, and vice versa.
- 2) Quality of Work Organization: This refers to the quality of work instructions, the organization's ability to support and assist in solving issues related to inefficiency, career advancement, barriers and problems, workplace fatigue, and hazard protection within the organization.
- 3) Work and Quality of Life: Quality of work life provides a balanced relationship among work, non-work, and family aspects of life. In other words, family life and social life should not be compromised by working hours, including overtime, working at inconvenient times, business trips, transfers, vacations, etc.
- 4) Opportunities for Career Growth: Promotion opportunities are limited for all categories of employees due to educational barriers or because of limited opportunities at higher levels [6].

- Criteria for Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life encompasses many aspects that alter employee behavior. Richard Walton (1973) introduced eight criteria for quality of work life, which include: work-life development, work-life balance, adequate and fair compensation, a healthy environment, social security, social interaction, a constitution, and immediate opportunities for utilizing and developing human capacity [7]. Hosseini also mentioned these eight criteria. Furthermore, in an article by Lokanadha Reddy and Mohan Reddy (2010), emphasis is placed on these eight criteria for quality of work life [6]. Gayathiri and Ramakrishnan (2013) have added other criteria like leadership, job satisfaction, and job design to Walton's criteria [8]. The human capital theory considers serving employees as an effort to generate production within the company. Accordingly, employees are viewed as resources due to their potential to lead future services. It is the organization's responsibility to provide jobs, training, performance evaluations, and rewards to employees, as these factors impact employee value [9]. The concept of quality of work life should address human needs and desires, emphasizing, for example, employers' intentions regarding social responsiveness. Below are the eight criteria for quality of work life to provide a stronger understanding of its characteristics:

- 1) Appropriate and Fair Job Compensation: A distinctive motivating factor for employees is the income level. How good this is primarily affects the quality of work life. Adequate and fair compensation is one of the criteria that has the most significant impact on quality of work life. Fairness in compensation has various meaningful interpretations. For example, job pay relates to factors like professional training, job responsibilities, and harmfulness in the workplace.
- 2) Safe and Healthy Working Conditions: Workers should operate in a protected work environment. Union actions, laws, and employer concerns have led to the establishment of progressively growing standards for a suitable work environment. Aspects of these developments include reasonable hours alongside standard working periods and the physical conditions necessary to reduce injury or illness rates. The overall movement towards quality of work life and their initial evolution may contribute to a sense of comfort in certain areas of the company [8].
- 3) Immediate Opportunities for Utilizing and Developing Human Capacity: Re-evaluation by industries means more than just work. How organizations plan to work differs from how they implement it. Although these opportunities vary and change from one job to another, deepening the work experience, the extent to which a company allows an employee to utilize and develop their abilities differs from other companies. Therefore, certain job qualities are necessary for development purposes [10].
- 4) Future Opportunities for Growth and Continuous Security: Future opportunities pertain to mapping out prospects for employees, as it plays a significant role in quality of work life [6]. Having a certification for blue-collar workers is important; otherwise, this can lead to demotivation and a loss of interest in their profession. However, more attention should be paid to the following elements to improve the quality of work life related to future opportunities for sustainability and security.
- 5) Social Integration in the Workplace: Social integration creates a type of working environment in which employees feel a sense of belonging to the company (Hamidi & Mohamadi, 2012).
- 6) Conditionality in Organizational Work: Employees in organizations are influenced by decisions made on their behalf, even though sometimes the decisions pertain to their positions. Employees perform better when they are allowed to participate in decision-making and managing their work. This approach encourages not only the satisfaction of income and economic needs but also meets their social and psychological needs with a focus on job design. For this reason, modern organizations strive to achieve a balance between work life and personal life [11].
- 7) Social Interaction in Work Life: A topic often silent among workers is the beneficial social roles and harmful activities of organizations. For instance, employees may be concerned about the organization's social responsibility regarding marketing techniques, hiring practices, and participation in political

campaigns, etc. Typically, organizations that show no responsibility make employees value their work less, which impacts their self-esteem [7].

- 8) Overall Life Space (Work-Life Balance): The role of a person's work experience is vital for its negative or positive impact on other stages of their life, such as their relationship with family. Long and frequent overtime may affect an individual's personal relationships with their family. This relates to freedom of expression and the ability to respond to organizational tasks, but the relationship between work and living space can be better described as the balance between work and life [6].

- Measuring Quality of Work Life

There are numerous studies that support the use of a comprehensive quality list to measure work quality, providing organizational insights and solutions for various foundational problems. Takeuchi and Yamazaki (2010) identified the following components in their study [12]:

- 1) Compensation for Work
- 2) Career Path
- 3) Working Hours: regular hours, overtime, absence for family reasons.
- 4) Relationships with Colleagues: feeling of belonging, competition, relationships with colleagues and peers, role conflicts.
- 5) Communication with Supervisors: communication with managers, communication with subordinates, communication with other workers, observation and evaluation, communication and information reception.
- 6) Physical Characteristics of the Work Environment: workplace, equipment, and tools.
- 7) Factors Influencing Job Evaluation: effectiveness of work, type of job, efficiency, autonomy, task variety, participation in decision-making.
- 8) Worker Support Factors: care during absences, workload distribution, communication with unions, supportive resources available to workers.

- Indicators of Quality of Work Life

Despite differing interpretations of quality of work life, research shows that some indicators are common across most societies, including wages and benefits, healthcare and welfare services, insurance, retirement, and similar factors. Based on conducted research, the following indicators for quality of work life can be identified:

- 1) Communication System: A vital environment for various authorities within the organization.
- 2) Suggestion System: Quality of work life programs and employee participation assume that employees have new ideas, and it is the management's responsibility to follow up and implement these ideas. Suggestion systems provide an organized method for collecting ideas from employees.
- 3) Organizational Effort: Organizational effort refers to the necessary indicators for achieving quality performance through the optimal use of organizational and administrative capabilities to streamline and rationalize the alignment of employee goals with organizational objectives [13].

- Factors Influencing Quality of Work Life

Regular assessment of quality of work life can provide important insights into employee well-being, such as employee commitment, job satisfaction, overall welfare, work-related stress, and the home-work interface. Quality of work life is based on three key factors:

- 1) Job Safety: The most fundamental element for enjoying work is a safe working environment. Jobs and workplaces should not jeopardize health.
- 2) Appropriate Working Time: Organizations should review working hours, overtime, holiday duration, and leave.
- 3) Fair Compensation: Employers should not pay wages below the minimum wage set by the government.
- 4) Colleague Characteristics: The characteristics of our colleagues can directly affect our performance at work, as we often spend more time with our colleagues than with our families.

- Quality of Work Life and Job Satisfaction

Achieving a high level of employee performance has become a goal for organizations. Thus, job satisfaction depends on employees' feelings about their jobs and how well the job meets their needs (Yvonne et al., 2014). Job satisfaction does not have a universally accepted definition, largely due to its significant role in organizational behavior and industrial psychology. It can be viewed as several different elements observed by various stakeholders in different ways [14].

Job satisfaction is distinct from quality of work life. Quality of work life is not solely influenced by job satisfaction; it is also affected by satisfaction in other areas of life, such as family satisfaction, leisure time, social life, and financial well-being. Therefore, the focus of quality of work life extends beyond job satisfaction to include the impact of the work environment on job satisfaction and satisfaction in non-work areas of life, as well as mental well-being [5]. Quality of work life is a critical aspect of work in organizations, essential for ensuring employee retention. It refers to an environment where individuals are encouraged to enhance their skills. A review of recent studies on job satisfaction reveals that some theorists are currently emphasizing the close relationship between workers' expectations of their jobs and the existing reality within organizations.

The focus on job satisfaction is based on work-related factors and organization. Bunn et al. (2001) found that after numerous studies in organizational behavior, the idea that satisfaction and performance could indicate well-being in the work environment was established [15]. This behavior may affect organizational activity and performance, making satisfaction a reflection of organizational activity, with each individual having intrinsic motivations to meet their needs; failure to achieve these motivations can lead to frustration.

- **Quality of Work Life and Human Resource Management**

The human resource management unit is responsible for the overall activities and policies related to the organization's employees among various managerial tasks. More specifically, it involves recruiting new colleagues, training employees, evaluating performance, rewarding them, and, in summary, creating a healthy and fair environment for staff.

The human resource management department plays a crucial role in creating an environment where individuals' talents can flourish. The effective performance of this department enables individuals to make the best use of their capacities and to leverage their abilities for their own benefit and that of the organization. Furthermore, this department contributes to employee satisfaction by improving the quality of work life.

- **Quality of Work Life and Employee Commitment**

Organizational commitment is an important occupational and organizational attitude that has garnered interest from many researchers in the fields of organizational behavior and psychology over the years. In recent decades, organizational commitment has received attention from managers and organizational leaders due to employees' perceptions of commitment and its recognition as a key determinant of organizational effectiveness and productivity [16]. Research and academic writings indicate that employee commitment is a work condition related to quality of work life.

Managers of organizations that seek to enhance productivity and the quality of work life for their employees work to heal attitudes, increase individuals' motivation to perform better and more effectively, and empower their sense of commitment to the organization. They also aim to reduce absenteeism, turnover, and other withdrawal behaviors to improve organizational productivity and employee performance [17].

An environment that fosters quality of work life is collaborative, developmental, open, informal, and interpersonal. Such a working environment is regarded as ethical and productive because quality of work life can only be extracted when managers trust and assure their employees. Moreover, employee commitment occurs in organizations where fundamental factors, company policies, and senior management leadership support it. Tej (2012) suggests that companies with high quality of work life may also achieve high employee commitment and customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to greater growth and profitability for the companies [18]. Hodgetts and Hegar (2007) reported that quality of work life is strongly related to work commitment and feelings of effectiveness [3].

Katinda (2010) measures quality of work life across four dimensions: work-life balance, job characteristics, supervisory behavior, and compensation and benefits. The findings indicate that the perception of quality of work life significantly impacts employee commitment. They also show that a balanced perception of family and work life has a very strong positive effect on reducing employees' inclination to leave the company [19].

De Klerk (2005) reported that further literature review indicates that individuals with high commitment demonstrate loyalty and an intention to stay with the organization, as well as personal interest in their jobs [20].

Research Methodology

The type of research in this study is applied. It aims to provide practical solutions for enhancing organizational commitment by acquiring information and knowledge on the impact of quality of work life. The research method employed is a survey. The data collection tool is a researcher-designed questionnaire. Two questionnaires were designed: the first related to the components of quality of work life, and the second related to managerial skills. Both questionnaires were developed based on a five-point Likert scale. Additionally, to prepare the conceptual and empirical framework, library methods (i.e., referring to existing resources) will be used. The unit of observation and analysis in this research is the individual. The reason for choosing the survey method is to achieve maximum generalizability of the findings. The statistical population includes all technical employees of the Southern Oilfields

Company. The sampling method used in the current research was stratified sampling appropriate for size combined with simple random sampling, conducted among 800 technical employees of the Southern Oilfields. Considering the total size of the statistical population (less than one million), the sample size was determined to be 130 individuals based on the "sample size determination table" developed by Krejcie and Morgan.

After collecting the respondents' answers, the data were analyzed using SPSS software at two levels: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The data were statistically analyzed using median, standard deviation, and simple correlation.

Findings

• Descriptive Statistics

Managerial skills in this research refer to the following areas:

- 1) **Technical Skills:** Technical skills represent the ability to conduct business with minimal resources and the highest possible efficiency, demonstrated clearly during execution.
- 2) **Cognitive Skills:** Cognitive skills in this research refer to the ability to make decisions and solve problems, which is clearly demonstrated during the decision-making process.
- 3) **Human Skills:** Human skills include the ability to interact with others through effective communication, clearly demonstrated in the stages of planning, organizing, supervising, and evaluating.

Regarding technical skills, the findings indicate a significant reduction in the percentage of respondents who perform these skills consistently or occasionally (2% for initiating project execution and tracking implementation progress, 3% for the ability to motivate team members to execute projects, 5% for the ability to adjust goals during execution, 6% for commitment to implementation stages, and 8% for timely execution). For project execution, 86% indicated that execution is often delayed, and 76% overlook some goals during implementation (Table 1).

Table 1- Percentage of Respondents Regarding Technical Skills

Technical Skills	Frequency Percentage
Initiating project execution and tracking progress	2%
Ability to motivate team members	3%
Ability to adjust goals during execution	5%
Commitment to implementation stages	6%
Timely execution	8%
Over the course of execution	76%

Regarding cognitive skills, the findings indicate that the percentage of respondents who always or occasionally engage in positive cognitive skills activities has decreased. For problem-solving and responsibility in selecting solutions, 9% reported taking time to think and study before making decisions, with 18% providing new information and alternatives when solving problems. Meanwhile, the percentage of respondents who always or occasionally exhibit negative behaviors related to cognitive skills, such as an inability to learn about alternatives for problem-solving and decision-making based on personal feelings, has risen to 57%. The results for identifying the causes of issues showed 53% for rushing decisions, and 37% relying on guessing and imitation in decision-making (Table 2).

Table 2- Percentage of Respondents Regarding Cognitive Skills

Cognitive Skills	Frequency Percentage
Thinking and studying before decision-making	9%
Allocating time for problem-solving	18%
Alternatives for problem-solving and decision-making based on personal feelings	57%
New information and alternatives when solving problems	16%

Regarding human skills, the findings indicate a low percentage of respondents who always or occasionally engage in positive human skills practices. This study showed 1% for setting specific goals in utilizing available resources, 4% for selecting the best ways to exploit resources and determining goal execution, 5% for ensuring coordination among various actions and identifying the reasons for the success or failure of any action, 16% for preventing resource wastage and relying on planning and coordination among working groups, 7% for discovering new ways to improve work performance, 8% for establishing emergency plans for critical situations, 18% for comparing the results of action plans with goals, 12% for the ability to distinguish between monitoring and evaluating any task during execution, and 19% for documenting program stages (Table 3).

Table 3- Percentage of Respondents Regarding Cognitive Skills

Cognitive Skills	Frequency Percentage
Setting specific goals in utilizing available resources	1%
Selecting the best ways to exploit resources and determining outcomes	4%
Preventing resource wastage and relying on planning and coordination among working groups	5%
Discovering new ways to improve work performance	16%
Creating emergency plans for critical situations and discussing with others during work evaluation	7%
Comparing the results of action plans with goals	8%
Setting objectives and the ability to distinguish between monitoring and evaluating tasks during execution	18%
Ability to formulate long-term plans	12%
Documenting program stages	19%

- Inferential Statistics

Since the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic for each of the variables falls between +1.96 and -1.96, the distribution of the variables in the population is normal.

- Hypothesis Testing

To examine the hypotheses, Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4- Correlation Results Between Research Variable

		Cognitive Skills	Technical Skills	Human Skills	Quality of Work Life
Cognitive Skills	r	1			
	p				
Technical Skills	r	0.271	1		
	p	0.000			
Human Skills	r	0.145	0.413	1	
	p	0.000	0.000		
Quality of Work Life	r	0.596	0.387	0.51	1
	p	0.000	0.04	0.009	

Table 4 shows the correlation matrix of quality of work life and managerial skills. The results indicate that the relationship between all managerial skills scores and quality of work life is significant ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

Quality of work life is specifically related to employees' levels of happiness. Each employee has different needs regarding their job. The quality level of their work life is determined by how well those needs are met [21].

Regardless of their standards, those with a high quality of work life generally earn enough for a comfortable living and find their work interesting. They experience a level of personal satisfaction and commitment to their job, indicating that employees who are generally satisfied with their work have a high quality of work life, while those who are dissatisfied or unhappy with their work have a low quality of work life, reflecting a lack of commitment.

From the findings of the research, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive linear correlation between quality of work life and managerial skills among some employees, with the most significant outcome being that respondents with a high quality of work life tend to possess strong managerial skills. The results indicated that there is a significant correlation between the level of managerial skills and the level of quality of work life at the 0.01 probability level, making quality of work life one of the most influential variables in the level of managerial skills.

Based on previous findings, this study proposes the following:

- 1) Employee participation in effective roles in decision-making for various situations.
- 2) Publishing materials to educate employees about the regulations and procedures governing work, as well as systems for determining salaries, incentives, rewards, and performance evaluation criteria.
- 3) Establishing a mechanism to encourage employees to engage in organizational learning that develops their managerial skills and aids them in innovation.
- 4) Developing new methods for managing employees' career paths.

- 5) Establishing a mechanism to honor outstanding employees.
- 6) Updating services provided to employees (health insurance, transportation, etc.).

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