

Quality of Work Life and Leadership Styles: A Study of Select Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District

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ABSTRACT

Quality of work life refers to the level of contentment or unhappiness with one's career. The purpose of this paper was to investigate the Five QWL variables which were examined namely 1) Participative Decision Making ,2) Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security ,(3)Rewards and Punishment ,4) Equity, Justice and Grievance and 5) Work and the Total Life Space. Quality of Work Life is the essential concept of favorable conditions in a working environment. The other parameter was Leadership Styles in which two types were chosen those are (1) Transformational Leadership and (2) Transactional Leadership were investigated in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District. This study is an attempt to look into the Quality of Work Life among Workers and Leadership Styles of Principals with special reference to Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District. The results showed that employees were not happy with the variables of QWL such as 1) Participative Decision Making ,2) Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security (3) Equity, Justice and Grievance, provided by the management of the Government Higher Secondary Schools. From this paper it was recognized that the principals / school heads should be given knowledge and skill of leadership styles and administrative management in order to improve their effective leadership in the higher secondary schools of Srinagar district.

Keywords: Justice and Grievance, Quality of Work Life, Transactional Leadership, Transformational Leadership

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic leadership refers to the leadership in an educational setting. As a leader at the topmost level in academics, managing, administration one is expected to enthuse and motivate teachers to discover ways to improve performance and atmosphere and further ensure that students and teachers are effectively involved. The role of school principals in the contemporary scenario is generally referred to that of an administrator rather than that of a manager according to educators. The main reason given for this is that it is best to associate management to the business and administration to the educational institutes. Principles usually are coupled with two essential duties. The first one is to ensure staff needs are duly met and everything goes on smoothly in terms of administration of school. This is the 'consideration' aspect of principal's job. The second essential duty is to formulate educational goals and objectives. This is the 'Initiating' aspect of the job. The consideration for staff makes a principal establish friendly, helping and professional relationship with the staff members based on trust and respect. The initiating aspect helps the principal to chalk academic tasks and set plans for organizational growth. Thus, the leadership of school head should include both the aspects of initiation and consideration for effective administration in schools.

Quality of work life (QWL) is the extent to which workers convince important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. It is focusing strongly on providing a work environment conducive to satisfy individual needs. Irrespective of professional role, good quality of work life has always shown a positive effect on the job satisfaction of employees and how they deliver to the customers and thus positive job satisfaction plays a key role in organizational effectiveness. In services, service provider is in direct contact with the end user, like wise in Government Higher Secondary Schools while offering services the employees require to deal with customer in groups. It is therefore imperative for the employees, especially teaching staff the Government Higher Secondary Schools to be provided with superior working environment so that they deliver quality to the students and also to be managed by best leadership styles in order to prosper in the long run. Therefore the present study is an attempt to study the Quality of work life and leadership styles being offered towards the employees of the Educational service sector.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1995, Cruz stated that for principals to be effective should communicate with parents, students and teachers and be team builders by constructing coalitions between these stakeholders. Furthermore, effective principals are well aware that there is a turbulent environment and they should address the needs of the outside groups that are too numerous. They should also encourage a risk taking environment by urging their employees to assume responsibility for a task. Besides, effective principals should possess certain skills in conflict management, active listening, problem solving and consensus building. They should consult teachers and parents in case of conflict. Moreover, they should adopt norms and attitudes that are in harmony with the school's culture. Most importantly they should establish credibility and prove that they are people of integrity.

There is evidence from several literature reviews that have substantiated the tremendous need for direction in school leadership and that have involved numerous characteristics of what researchers consider 'effective' leadership (Caldwell & Hayward, 1998; Davis, 2003; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Furman, 2004, Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Mujis Harris, 2003; Schein, 2000). In 1998, Davis, stated that effective school leadership has two vital components i.e. nurturing positive interpersonal relationships and constructing a school vision. He also acknowledges that developing a school vision takes time and the principal should have the ability to determine the status of the school, identify important aspects of improvement and have a contingency plan to solve problems. In addition to this, they should be knowledgeable about theory and especially those focusing on organizational behaviour and leadership. They should possess technical skills needed for managerial responsibilities and the ability to reflect upon their practices in which they skilfully integrate knowledge and skills with experience.

Cohen and Rosenthal (1983), QWL is an internationally designed effort to bring about the increased labour management cooperation, to jointly solve the problem of organizations performance and employee satisfaction. Any attempt at improving the performance of the organization can be successful only if the organization is able to develop a strong quality of work life. The term quality of work life thus, refers to the favourableness or un-favourableness of a total job environment for people. The basic purpose is to develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for the economic health of the organization. According to Walton (1975) proposed eight conceptual categories. They are as follows: 1) Adequate and fair compensation, 2) Safe and healthy working conditions, 3) Immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, 4) Opportunity for continued growth and security, 5) Social integration in the work organization, 6) Constitutionalization in the work organization, 7) Work and the total life span and 8) The social relevance of work life. According to Kotze (2005) work-family balance enhances an individual's QWL, as involvement in multiple roles protects or buffers individuals from the effects of negative experiences in any one role. Beyond this buffering effect, work-family balance is thought to promote well-being in a more direct manner. Balanced individuals experience low levels of stress when enacting roles, presumably as they are participating in role activities that are salient to them. Ellis and Pompli (2002) in their reading on nurses identified a numerous factors resulting in job dissatisfaction and quality of working life, including: Poor working environments, Resident aggression, Unable to deliver quality of care expected, Balance of work and family, Shift work, no involvement in decision making, Workload, Professional isolation, non-recognition of work, unhealthy relationships with supervisor/peers, absence opportunity to learn new skills and Role conflict.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to identify the Perceptions of the Quality of work life and Leadership Styles in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District. The study has been undertaken with the following specific objectives.

1. To examine the nature of Quality of work life (Five variables of QWL) and Leadership Styles prevalent in the selected Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar district of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. To suggest on the basis of the results of the study measures aimed at improving Quality of work life and Leadership Styles in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar district of Jammu and Kashmir.

4. HYPOTHESIS

In consonance with the aforesaid objectives, the hypotheses which have been framed for verification and confirmation are:

1. Quality of work life based on the Five variables of QWL prevalent in Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District significantly good. (If the mean score in the five point scale has a mean score above 2.5).
2. Leadership Styles prevalent in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District are significantly transactional and transformational in nature. (If the mean score in the five point scale has a mean score above 2.5).

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The universe of the study includes six Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District and sample size taken to conduct the research is 64 teaching staff and six principals. For this study, the sampling technique is stratified

random sampling as sample was chosen on the basis of experience, specialty and qualification of the staff working in these Government Higher Secondary Schools. Structured questionnaire of twenty four statements with an alpha coefficient of 0.82 were identified from the literature to collect data from the teaching staff in order to assess QWL prevalent in these Government Higher Secondary Schools. The other structured questionnaire MLQ (Multi-factor leadership questionnaire) pertaining to Leadership Styles consists of twenty eight items with an alpha of 0.86. MLQ-5X was introduced in both of its forms i.e. Rater Form (For Teachers) and Leader Form (For School Heads/Principals. Secondary data was collected from earlier research work, various published journals, magazines, websites and online articles.

Table 1: Sampling Distribution for Quality of Work Life and Leadership Styles of Raters (Teachers)

S. No	Name of the Government Higher Secondary	Percentage Of population representation in the sample	Number of Teaching staff in the sample
1	HSS Jawahir Nagar	22%	7
2	GHSS Kothibagh	17%	14
3	HSS SP HSS Srinagar	18%	15
4	GHSS Amira Kadal	21%	10
5	HSS M.P Bagh-I Dilawar Khan	16%	12
6	GHSS Rajbagh	23%	6
Total (N) for Quality of Work Life			64

The data collection method used to collect the primary data for this study consisted of Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X). The MLQ-Leaders Form was used to collect the responses from the selected six Government Higher Secondary Schools’ heads/ Principals, whereas MLQ-Rater Form was used to collect responses from the teachers of the said schools. The MLQ-Leader Form as well as Rater Form consists of 28 questions each.

Bass and Avolio (1985) articulated what is perhaps the most comprehensive theory of leadership so far. Extending the work of Burns (1978), Bass posited that leadership is composed of three domains: transformational, transactional and laissez faire. Subsequently this led to the development of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The Full Range Multifactor Leadership model comprises transformational leadership, transactional leadership and the dimensions of passive avoidant leadership. But in our study of the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar district only two leadership styles were analyzed i.e. Transformational Style & Transactional Style of leadership. Transactional leaders are those who exchange tangible rewards for the work and loyalty of followers, whereas transformational leaders are those who engage with followers, focus on higher order intrinsic needs, and raise consciousness about the significance of specific outcomes and new ways in which those outcomes might be achieved. Transformational leadership in the Full Range Leadership model comprises five dimensions: Idealized influence (Attributed), Idealized influence (Behaviour), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, comprises three dimensions: contingent reward and management-by-exception (active).

6. ANALYSIS

The results of the analysis are based on the guidelines evolved front the past researches done in the field. Prior to the analysis of the data, the past research done in this field was studied thoroughly so as to follow a standard pattern of analysis. The statistical tools used to measure QWL of respondents/teacher were mean and standard deviation. Mean is a very important measure of central tendency which helps in comparison of factors. The standard deviation gives very important and useful information about the spread of data and enables us to measure the accuracy of central tendency mean).

Table 2: Overall Perception of teaching staff of Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District towards quality of work life(N=64)

S No.	Components of QWL	MEAN	ST DEV	RANK
1	Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security	2.06	1.21	5
2	Participative decision making	2.94	0.97	3
3	Rewards and Punishment	3.12	0.86	2
4	Equity, Justice and Grievance	2.81	1.23	4
5	Work and the Total Life Space	3.98	0.54	1
OVERALL QUALITY OF WORKLIFE(Five Variables)		2.98		

Work and the Total Life Space ranks 1st in the list with mean value of 3.98 and standard deviation 0.54 which reflects that overall the teaching faculties are satisfied with this dimension of Quality of Work Life. This dimension indicates that a person’s work should not overbalance his life. Ideally, work schedules, career demands and travel requirements should not take up too much of his/her leisure and family life. Rewards and Punishment ranks 2nd with mean value of 2.94 and standard deviation of 0.86. Rewards and punishments are the just like carrot and stick, it comprises of rewards, punishment and discipline. It implies to rewarding those who are better performers and punish those who are caught committing serious offence and tries to inculcate serious discipline among the employees in terms of punctuality, least absenteeism etc. Participative Decision Making ranks 3rd with mean value of 3.12 and standard deviation of 0.97. In an institution, every member of staff should have a say in decision making that makes a sense of belongingness among the employees. It consists of recognition to employee suggestions, communication that too vertical as well as horizontal as it may effect day to day work life of the employees, reprimand, if oppose the decision taken by the management, management union interaction, pertaining to management’s decision making, employees union is taken in to confidence and weightage to the office bearers in regard of decision making. Equity, Justice and Grievance ranks 4th with mean value of 2.81 and standard deviation of 1.23. It is pertaining to equity, justice and grievance respectively. It focuses on equality in terms of rules and procedures followed, impartial approach of top management towards employees in context with work assignments, transfers etc. and grievance redressal is fully mechanized. Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security ranks 5th with mean value of 2.06 and standard deviation of 1.21. It has been reflected that teachers are not satisfied with this dimension. There must be employment, which provides for continual growth and job & income security. Opportunities for training and advancement should be considered. The overall quality of work life (five variables) is fairly good as indicated by the mean value of 2.98.

Table 3: Overall Perception of teaching staff and school heads / principals of Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District towards leadership style of school heads / principals (N=64 for Rater and N=6 for Leader.)

Style	Respondent	Mean	SD	Overall Mean
Transformational	Rater	2.397	0.62	2.84
	Leader	3.281	1.33	
Transactional	Rater	2.443	0.57	2.87
	Leader	3.285	0.33	

From the Table 3, it is clear that transformational and transactional leadership styles are prominent in school leaders according to both leaders and raters. However transactional leadership marginally dominates transformational leadership. Further, it is evident that according to both leaders and raters ‘inspirational motivation’ is the highest rated variable. Also according to items score of raters, idealized attributes of ‘transformational leadership’ has highest value. According to the leaders item score, inspirational motivation of ‘transformational leadership’ has highest value.

Table 4: Summary of Testing the Hypotheses

Quality of work life based on the Five variables of QWL prevalent in Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District significantly good. (If the mean score in the five point scale has a mean score above 2.5).	Accepted
Leadership Styles prevalent in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District are significantly transactional and transformational in nature. (If the mean score in the five point scale has a mean score above 2.5).	Accepted

CONCLUSION

According to the teachers, the least observed behavior in principals/school heads is ‘avoiding making decisions’, while according to principals/school heads, their dominant behavior is ‘to express confidence that goals will be achieved’. According to principals/school heads, their least prevalent behavior is ‘to wait for things to go wrong before taking action’. The teachers believe that their principals/school heads are somewhat respected, admired and trusted while as principals/school heads believe that they are fairly often respected, admired and trusted. The teachers believe that their principals/school heads only sometimes talk about their values, consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions and signify a collective sense of mission. On the other hand principals/school heads confirm that they fairly often talk about their values, consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions and signify a collective sense of mission. The teachers believe that their principals/school heads fairly often behave in ways that motivate people around

them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. The principals/school heads believe that they frequently behave in ways that motivate people around them.

The Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District of Jammu and Kashmir need to develop a sense of security and belongingness among the teachers. There should be improvement in the grievance handling procedure in the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District pertaining to employee's problems. As such there should be grievance handling cell in every Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District for their employees. The Government Higher Secondary Schools of Srinagar District of Jammu and Kashmir state should be free from the role of individual favoritism, there should be no bias or favoritism towards individual employees, insuring rules are equally applicable to all should be maintained. The education department should give much more importance to the dimensions of Quality of Work Life and highlight the dimensions of QWL where the perception of teachers varies significantly. Teachers should be given the power of making decisions individually related to their pedagogy and related to their work .Also, important tasks should be given to them. They should be given different types of tasks related to their profile. There should be no discrimination on the basis of gender, religion and race of faculty members. They should be treated with due respect. There should be harmonious relations between teachers. The commitment level of teachers should be high. They should be motivated to perform better. The institutions should give value to the ideas of teachers and their initiatives should be appreciated.

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