



## **Role of Work Flexibility in Enhancing the Quality of Work Life in IT Sector**

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**Abstract:** The quality of work life among employees is highly essential for the better organizational performance. Quality of work life is influenced by several factors. This study focuses on the role of work flexibility in enhancing the quality of work life in the I.T sector employees in Chennai. The Work flexibility is analyzed in two types viz., temporal work flexibility and operational work flexibility each with five variables. Cronbach Alpha used to validate the included variables. Multiple regression analysis used to find the influence of work flexibility on the Work life Quality. The study concludes that the temporal flexibility results in better work life balance among the employees whereas the operational flexibility results in self discipline, motivation and enrichment among the employees which are essential for the better organizational performance.

**Key Words:** Quality of Work life, Work Flexibility, Temporal flexibility.

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### **Introduction**

The continuous enhancement of quality of work life among the employees is highly essential for the organizational performance (Havlovic, 1991) specifically in service oriented industry (Huang, et al., 2007). With the rise of globalization in India, the economy experiences a lot of changes in the business sector. The globalization has witnessed enormous work opportunities, adequate work standard, 24/7 work culture (Park, 2010). It has changed the public view on the definition of good work place (Chakraborty and Samyal, 2015). In olden days, the good

company indicates the company with huge financial figures and human resources (Martel and Dupices, 2006). But nowadays, the good company is the company which consists of fair HRM practices, good work culture and opportunities for growth that the employees desire to work (Bhattacharya and Singh, 2017).

There are so many studies related to the measurement of quality of work life (Van, et al., 2007) factors influencing quality of work life (Zin, 2004) consequences of good quality of work life (Sirgy, et al., 2001) and the ways to enrich the quality of work life (Saha and Kumar, 2016). But the studies related to the role of work flexibility in enhancement of quality of work life is limited (Wyatt and Wah, 2001). But it is the need for the present era. Hence the present study focuses on this aspect.

### **Rationale for the Study**

Many researchers have suggested a numerous number of predictors of quality of work (Sivgy et al., 2001; Gurses et al., 2009). Majority of the studies highlighted the importance of work culture, its culture, and its environment in the enhancement of quality of work life (Rajadhyaksha and Smita, 2004; Powell, et al., 2009). Since there is a versatility nature in all sectors of the economy, it is difficult to identify the common predictors and measures to enrich the quality of work life (Kanten and Sadullah, 2012). There is a need for flexibility especially work flexibility is essential to enrich the employee performance (Bhargava, 2016). Only few studies have attempted to examine the impact of work flexibility on QWL (Datta, 1999; Mansi, 2017). Under this scenario, the present study has made one step ahead on this line.

### **Theoretical background and Hypotheses Building**

The theoretical background explains the dependent and independent factors taken for the present study. The dependent variable is the QWL whereas the independent variable is work flexibility.

The quality of work life is measured by the authors with the help of factors from four to eight (Sirgy, et al., 2001). The included variables in each factor vary from 3 to 5 (Rastogi, et al., 2017).

The work flexibility focuses on the flexibility in work related tasks (Hill, et al., 2008). It is classified into temporal flexibility (Clark, 2001) and Operational flexibility (Bailyn, 1997). The temporal flexibility is described as the ability to have discretion in one's work schedule (Clark, 2001). The operational flexibility indicates the control over the conditions of work (Ahuja, et al., 2007). The variables used to measure the temporal and operational flexibility with help of variables from 5 to 6 variables (Halpern, 2005; Chang, et al., 2010).

The relationship between temporal flexibility and the quality of work life was evaluated by many researchers (Budwar, 2007; Carlson, 2010). The relationship between operational flexibility and the QWL was analyzed by researchers (Hausse, et al. 2010; Hayman, 2010). They found the significant positive impact on both types of flexibility on the QWL in the organization. On that basis, the present study examines the given Null Hypotheses.

- i) Temporal flexibility is not positively influencing QWL
- ii) Operational flexibility has no significant impact on QWL

### **Research Method**

Primary data were collected through the pre-tested questionnaire from the employees working in top ten IT companies at Chennai. In total, 200 employees (twenty per company) are determined as the sample of study. Out of 200 employees, only 89 employees responded the questionnaire at the fullest level. All these 89 filled in questionnaire are included for further analysis.

### **Procedure**

The work flexibility is divided into temporal and operational flexibility which consist of 5 and 5 variables respectively. The QWL is measured with the help of 15 variables which are drawn from reviews (Clark, 2001; Sivgy, et al., 2001; Rastogi, et al., 2017). All variables are measured by Likert's five point scale.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed with the help of SPSS AMOS21. Initially, the validity in each factor is tested by confirmatory factor analysis. The mean, standard deviation, co-efficient of variation and 't' statistics of each factor have been estimated from the score of variables in each factor (Temporal, Operational Flexibility and QWL). Finally, the multiple regression analysis is administered to find out the impact of work flexibility on QWL.

### **Results and Discussion**

The mean score, its standard deviation, co-efficient of variation, 't' statistics and the Cronbach alpha in each construct included for the study are computed and presented in Table.1

**TABLE 1**

#### **Respondents view on Construct**

<i>Sl.</i>	<i>Construct</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Cronbach</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Co-efficient</i>	<i>'t'</i>	<i>'P'</i>
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No.		<i>n</i>	<i>alpha</i>		<i>deviation</i>	<i>of variation (in %)</i>	<i>statistics</i>	<i>value</i>
1.	Quality of work life	15	0.8708	3.4117	0.7245	21.23	3.1441	0.0089
2.	Temporal flexibility	5	0.8142	3.2081	0.6108	19.04	2.9024	0.0141
3.	Operational flexibility	5	0.8011	3.1424	0.5945	18.92	2.5165	0.0242

The analysis revealed that the included variables in all three constructs explain the internal consistency in each construct since the Cronbach alpha are greater than 0.60 (Hair, et al., 2014). The level of QWL in the IT companies are at a moderate level since its mean score is 3.4117 which replicates the findings of Balters et al., (1999); Budhwar (2007). Both the temporal and operational flexibility are equally viewed as the important factors influencing the QWL in IT companies since its mean scores are 3.2081 and 3.1424 respectively which is similar to the findings of Carlson et al., (2010).

### **Influence of Work Flexibility on QWL**

The impact of temporal and operational flexibility on the quality of worklife in IT companies is examined with the help of multiple regression analysis (Hayman, 2010). The least square method was followed to examine the impact. The results are given to Table.2

**TABLE 2**

#### **Results of Multiple Regression Analysis**

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>Unstandardized co-efficient</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	$\beta$	<i>t'statistics</i>	<i>P'value</i>
1.	Temporal flexibility	0.2887	0.1022	0.2621	2.8248	0.0309
2.	Operational flexibility	0.3149	0.0886	0.2945	3.5542	0.0112
	Constant	0.4173				

	R <sup>2</sup>	0.8042				
	F-statistics	11.9943				0.0245

Both the temporal and operational flexibility have a significant and positive impact on QWL which recalls the findings of Costa et al., (2004). A unit increase in the above said two constructs results in an increase in the level of QWL at IT companies by 0.2621 and 0.2945 units respectively. The changes in the work flexibility explain the changes in QWL at IT companies to an extent of 80.42 per cent since its R<sup>2</sup> is 0.8042 which replicates the findings of Dastmalchian and Blyton (2001). By comparing the two flexibilities, the most important flexibility to enhance QWL is operational flexibility (Eaton, 2003).

### **Concluding Remarks**

The study concluded that the work flexibility is essential to enhance the QWL at IT companies. The organizations are advised to give freedom to their employees to choose work time and workplace in order to motivate the self responsibilities among their employees. The temporal flexibility results in better work life balance among the employees whereas the operational flexibility results in self discipline, motivation and enrichment among the employees which are essential for the better organizational performance.

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