

Quality of Work Life among Academicians in Selected Public Institutions of Higher Learning in Sarawak

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to determine the factors influencing the Quality of Work Life (QWL) among academicians and to determine the differences between QWL and responses by those in the selected demographic profile (Gender and Marital Status).

Design/methodology/approach: A survey methodology was used in this study. This research involves the utilization of questionnaires which were administered among two hundred and seventy-eight (278) academicians currently working in a selected Public Institutions of Higher Learning in Sarawak. The factors influencing QWL were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The comparative between QWL and selected demographic profile (Gender and Marital Status) was analyzed using the Independent T-Test method.

Findings: The results of the study showed that the respondents were satisfied with their work context (co-worker) domain. The major influencing factors include having good communication and relationship with students, support staff, and other stakeholders. Results also indicated that there are significant differences between QWL and Gender. There were no significant differences found between QWL and Marital status.

Research limitations/implications: This may assist to improve individuals and organizations performance whilst increasing commitment levels among academicians.

Practical implications: These findings will help policy makers to implement the best practice to improve the QWL.

Originality/value: Having QWL is useful in efforts to improve productivity, organizational effectiveness, the uplifting morale of employees whom can contribute meaningfully to the economic development of the country.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life (QWL), Academicians, Public Institutions of Higher Learning

Background

The quality of work life (QWL) is characterized as the degree to which an employee is happy with their personal and working needs while accomplishing the objectives of the organization. QWL has been found to influence the commitment and productivity levels of employees in academic institutions, as well as in other industries. However, reliable information on the QWL of academicians is limited. The purpose of this study was to assess the QWL among academicians in the selected Public Institutions of Higher Learning in Sarawak. Under the Eleventh Malaysian Plan 2016-2020 (RMK-11), an emphasis was given on anchoring human growth. In that respect, the quality of academicians should be highlighted for achieving its goal. It is a norm for academicians to perform a lot of roles and shoulder responsibilities which may cause them to become pressured due to workload (Panatik, Rajab, & Shaari, 2012). QWL is a complex entity influenced by and interacting with, many aspects of work and personal life. Brooks defined the QWL as "the degree to which individuals are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in their work organization while achieving the organization's goals." Therefore, the concept of employee satisfaction is not about providing people with a job and a good salary. It is about providing people with a better place where they feel accepted, wanted and appreciated (Almalki, Fitzgerald, & Clark, 2012). In Malaysia, reviewing previous studies of QWL identified differing numbers of factors that have an impact on the QWL of the teacher (Bujang, 2010), academic staff (Daud, 2010; Nikam, 2013; Diyanna et al., 2016) and librarians (Aziz & Nadzar, 2011). To date, the prior study on QWL is broad yet moderately little work focus QWL among academicians in Malaysian Public Institutions of Higher Learning. The nature of academicians work was another factor that affects the QWL of academicians. Therefore, studies that are aimed to investigate and assess the perception of QWL among academicians are very important. This research will also help academicians examine important aspects of their QWL and understand how they relate, encouraging them to look at their lives as a whole to improve their QWL.

Methods

Design and Sample

A descriptive research design, namely a cross-sectional survey, was used in this study. Data were collected using Brooks' survey of quality of work life and demographic questions. This research involves the utilization of questionnaires which were administered among two hundred and seventy-eight (278) academicians currently working in a selected Public Institutions of Higher Learning in Sarawak. Data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics and Independent t-test. Total scores and subscores for QWL items were computed and reported using SPSS version 23.

Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was adapted from the Brooks' survey of quality of work life. It is a self-completion questionnaire with 35 items divided into 4 subscales (a) work life/home life, (b) work design, (c) work context and (d) work the world. According to Almalki et al. (2012), work life/home life can be understood in terms of the border concerning the life of both at the