

## A Survey of Relationship between Work Life Quality and Staffs Participation in Payame Noor University, Iran

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the quality of work life and staff's participation in university affairs in Payame Noor university of West Azerbaijan province in Iran. In order that a questionnaire has been made which contained 26 questions, and one main hypothesis and 8 sub-hypotheses has been tested. The results of Pearson's correlation test and enter multiple linear regression show that according to the Walton's theory, the 8 components of work life quality have a significant effect on staff's participations in university affairs. Also there is a significant relation between quality of work life and staffs participation,  $R^2$  coefficient between these two variables is 0.67, which indicates that 0.67 of participation variations is explained by work life quality components. Also the Beta coefficients show that total life space has the most effect on staff's participation in comparison with other 7 components of work life quality.

**KEY WORD:** work life quality, staff's participation, Walton's theory, Payame Noor University

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Work life Quality is a theory that has been raised for the first time in 1970s. This theory attempts to improve the work life quality and respond to staff needs that has been declined as a production factor along with other production factors such as capital, and has been suffered by exploit. Work life quality not only changes the conditions of work life, but includes humanization of working environment to preserve dignity of staff. Psychologists consider the work life quality as the humanization of management. Work life quality term describes a process which an organization reacts to the needs of their staffs, this plan provides a mechanism that involves staffs in decisions and let them to design their own career.

Staff participation in organization affairs is one of those important issues that its necessity is felt more than any other time in recent decades, because it causes good decision making, completely successful in decisions implementation, perform the duties efficiently, increase productivity and lower costs. So staff participation is one of main factors in the success of organizations. Some theories indicate that the first revolution in the management was organization hierarchies and second revolution was the separation of ownership from management and now participation has been proposed as the third and most important revolution in management.

In the academic education system in Iran, Payame Noor University is one of the largest universities which the effects of staff's participation in university affairs have been revealed. Many factors affect staff participations which identification of these factors can promotes staff participations and organizations will result in success. Considering that the Payame Noor university has an educational service structure and staff do their duties based on which duties has been transferred for them, so the changes of university structure from a task base structure to a participation structure is required. So the most effective ways should be chosen and used. With regard on the fact that the staff have basic role in the partnership management and staff should be involved in the desired changes, the factors which affect staff behaviors should be mentioned. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between quality of work life and the staff's participation in university affairs in Payame Noor university of West Azerbaijan province. In order that and according to Walton's (1975) theory, it is going to test these main and sub- hypotheses:

#### **Main hypothesis:**

- 1- There is a significant relationship between quality of work life and staff participation in university affairs.

#### **Sub- hypotheses**

- 1-1: there is a significant relationship between fair and adequate benefits and staff's participation.
- 1-2: there is a significant relationship between safe working condition and staff's participation in university affairs

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- 1-3: there is a significant relationship between human capabilities development and staff's participation
- 1-4: there is a significant relationship between growth and safety and staff's participations.
- 1-5: there is a significant relationship between constitutionalism and staffs participations
- 1-6: there is a significant relationship between social integration and staffs participations
- 1-7: there is a significant relationship between social relevance and staffs participations
- 1-8: there is a significant relationship between total life space and staffs participations

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work life quality is a process through which the organization shareholders, managers, unions and staffs learn how to work better together, demonstrate operations for themselves, apply the necessary improvements in order to both targets of improving work life quality for all members and achieving a high level of efficiency [2].

In the 1970s, attention to the work life quality increased. For example, in 1974 Congress of America created a national center for productivity and quality of work life and it focused on reduction of conflicts, increase staff satisfaction and staff participation in the organization affairs [8]. Baron and Gonberk treat the particular programs in the work life quality including increasing in organizational efficiency and enhancing the quality of work life by staff participation on making decisions which are relates to their career. And they encourage the supervisors to meet all staffs in every level democratically and involve them in decision making.

Richard Walton considers 8 cases as components of work life quality: fair and adequate benefits, safe working conditions, human capabilities Development, growth and safety, constitutionalism, social integration, social relevance and total living space [9].

With regard to the framework of this study the relationship between 8 components of work life quality in Walton theory and staff participation will be discussed.

### **Fair and adequate benefits and staffs participations**

Staffs tend to determine what they and others deserve by comparing what the organizations take them with what they give to the organizations. Comparing themselves with others, they may come to the conclusion that they have fair received or not. If they make a fair comparison or find it based on equality, they most likely will be pleased. If the compare result is unfair they will be dissatisfied and will result in less effort, on the other words they will contribute less to work [7].

### **Safe working conditions and staff participation**

If organizations can provide better mental- physiological conditions in the work environment, they will improve productivity and efficiency and staffs will have greater participation in the affairs of the organization, because daily waste of work hours would be decreased and more staffs would be involved with their works [7].

### **Human capabilities development and staff participation**

The development of human capacity and staff improvements will create pure ideas and key opportunities for the organization and enhance organizational competition power in today's competitive environment. Therefore, the development of human capacity means development in the ability and competence of individuals to achieve continuous improvement in organizational performance.

### **Providing opportunities for growth and sustainable Occupational Safety and staff participation**

According to Richard Astyrs commitment can also caused by personal factors such as years of work in the organization and organizational features such as the freedom of staffs in decision making and a sense of Occupational Safety[5]. Hence, managers should be able to provide an acceptable level of occupational safety for staffs to increase the level of their participation in decision-making in the organization.

### **Constitutionalism and staff involvement**

When human resource of an organization ensure that all activities of managers, especially human resource managers, is based on ethics and the law, Staff participate in decision making and most importantly, they feel that their behavior is based on justice and fairness. So the problem of non-compliance in the areas of ethics and rules would be reduced as well.

### **Social integration and communication and staff participation**

Realization of democracy requires the formation of a community-oriented organization. This requirement that people want to belong to an organization and share in its goals, is a manifestation of participatory culture. Human need for socialization and they have values and common goals [1]. Thus an organization should try to use partnership relations between staffs instead of coercive relations.

### **Total living space and staff participation**

Total living space is one of those work life quality indicators that organizations pay less attention to it. As long as this component to be forgotten the staff will not feel interest in work, this means that staffs should be emotionally supported from family and will be in attendance with high morale and sense of responsibility.

Yavari Y, Amirtash and Tondnevis (2009) evaluated the Quality of Work life in physical education faculties and departments. They stated that there was no significant difference in quality of work life among faculties and departments except in the developing human and personal skills and abilities aspect of QWL, and there was significant relation between QWL and some of its aspects with age and the number of teaching years of faculty members [10]. Mirkamali, Narenji (2011) determined the quality of work life among faculty members of university in Tehran and Sharif University of technology. They showed that faculty members of both Tehran and Sharif University are in a relatively unfavorable QWL condition and there is no significant difference in the level of QWL among faculty members of the two universities, however, there is a small difference in social integrity and cohesiveness between the two populations [4]. Shabhazi et-al (2011) investigated the relationship between Quality of Work Life and performance of department chairpersons of Esfahan University. Results indicate that QWL has positive relations with performance, developing human capabilities, constitutionalism in the work organization; total life space and social integration in the work organization predict the performance [6]. Marta et.al (2011) suggests that ethic institutionalization positively influences quality of work life and the effect of ethics institutionalization on QWL is stronger for Thai than U.S, because the Thai culture is collectivistic, whereas the U.S culture is individualistic [3].

In summary, faculty members are very important to universities, therefore it has high value to pay more attention to their QWL, and their work conditions. In addition, it is recommended to use QWL improvement programs to take advantage of their benefits.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study is a scientific and practical survey. Statistical population is the West Azerbaijani Payame Noor University's staffs. To select a sample of population, the two-stage cluster sampling method has been used. So that:

**Table 1: Classification of West Azerbaijani Payame Noor universities by centers and units**

Payame Noor's Centers and units in the west of province	Payame Noor's Centers and units in the north of province
Center of Mahabad	Center of Khoy
Center of Naghadeh	Center of Makou
Center of Miyandoab	Unit of Siyah cheshmeh
Center of Bookan	Unit of Gare- ziya addin
Center of Shahindegh	Unit of Salmas
Unit of Tekab	Unit of Firurag
Unit of Oshnavieh	Unit of Tazeh Shahr
Unit of Sardasht	Unit of Shout
Unit of Piranshahr	

First, among three geographical regions of West Azarbaijan province (north, center and south), two regions (north and west) has been selected randomly. Then between all 7 centers, 10 units and 247 staffs of West Azerbaijan's Payame Noor universities, 3 centers and 4 units and 66 staffs has been selected by the use of two-stage cluster sampling method.

#### 3.1. Data gathering tools

To gather the data and staff's information and test the hypothesis of the survey, a questionnaire has been used. This questionnaire contains questions which make variables practical. The questionnaire consists of two types of questions: the first type has been used to determine the sample characteristics by gender, years of work, education and marital status and the second type has been used to test the hypothesis. This study uses Likert's five rating scale in the questionnaire. The sample members have been asked to show their opinions about their work life quality and participation in university affairs.

#### 3.2. Testing for validity and reliability of measuring tools

To gauge about validity of measuring tools we used symbolic validity method, so that the initial questionnaire has been investigated by management professors and experts about its validity. To gauge about reliability of questionnaire, the Cronbach's Alpha method has been used. The result of tests by SPSS software (table2-1, 2-2) shows that the questionnaire reliability is 0.936 which shows a high correlation between questions and the questionnaire is highly perpetuate.

**Table 2-1 : Cases Processing Summary**

	N	%
Cases valid	66	100.0
Excluded	0	.0
Total	66	100.0

**Table.2-2: Reliability Statistics**

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
26	0,936

### 3.3. Method of statistical data analyzing

In order to analyze the information gathered from questionnaires, we used the descriptive and deductive methods. So that, to describe the answers which has been given for any question, we used frequency distribution table and their reply percentage. Also in order to test the hypothesis of survey, we used Pierson's correlation test(r) and then we used Enter multiple linear regression model to measure the size of each variable effects on dependent variable.

### 3.4. Inferential analyzes of statistical data (statistical test of hypotheses)

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between staff's work life quality and their participation in university affairs. To measure dependent and independent variables of this hypothesis 18 questions (question 1-18) and 8 questions (question 19-26) in the questionnaire has been used, respectively. So both of them are spatial variables and we have to use Pearson test to reach the correlation between these variables.

$H_1$ : There is a significant relationship between staff's work life quality and their participation in university affairs.

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between staff's work life quality and their participation in university affairs

**Table 3: Pearson's test to determine the correlation between the quality of work life and staffs participation in university affairs.**

independent variable		Work life quality	
dependent variable			
Participation	Correlation coefficient		0.872
	Significance level		0.000
	Number of observations		66

The results of Pearson's test in table 3 shows that the significance level is (0.000) and below the (0.05), so the hypothesis  $H_0$  has been rejected. It means that there is a significant relationship between work life quality and staff's participation. Also the correlation coefficient between two variables is positive and 0.872, which is statistically appropriate. It shows that the relationship between mentioned variables is positive.

**Table 4. Testing the hypotheses (Pearson's test)**

Dependent variable	Participation		
	Correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number of observations
<b>Independent variable</b>			
Fair and adequate benefits	0.581	0.000	66
Safe working condition	0.683	0.000	66
Developing human capabilities	0.538	0.000	66
Growth and safety	0.473	0.000	66
Constitutionalism in organization	0.666	0.000	66
Social integration	0.636	0.000	66
Social relevance	0.526	0.000	66
Total life space	0.554	0.000	66

In order to investigate the effects of other work life quality components (independent variables) on staff's participation, enter multiple regression model has been used, because all the components (independent variable) and dependent variable are spatial.

The results of Enter regression model has been presented in table 5. It shows that  $R^2$  coefficient is 0.67, which indicates that 0.67 of participation variations is explained by work life quality components.

**Table 5: Result of Enter regression model**

Regression method	$R^2$	$R^2$ adjusted	Standard error
Enter	.67	.62	.50028

To understand the effect of each 8 components of work life quality, on staff's participations, the results has been presented in table 6. So the higher is the Beta coefficient, the effect of that variable on dependent variable is high.

**Table 6: Beta coefficient for each component variables of work life quality**

Variables	coefficients	Un standardized	Standardized coefficients
	B	Standard error	Beta
Fair and adequate benefits	0.025	0.11	.025
Safe working condition	0.26	0.11	0.279
Developing human capabilities	0.007	0.102	0.007
Growth and safety	0.044	0.109	0.041
Constitutionalism	0.169	0.127	0.191
Social integration	.136	.095	.160
Social relevance	.099	.111	.096
Total life space	.274	.085	.293

The results show that total life space has the highest effect on staff's participation in university affairs, then the second component(Safe working condition), fifth component(constitutionalism), sixth component(Social integration), seventh component(Social relevance), fourth component (Growth and safety), first component(Fair and adequate benefits) and finally the third component of Developing human capabilities has the most effect on staff's participation in university affairs respectively.

**4. Conclusion**

The present research examines the relationship between the work life quality and staff's participation in West Azerbaijani Payame Noor University. So we present one original hypothesis and eight sub hypothesis. Before testing for hypothesis, some descriptive results have been presented. After that we test for hypothesis. The results of hypothesis testing show that:

**Hypothesis 1:**

In order to test this hypothesis, 26 questions has been asked in the questionnaire which 18 questions were related to the eight components of work life quality ( independent variable) and 8 questions were related to staff's participation in university affairs. The results show that the significance level is 0.000 which is lower than 0.05, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected. So there is a significant relationship between work life quality and staff's participation in university affairs. Correlation coefficient between these variables is 0.872 which is statistically appropriate and indicates the positive and direct relationship between these variables. To measure the size of work life quality effect on staff's participation, Enter multiple linier regression model has been used.  $R^2$  Coefficient is 0.67 which indicates that 0.67 of participation variations is explained by work life quality components.

**Sub-hypothesis 1-1:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions. The significance level for this variable is 0.000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected. It shows that there is a significant relationship between fair and adequate benefits and staff's participation. Correlation coefficient is 0.58 which indicates a positive and direct relationship between these variables.

**Sub-hypothesis 1-2:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected and there is a significant relationship between safe working condition and staff's participation in university affairs. Correlation coefficient between these variables is 0.683, which shows a positive and direct relationship between these variables.

**Sub-hypothesis 1-3:**

This one has been measured by 3 questions in the questionnaire. The significance level is 0.0000, so this hypothesis has not been rejected. So there is a significant relationship between human capabilities development and staff's participation. Also the correlation coefficient between 2 variables is 0.538, which shows a positive and significant relationship between these variables.

**Sub-hypothesis 1-4:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 3 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.000, so this hypothesis has not been rejected. There is a significant relationship between growth and safety and staff's participations. The correlation coefficient (0.473) shows a positive and direct relationship between these variables.

**Sub-hypothesis 1-5:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.0000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected and there is a significant relationship between constitutionalism and staffs

participations. Also the correlation coefficient between variables is 0.666, which shows a positive and significant relationship between these variables

**Sub-hypothesis 1-6:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.0000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected and there is a significant relationship between social integration and staffs participations. Also the correlation coefficient between variables is 0.636, which shows a positive and significant relationship between these variables

**Sub-hypothesis 1-7:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.0000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected and there is a significant relationship between social relevance and staffs participations. Also the correlation coefficient between variables is 0.526, which shows a positive and significant relationship between these variables

**Sub-hypothesis 1-8:**

This hypothesis has been measured by 2 questions in questionnaire. The significance level is 0.0000, so this hypothesis hasn't been rejected and there is a significant relationship between total life space and staffs participations. Also the correlation coefficient between variables is 0.554, which shows a positive and significant relationship between these variables.

To measure the size of work life quality components effects on staff's participation, Enter multiple linier regression model has been used and the Beta coefficients has been revealed. The result of regression model has been presented in table 7. The results show that total life space has the most effect on staff's participations and a change in this component can change staffs participation by 0.29. The effect of other components has been presented in table 5-1:

**Table 7: size of each work life quality component's effects on staff's participation (rated by their importance)**

Components	Standardized Beta coefficients
Total life space	0.293
Safe working condition	0.279
Constitutionalism in the organization	0.191
Social integration	0.160
Social relevance	0.096
Growth and safety	0.041
Fair and adequate benefits	0.025
Developing human capabilities	0.007

## 5. Suggestions

### 5-1: suggestions related to the study results:

- 1. Total life space:** The results show that total life space has the most effect on staff's participation, so deans of universities should improve the total life spaces elements in order to enhance staff's participation.
- 2. Safe working condition:** the second component which has the most effect on staff's participations is the safe working condition. So to encourage the staffs to participate in university affairs, providing a safe and secure working environment with appropriate facilities and psychologically stress less with no work pressure is required.
- 3. Constitutionalism in the organization:** the results show that this one is the third most effective element on staff's participation, so to improve staff's participation, encouraging to constitutionalism in the organization would be useful.

### 5-2: suggestions for future studies

1. The elements of work life quality which have been considered in this study were Richard Walton's elements of work life quality. It is suggested to do this study by emphasizing on other scientific views.
2. It is suggested that this study done by the viewpoint of managers.
3. In this study we investigate the effect of work life quality on staff's participation. It is suggested to investigate the effect of work life quality on other variables such as performance.

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