

A Conceptual Frame Work on How the Quality of Work Life has been linked with Human Well-Being

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Abstract

Quality of work life is one of the essential domains in peoples' lives and also affects and shapes many of the gears of the common or complete quality of life i.e. wellness of organizational members, as well as humans related directly or indirectly to the organization. Many researches had been made with regard to the QWL and still the studies are being conducted but only some studies had been made with regard to the human well being by linking QWL. Employees in the organizations face lot of problems due to certain situations arising in the organizations that directly affect the life of employees, their families and the others linked directly or indirectly linked to the organization. The present article provides a framework on how the organizations have to create the better QWL to bring the improvement in the human's behavior both inside organization and outside the organization.

Keywords: Quality of work life, Well being of humans, Management of Personnel, spirituality.

Introduction

Many organizations i.e. from small scale to large scale have become a leading type of institutions in the world. The present world is being ruled by these organizations which are directly involved in raising and controlling the nation's wealth and resources, and deeply penetrate, influence and shape the various spheres and domains of life on the earth in the form of Technological, economic, political, social, cultural, educational, health, recreational, etc. Organizations show the positive effects i.e. providing the facilities that help in coping the survival of human life as well as the negative effects too which can be termed as pollution, global warming, environmental and ecological destruction, due to the Liberalization, globalization and privatization that made organizations borderless and can reach nations and continents to do their routine business activities.

Issues faced at the organization level.

Organizations may face several challenges, transformations, changes, pressures and demands from various sources presently and future due to rapidly changing technology and various factors related to the organization in the environment.

Some of the issues that are associated with job are like the stress due to changes in the nature of work, life styles and changing of industries from industrial age to informational age through knowledge interventions. The other important issue like managerial ethics and social responsibility. Corruption, bribery, manipulation and misrepresentation of financial information, intimidation, and other unethical conducts and behavior are widely practiced on worldwide

basis. The result was terrible and disastrous economic, social and financial consequences. Inside organizations human rights are not enforced. There is a immense and urgent need to institutionalize and enforce high ethical standards to help solve ethical dilemmas and ensure that organizational members behave ethically. Social responsibility has shown an drastic increase now a days. These days Organizations are demanded to make a constant significant contribution to social advancement and development.

Importance must be given by organizations for sustainable growth and development and fully recognizing limited resources. Organizations should be fully aware of the impact of their operations and decisions on the global environment. Managers are under growing pressers to address serious global environment problems such as: global warming, pollution, natural resource depletion, industrial wastes and toxic accidents, etc. Challenges being faced by leaders today are "The need to develop business models that accentuate ethical leadership, employee well-being, sustainability and social responsibility without sacrificing profitability, revenue growth and other indicators of financial performance.

Roth and Jackson (1995) empirically found statistically significant correlations between QWL and business performance (in terms of market share, stakeholders value, and business sustainability).

Gyan-Baffour (1999), studied the effect of employee participation and work design and found that firms that had higher levels of employee participation and higher levels of flexible work design outperformed firms with lower levels of employee participation and work flexibility.

Morhead and Griffin (2000, p. 549) mentioned the benefits gained from QWL programs differ substantially, but generally they are of three types.

- A more positive attitude toward the work and the organization, or increased job satisfaction is perhaps the most direct benefit.
- Another is increased productivity, although it is often difficult to measure and separate the effects of QWL programs from the effects of other general factors.
- A third benefit is increased effectiveness of the organization measured by its profitability, goal accomplishment, shareholders' wealth, or resource exchange.

The third gain follows directly from the first two. As for work spirituality, studies reported that companies that introduced opportunities for spiritual development outperformed those that don't, and that spirituality in organizations is positively related to creativity, employee satisfaction, team performance and organizational commitment. Fawcett et al. (2008) reported that work spirituality is positively associated with productivity, service quality, and retention. Marques (2006), a prominent researcher in work spirituality pointed that "In spiritual work place people will increasingly engage in team performance, leading to greater output, and hence, be translated to increased job satisfaction".

The Quality of Work Life persuade extends beyond an individual's work life to personal life and well – being. (Barling, 1995) Employment role experiences exert direct effects on different aspects of personal well – being. Personal well – being influences parent – child and interposal interactions, which intern affect child behavior and marital functioning respectively. Marques (2006) reported that "Individuals, who are satisfied with their work environment, will generally be less stressed outside of work place. Persons will have greater sense of well – being, and an enhanced desire to make others at work and outside share in their contentment".

Enlightening the QWL and Human Well-being

Quality of Work life

Quality of work life was first introduced in the 1960 s (Davis, 1977). Robbins (1989) defined QWL as "a process by which an organization responds to employees' needs by developing mechanism to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work. The unique use of QWL referred to the quality of the relationship between the worker and the working environment considered as a whole, and was intended to lay emphasis on the human dimension of work commonly forgotten in the concentration on the technical and economic factors of job design (Gray and Smeltzer, 1989: 641). QWL is" the favorable conditions and environments of a work place that support and promote employees' satisfaction by providing them with rewards, job security and growth opportunities".

Quality of Work Life has gained deserved prominence in Organizational Behavior as an indicator of the overall quality of human experience in the workplace, (Schermerhorn et al. 1994). The concept of QWL expresses a special way of thinking about people, their work and the organizations in which their careers are fulfilled. Clear objectives are established such as high productivity should be achieved along with job satisfaction by the people who do the work. The study on QWL has been shown interested by many of the scientists, and researchers to put emphasis on Human well-being. Some of the writers don't differ on what are its main facets or constituents. The literature reveals that different models of QWL have been proposed

by various authors and writers; following is a discussion of a number these models.

Nadler and Lawler, (1983) stressed that there are certain benchmarks of managerial excellence to be considered for employees that involve the Employee participation that involves people from all levels in decision making. Developing trust, redesigning jobs, systems and structures to give people freedom at work. Also to reinforce by creating reward systems that are fair, relevant and contingent on work performance and have responsiveness for making the work setting more pleasant and able to serve individual needs.

Gray and Smeltzer (1989) identified the factors for Quality of Work Life such as adequacy in compensation, Safe and healthy working conditions, Immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, Opportunity for continued growth and security, Social integration in the work organization, Constitutionalism, Balance of work and life, Social relevance of work life.

Blegan (1993) conducted a meta – analysis concerning work satisfaction of nurses, and Knox and Irving (1997) conducted a meta – analysis concerning nurses and QWL. QWL factors resulting from these two meta – analysis include: Reduced work stress, organizational commitment and belonging, positive communication, autonomy, recognition, predictability of work activities, fairness, clear locus of control, organizational decisions, low role conflict, job performance feedback, opportunities for advancement, and equitable pay levels.

Lewis et al. (2001) suggested that QWL comprises the following general topics like Co – worker and supervisor support, Teamwork and communication, Job demands and decision authority, Patient/ resident care, Characteristics of the organization, Compensation and benefits, Staff training and development, Overall impression of the organization.

QWL models mentioned by the writers and researchers generally agree on the significance of QWL to individual and organizational performance and success. However, there is no such unanimous agreement on QWL factors or dimensions. It encompasses a wide range of dimensions/ constituents including structural, social, cultural, etc. In a broader sense, QWL can be referred to as the whole goodness and well – being of individual employee that is the result of total work place context – at work place environment – physical, structural, cultural, social, etc. Thus high value and emphasis has been placed on high QWL and its association with the total human well – being.

An important phenomenon that has gained momentum and closely related to QWL is "workplace spirituality" "deserves a brief discussion. "Workplace spirituality" or "spiritual organization" has recently attracted the attention and interest of a steadily increasing number of scientists and researchers from different disciplines, including organization and management field. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) defined work place spirituality as "the recognition that people have

an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community". Milliman et al. (2003) state that an organization is spiritual in the extent it serves as an outlet for its members to satisfy inner needs, to have a positive impact on society, to develop strong connections to others, and to have consistency between one's core beliefs and the values of the organization. Elaborating on organizational spirituality, Marques (2006) stated: "Spirituality is a higher awareness that entails realization of being interconnected to all other living beings, showing respect to everyone and everything that lives... and realizing that there is more to life than our physical state of existing or that which is visible to us. It meaningful work, community (inter connectedness) and positive organizational/ mission.

Human Well-Being

Scientists and researchers from different fields had started showing interest in Human "well – being", "wellness", "quality of life", "goodness". Attempts have been made to

"articulate a vision of the "good life", "well – being", "wellness" and "identify what contributes to such "good life", "well – being" or "wellness". Many models focus on life tasks such as Physical health, Intellectual health, Social health, Spiritual health, Emotional health, Occupational or career health. These tasks majorly focus on the human well being, it is a way of life geared to optimal health in which the mind, body, and spirit are integrated and an individual can live fully.

Proposed Framework for QWL – Human Well – being Linkage:

The Human well-being and the Quality Work Life are interdependent, multi-faceted and multi dimensional complex construct that encompasses many interacting factors. Every QWL dimension/factor may affect more than one state/self of human well-being.

Figure (1) presents the main QWL factors and the main states of human well-being, and the outcomes resulting from QWL- well-being linkage.

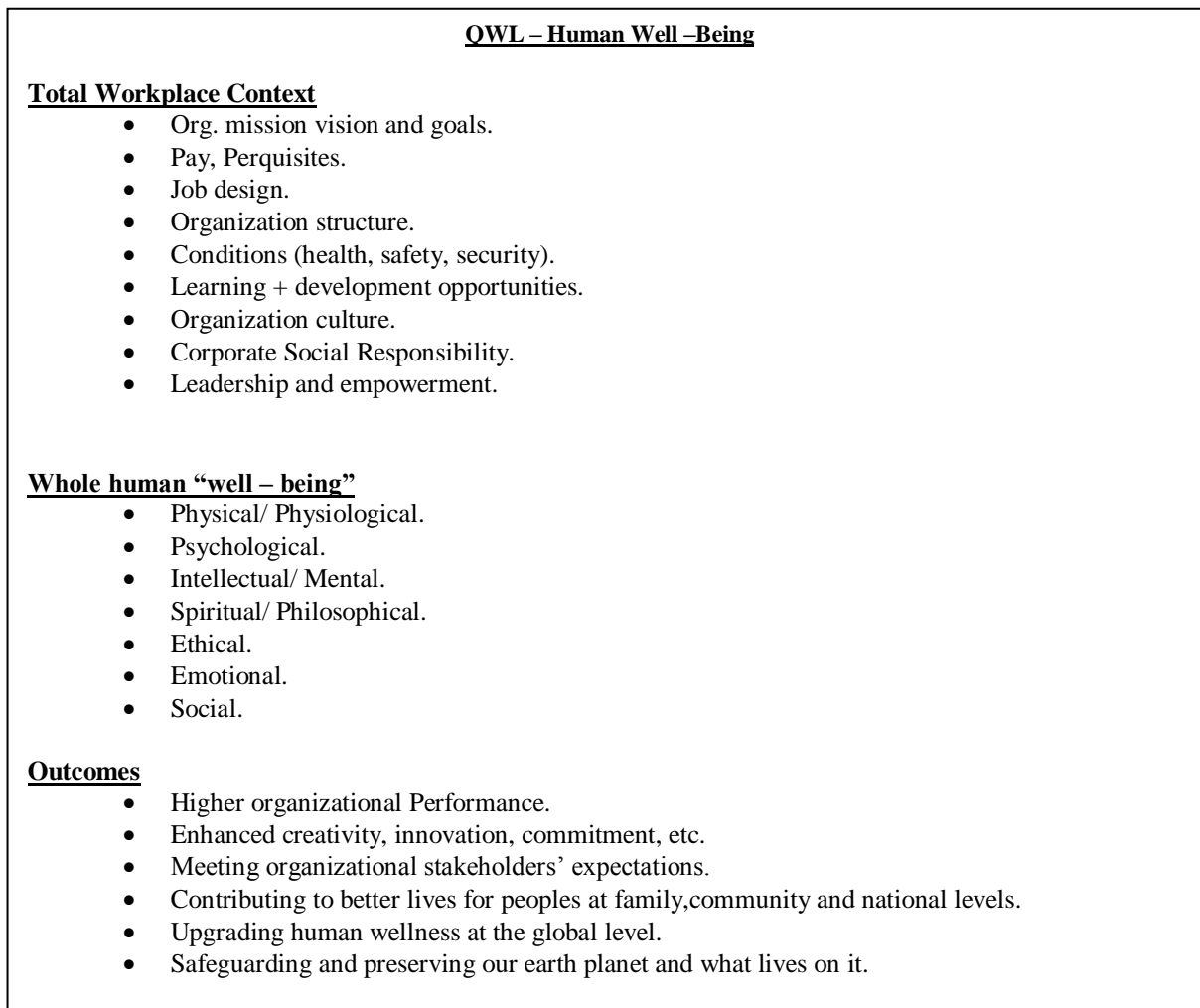


Figure (2) presents the different QWL factors which affect each of human well-being, supported by a brief discussion.

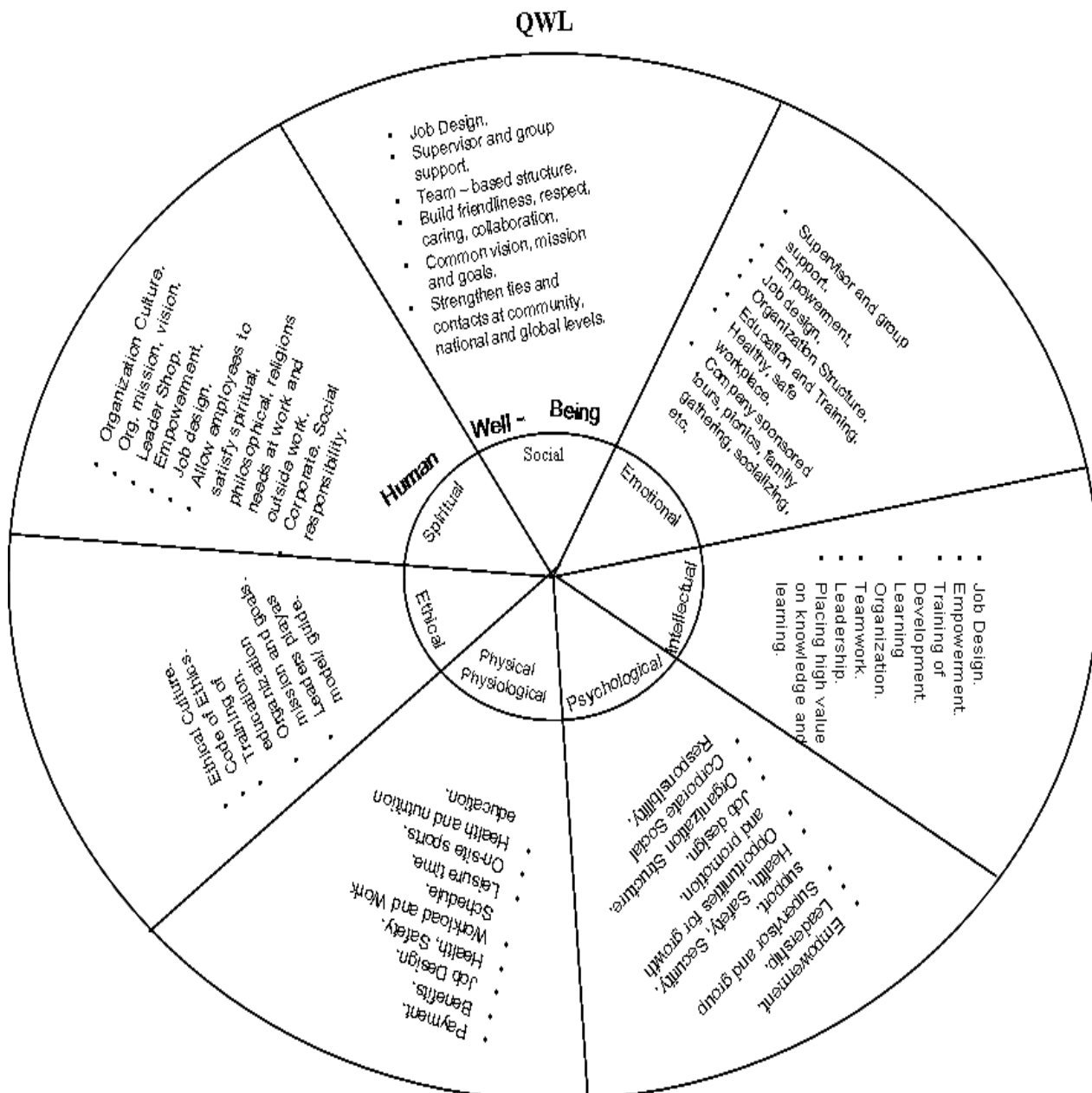


Figure 2. QWL-Human well-being Relationship

Healthy physical/ physiological well being of human beings can be contributed by the factors of QWL among these factors are like Salary, allowances, increments, rewards and reward systems, promotions must be linked to performance and job security must be provided along with perquisites like flexible working hours, reasonable paid leave, free/ subsidized medication and health care that should be sufficient to maintain a socially acceptable standard of living for the employees, and their families/ dependents. The psychological state of an individual employee will certainly have a significant influence on his/ her

professional and personal lives. Psychological well – being requires job satisfaction, free from stress, tension, anxiety, boredom, frustration, loneliness, and alienation. The individual needs to have meaningful, purposeful work feeling invaluable individual, self – esteem, pride and competent; experiencing responsibility, self – managing and exercising choice and influence. The organization can enhance and promote the psychological well – being of individual through many ways, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Employee Participation and Employee's empowerment : employee's should be allowed to exercise self – determination and choice, having more influence on getting work done, having meaningful work and feeling pride and an invaluable member.
 2. Organizational structure with highly decentralization, with open and free communication across the organization, and using more and more team – based structure.
 3. Organizational commitment to establish and maintain justice to all the people in organization.
 4. Provide work place privacy that protects employees' humanity and dignity, and not intimidating them.
 5. work place should be comfortable, safe, healthy, secure, with minimum health risks and dangers and reasonable stresses.
 6. Employees want to engage in family, recreational, sports, picnics, socializing activities so that reasonable work load and work schedule should be provided which allow more leisure time.
 7. Employees should be encouraged and rewarded and also provide paid leaves to engage in various community and social activities and issues.
 8. Advocating and pursuing constantly active corporate social responsibility, which make the employee recognize the social relevance of his/ her work and feel that what he/ she is doing is congruent with personal values, beliefs, etc.
 9. Leadership that pays attention to the concerns and developmental needs of each individual, and provides individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation; excites, arouses and inspires followers (Robbins and Coulter, 2005: 433).
4. Culture in the Organization should be stress caring, helping, openness, and sensitivity to others.
 5. Maintaining family-like work environment: on – site child care, summer day camps, flextime, flex place, job rotation, job sharing, company sponsored family picnics and recreational, social activities/ events, and sports facilities.
 6. Training people to understand their emotions, their sources and how to manage their emotions and those of their employees.

Continuously upgrading and developing the intellectual/ mental state of an individual far beyond job – related education and learning will promote and enhance responsible citizenship behavior at organizational, community, national and global levels. Training and learning should extend to whatever skills, capabilities, knowledge and attitudes that serve personal, organization, community, national and global goodness and welfare. Organizations can undertake the following measures and actions:

1. Provision of good opportunities for learning, training and development.
2. Employee's empowerment and participation.
3. Job rotation, job enrichment, job integration.
4. Management and organizational culture should give high value to knowledge and learning.
5. Providing employees with regular feedback on results of work.
6. Providing enough opportunities, facilities, support, and paid leaves to encourage and reward employees, to attend seminars, workshops, conferences run by other institutions, and engage in research projects relevant to work, organizational and/ or broader societal needs at the national and even global levels.

Considering the workplace which is full of emotions and passions, such as pleasure, respect, self – esteem, security, pride, safety, courage, self – confidence, love, hate, joy, comfort, grief, optimism, pessimism, affection, friendship, empathy, etc. The importance and influence of “emotions” and “emotional intelligence” has been recently frequently cited in literature

The measures that organizations need to undertake include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Employees should be provided with management and supervisors amicable, friendly, family – like and supportive environment. The individual needs to feel he/ she is accepted, welcomed, trusted, respected and receives all assistance, encouragement and support he/ she needs (at the personal/ family levels).
 2. when the employees are provided with shared vision, common goals that creates a sense of belongingness.
 3. Creating organizational design towards more team – based structures, which reinforce face – to – face contacts and interaction. Work requirements should
1. Team – based structure to provide greater opportunities for employees to interact and develop close social networks.
 2. Organic, structure that provides and encourages smooth flow of communication throughout the organization.
 3. Develop and maintain an organizational culture of mutual understanding, respect, enhance and encourage constructing healthy social networks.
 4. Organization should sponsor various social, recreational, cultural and other activities, including employees' families, on – site and outside organization premises.

5. Strengthen partnership, collaboration, and joint ventures with other organizations, at home and abroad.

Ethical standards and ethical behavior up gradation is becoming a critical challenge faced by organizations and managers at present, and in future at, and outside, the workplace setting. Among the measures and actions that organizations can, and should, undertake to address this issue and bring a reversal trend, include, but not limited to, the following:

1. The organizations should not only serve the interests of owners and managers but also clearly recognize and actively pursue serving the interests and welfare of broader societies, at community, national and global levels, as their ultimate mission and purpose.
2. Organizations should institutionalize, nourish and enforce a strong ethical culture that stresses and respects: integrity, honesty, openness, truthfulness, accountability, transparency, equity, risk tolerance, focuses on means as well as ends, collaboration, and respects and protects fundamental rights.
3. Provide the training and educate all organizational members on ethics. Policies, procedures, committees and mechanisms necessary to be implemented effectively.
4. Organizations should encourage and reward behaviors that contribute to greening organization and management, preserving and protecting environment and natural resources and safeguards our planet, and enhancing global citizenship behavior.
5. Respecting core or universal values: respect for human dignity, respect for basic rights, and be good citizens (Robbins and Coulter, 2005:199).

“Spiritual wellness” or “health” or “well – being” now permeate the literature, especially in psychology, and recently in organization and management field. There is no agreed on definition in literature, this is not surprising since the topic is very strongly and intensely personal in nature.

There are several models that present spiritual wellness that identify spirit as the central energy source that allows an individual to engage in the activities that are associated with the other components of life. Purdy and Dupey (2005) affirmed that spirituality is the central force that determines an individual’s health and satisfaction within each dimension (Physical, social, emotional, intellectual, occupational). Their Holistic Flow Model of Spiritual Wellness includes: a belief in an organizing force in universe, connectedness, faith, movement toward compassion, the ability to make meaning of life, and the ability to make meaning of death (Purdy and Dupey,2005). Barrett (1999) pointed that spiritual needs are met when our work aligns with our passion and has meaning for us, or we feel we are able to make a difference through our ideas or being of service to others. Covey (1989, 292) proclaimed that “the spiritual dimension is your core, your center, your commitment to make a difference”.

Spiritual influence in the workplace has gained momentum in recent years and is often described in terms of organizational spirituality (Fawcett et al., 2008). Building and maintaining “spiritual workplace” or spiritual organization is never an easy task. It requires drastic steady changes in the various organizational realms including structure, culture, leadership, job design, rewards system, training etc.

In order to build a spiritual organization requires developing and maintaining an organizational culture with the following like Strong sense of purpose, Focus on individual development, Trust and openness ,Employee empowerment, Toleration of employee expression: allow people to be themselves – to express their moods and emotions (Burack, 1999; Wagner – Marsh and Conley, 1999; Cash and Gray, 2000).

Fawcett et al (2008) pointed that building a spiritual organization requires a people – centered, inspiring organizational culture which is built on the following three main factors:

- Core values: community, accomplishment, self – esteem, and balance.
- Organization climate: affirmation, belonging, competence.
- Work place attributes: job design, empowerment, respect, equality, collegiality, etc.

Marques (2006) pointed that many writers stressed that the implementation of a spiritual mindset in the work place as being a leadership responsibility. Gilber Tan recommended the following interventions to promote spirituality ;Organizational culture, redesign organizational structure to support spirituality at work , Train people to raise awareness and competencies in integrating spirituality and work, training people on the spiritual basis to life and business, Align reward and appraisal systems to recognize employees for acting ethically and promoting a sense of community in the organization (Rahim, 2007:220 -21).

An important dimension associated with spiritual leadership is empowerment. Giacalone et al., proclaimed “... Especially important for work place spirituality is empowerment”. Neck and milkman (1994) argued that a critical factor in whether spiritual – based management practices result in improved performance involves empowering employees with the capability to participate in redeveloping and implementing the organizational vision. The reason for this is that all people seek to reach their full potential and empowering employees is the only way individuals can attain their fullest sense of growth and contribution.

Conclusion and Future Research

Quality of Work Life has been placed more value recently on a high Quality of Work Life for many reasons. It enhances and promotes the total human well-being of organizational members, upgrades their professional roles and other personal roles at family, community, national and

global levels. High Quality of Work Life can result in better organizational performance, effectiveness, innovativeness, etc.

Consequently, contributing to better life for all those peoples whom organizational members serve, and with whom they deal and interact. High Quality of Work Life can help protect and preserve our lives and the earth planet and what lives on it. Thus developing and maintaining high Quality of Work Life place work deserves greatest attention and concern, though it is no easy task.

The framework presented in this paper has been developed to reflect the complexity of both Quality of Work Life and human well-being to make wider managers' understanding and their recognition of the significance of the relationship between Quality of Work Life and human well-being. Also, the conceptual framework would help managers focus attention and effort on building and nurturing those workplace factors that can contribute more significantly to high Quality of Work Life.

However managers need to be aware that some workplaces are more or less susceptible and adoptive to such transformation. Hopefully, the proposed framework would stimulate further research, especially empirical research aimed at testing the model in real life setting. The framework provides a promise for researchers to study the relationship between certain QWL factors and particular human well-being states, in different settings. It is expected that further research would examine which QWL factors can enhance a particular well-being self/state in different settings.

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