

## Studying the Relationship between the Quality of Work Life and the Work Function of Tehran Municipality Employees

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### ABSTRACT

This research is to study the relationship between the quality of work life and function of Tehran municipality employees. The quality of work life includes 8 components, and employees' function includes 7 components. To measure the quality of work life, the Walton model and to measure the employees' function, the Achieve model was used. The studied statistical community includes 240 members of Tehran municipality employees and the sample volume is 70 members.

For analyzing the present research data, the descriptive and inferential statistics were used. In inferential statistics part, Chi 2 Karl Pearson's test, Tau Kendall and Friedman's correlation were used. The results obtained from research hypotheses show that there is a meaningful relationship between quality of work life components (fair payment, secure job environment, opportunity for growth, social dependence and the general work life environment, social consistency, legalism in the organization, and developing human qualities) and employees' function. In other words, with the increase or decrease in each of quality of work life components, the amount of employees' function is affected.

**KEYWORDS:** quality of work life (QWL), employees' function.

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### INTRODUCTION

Manpower is one of the most important factors of production and plays an outstanding role through either physical or mental, administrative, and technological participation in production process, in a way that one can say bravely, communities which could succeed in producing effective manpower by correct planning and based on scientific principles and criteria, could well overcome scarcities due to other production factors, and have provided a desirable economic situation for themselves.

Nowadays, the improvement of employees' quality of work life has become one of the most important purposes of the organization and the employees (Moheb Ali, 1995, 39). And quality of work life (Q.W.L.) means having a good supervision, good work conditions, good payment and benefits, and the most interesting of all, challenging and enriching (Jazani, 2000, 396).

The plan and action to achieve higher efficiency and productivity of the human sector that is regarded as the most valuable organizational capital, requires a higher knowledge and a comprehensive one of the organization members. However, if one feels an improved quality of work life for himself, this makes him more powerful to perform his work and finally causes higher productivity and better function.

The improvement of peoples' function and an increase in productivity influences the decrease of life's major problems such as economic inflation, actions without surplus value, and expenditures caused by (false jobs and hidden joblessness, physical and psychic diseases), and results in the increase of national earning, per capita earning, productive employment level, and public welfare.

Previously, human employment in organizations was for earning the income and life provision, while today, with the standardization of life level, the increase in information and awareness of manpower has caused a variation in interests and preferences of the employees.

Some of the knowledgeable believe that a part of productivity record and product quality reduction is due to the reduction of work life quality and the changes occurred in employees' interests and superiorities in some large industrial countries. The employees request to have more supervision and interference in their work (Kasayi, 2005, 120).

In relation to this, primary studies showed some organizational behaviors such as the improper treatment with the clientele, lack of motivation to give an answer to the clientele, lack of attachment to and dependence on the

organization, poor effectiveness and job dissatisfaction in Tehran Municipality; therefore, this matter was considered as a serious and major issue to study and research, and regarding the management science's knowledge and experiences, based on this idea that if the employees are not treated respectfully and they don't have the opportunity to express their thoughts, and don't have interference and participation in making the decisions related to the quantity or quality of their own work, we cannot expect the proper and desirable reactions from them. In one hand, moderation and removal of the mentioned inadequacies, enhances people's participation in their own function and reduces the stresses, service abandonments, and absences. Therefore, the main question of the research is that: "is the quality of work life of the studied municipality employees causes the creation of behaviors based on improper treatment with the clientele, lack of feeling attachment to the organization and their job dissatisfaction?"

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The theoretical framework is a pattern based on which the researcher theorizes about the relationships between factors considered as important in creating the problem.

The researcher used the Walton Model in compiling the theoretical framework of the research, the analysis and study of the independent variable (quality of work life), and its indexes; and for the dependent variables (employees' function), the Achieve model was used that each have specific indexes and standard questions to formulate a research questionnaire. The quality of work life means a process by which all organization members, are interfered in a way decisions made for their jobs specially, and their job environment generally through open and proper relationship channels prepared for this purpose, and therefore their participation and job satisfaction rises and the stress caused by work is lowered for them (Pardakhtchi, 2009, 120).

Thus, we can say in summary that: the quality of work life is the degree of desirability and satisfaction each individual, each organization member has from his individual requirements according to his experiences and attempts in an organization (Peykari, 2009, 21).

Despite the existence of distinctions in understandings from the quality of work life, the performed researches show that some indexes are common in most of the communities. According to Walton theory and model, the quality of work life consists of 9 components as the following:

\*Fair payment: the amount of money paid to the employee for the physical or mental activities or a mixture of mental and physical activities according to the social criteria, job volume and similar jobs.

\* Secure job environment: that is creating physically secure job conditions, and also determining reasonable work hours.

\* providing Continuous Opportunity for growth and security: providing the ground for personal abilities' improvement, opportunities for development, opportunity for applying the acquired skills, and providing income and job security.

\* Work Life's Social Dependence: refers to the employees' understanding way about organization's social responsibility.

\* The general life environment: the establishment of equilibrium and balance between work life and employees' other life responsibilities.

\* Social Uniformity and Consistency: creating a work environment and atmosphere that strengthens the employees' feeling of attachment to organizations and that they are required by the organizations.

\* Legalism in the Organization: the availability of freedom of speech ground for the employees without the fear of superior position's revenge.

\* Developing Human Qualities: the availability of opportunities such as using the independence and self-controlling job, obtaining different skills, access to suitable information with work (Griffin, 1999, 354).

\* Function: concluding the tasks of the organization entrusted to manpower (Casio, 1989, 304).

According to Achiv's theory and model, employees' function was in the form of 7 components that are as follows:

- Ability (knowledge and skills): The knowledge and skills of the followers is called the ability term.
- Clarity (understanding or imagining the role): understanding and accepting the type of job, its place and method is called ability. In order for the followers to have a full understanding of the problem, major intentions and purposes, the way of achieving these purposes and the priorities of purposes and intentions must be completely explicit and clear to them.
- Help (organizational support): The organizational help or support that is required by the follower to complete the effectiveness of work. Some of the organizational support factors include: budget, instruments, facilities, accessibility of the product and its quality, and the adequate supply of human resources.
- Incentive (motivation and inclination): the task of the followers or motivation to complete a specific analyzed task in an achieving way is called incentive.

- Evaluation (education or feedback): The feedback and occasional revisions are called evaluation. A proper process of evaluation allows the follower to become aware of the quality of the work being done, continuously. Because the reason for many function problems is the lack of required education and function feedback.
- Validity (valid actions and personnel rights): This term refers to the lawfulness of manager's decisions about human resources.
- Environment (proper environmental factors): The environment term refers to the external factors that can influence the function even with having full ability, clarity, support and required incentive for the job.

The key components of the environmental factors include: compete, the change in market conditions, public regulations, preparations, etc.. Paying attention to this issue is important because if the environmental problem is out of the followers' option power, we shouldn't give those rewards or punish them any more for their function (Hersey and Blanchard, 1997, 509-512).

This research is applicable based on purpose, and is the survey type of descriptive regarding the method. Because it is to study the present situation, it is placed in the domain of descriptive, and because the researcher performs a kind of survey on a sample or a totality of the community to describe the views, thoughts, behaviors, or characteristics of the community, it is place in the domain of survey researches.

"The purposes of the researcher for doing this research are objective, real, and regular description of a situation or a subject characteristics. In other words, the researcher tries to report exactly what it is and without any interference or subjective conclusion in these researches, and concludes objective result from them." (Khalili and Daneshvari, 1999, 64)

Survey is a method in social research that is more than a specific technique in gathering information. Although usually questionnaires are used in it, other techniques such as structured interview, observation, and content analysis etc. are also used. The characteristic of a survey research is a regular collection of data that is called variable matrix based on occasional data." (khaki, 2010, 212)

The library and field methods were used in the present study. In library method, for gathering information on literature and research background, expert books and articles, theses and internet data bases were used, and the field method was used for studying the quality of work life and its relationship to the employees' function. Besides distributing the questionnaire for the municipality employees, and gathering them, the two descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the data. In descriptive part, the frequency distribution tables, figures, and their demographical characteristics in the form of gender, age, education, and work experience, and in the inferential part, the Chi 2 test of Karl Pearson, the Taw Kendall and Friedman correlation were used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The studied hypotheses in this research included a main hypothesis and eight alternative ones that are:

The main hypothesis: There is a meaningful relationship between quality of work life and employees' function.

Alternative hypotheses:

- 1) There is a meaningful relationship between fair payment and employees' function.
- 2) There is a meaningful relationship between secure job environment and employees' function.
- 3) There is a meaningful relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function.
- 4) There is a meaningful relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function.
- 5) There is a meaningful relationship between social dependence of work life and employees' function.
- 6) There is a meaningful relationship between general life environment and employees' function.
- 7) There is a meaningful relationship between social uniformity and consistency and employees' function.
- 8) There is a meaningful relationship between human qualities development and employees' function.

### Testing the Research Hypotheses

The main hypothesis: There is a meaningful relationship between quality of work life and employees' function.

H0: There isn't a meaningful relationship between quality of work life and employees' function.

H1: There is a meaningful relationship between quality of work life and employees' function.

**Table 1: The results of Chi 2 test of the main hypothesis**

	quantity	Freedom degree	Meaningful level
Chi 2	10.645	4	.031
number	58		

Considering table 1, because the meaningfulness level of Chi 2 test is less than 0.05, therefore we conclude that the H0 Hypothesis is refused and the H1 hypothesis is accepted. In other words, we can claim with 0.95 probabilities that there is a meaningful relationship between quality of work life and employees' function.

**Table 2: The results of Tau Kendall correlation of the main hypothesis**

	quantity	Approx. T(b)	Meaningful level
<b>Tau Kendall</b>	.279	2.183	.029
<b>number</b>	<b>58</b>		

In table 2, the Tau Kendall correlation index (0.279) expresses the positive relationship between fair payment and employees' function. And considering table 1, 0%, 11.9%, and 66.7% of repliers those who asserted a low, average, and high satisfaction of their life quality respectively, has had a high level of function. In other words, with an increase in the quality of work life, the employees' amount of functioning also increases. That is, the main hypothesis is accepted.

Alternative Hypothesis 1: There is a meaningful relationship between fair payment and employees' function.

H0: There isn't a meaningful relationship between fair payment and employees' function.

H1: There is a meaningful relationship between fair payment and employees' function.

**Table 3: The results of Chi 2 test of alternative hypothesis 1**

	quantity	Freedom degree	Meaningful level
<b>Chi 2</b>	20.235	4	.000
<b>number</b>	<b>58</b>		

Considering table 3, because the meaningfulness level of Chi 2 test is less than 0.05, therefore we conclude that the H0 Hypothesis is refused and the H1 hypothesis is accepted. In other words, we can claim with 0.95 probabilities that there is a meaningful relationship between fair payment and employees' function.

**Table 4: The results of Tau Kendall correlation of alternative hypothesis 1**

	quantity	Approx. T(b)	Meaningful level
<b>Tau Kendall</b>	.481	3.542	.000
<b>number</b>	<b>58</b>		

In table 4, the Tau Kendall correlation index (0.481) expresses the positive relationship between fair payment and employees' function. And considering table 4, 0%, 4.9%, and 45.5% of repliers those who asserted respectively a low, average, and high payment satisfaction of their income and benefits, has had a high level of function. In other words, with an increase in satisfaction with payments, the employees' amount of functioning also increases. That is, the alternative hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Alternative Hypothesis 3: There is a meaningful relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function.

H0: There isn't a meaningful relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function.

H1: There is a meaningful relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function.

**Table 5: The results of Chi 2 test of alternative hypothesis 3**

	quantity	Freedom degree	Meaningful level
<b>Chi 2</b>	11.025	4	.026
<b>number</b>	<b>58</b>		

Considering table 5, because the meaningfulness level of Chi 2 test is less than 0.05, therefore we conclude that the H0 Hypothesis is refused and the H1 hypothesis is accepted. In other words, we can claim with 0.95 probabilities that there is a meaningful relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function.

**Table 6: The results of Tau Kendall correlation of alternative hypothesis 3**

	quantity	Approx. T(b)	Meaningful level
<b>Tau Kendall</b>	.301	2.727	.006
<b>number</b>	<b>58</b>		

In table 6, the Tau Kendall correlation index (0.301) expresses the positive relationship between continuous opportunity for growth and security and employees' function. And considering table 7, 35% of repliers those who described the continuous opportunity for growth and security as improper, asserted that they have a low level of function. On the other hand, one of the people who had expressed a lower satisfaction from continuous opportunity for growth and security in the organization told that they have a low function. In other words, with an increase in

satisfaction with continuous opportunity for growth and security, the employees' amount of functioning also increases, that is, the alternative hypothesis 3 is also accepted.

Alternative hypothesis 7: There is a meaningful relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function.

H0: There isn't a meaningful relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function.

H1: There is a meaningful relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function.

**Table 7: The results of Chi 2 test of alternative hypothesis 7**

	quantity	Freedom degree	Meaningful level
Chi 2	38.437	4	.000
number	58		

Considering table 7, because the meaningfulness level of Chi 2 test is less than 0.05, therefore we conclude that the H0 Hypothesis is refused and the H1 hypothesis is accepted. In other words, we can claim with 0.95 probabilities that there is a meaningful relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function.

**Table 8: The results of Tau Kendall correlation of alternative hypothesis 7**

	quantity	Approx. T(b)	Meaningful level
Tau Kendall	.518	3.942	.000
number	58		

In table 8, the Tau Kendall correlation index (0.518) expresses the positive relationship between legalism in organization and employees' function. And considering table 10, 0%, 3.3%, and 75.0% of repliers those who asserted a low, average, and high satisfaction of their legalism respectively, has had a high level of function. In other words, with an increase in the satisfaction from legalism in organization, the employees' amount of functioning also increases, that is, the alternative hypothesis 7 is accepted.

**Table 9: The results of Chi 2 test of alternative hypotheses**

Number hypothesis	quantity	Freedom degree	Meaningful level	result
1	20.235	4	.000	Accepted.
2	11.199	4	.000	Accepted.
3	11.025	4	.000	Accepted.
4	19.356	4	.001	Accepted.
5	38.939	4	.000	Accepted.
6	17.715	4	.000	Accepted.
7	38.437	4	.000	Accepted.
8	37.304	4	.000	Accepted.

### Ranking the Quality of Work Life and Employees' Function through Friedman's Test

It should be explained that in all of the following Friedman tests, the higher rank average shows the better ranking.

Figure 10: The results of average rank from Friedman's test to rank the quality of work life components

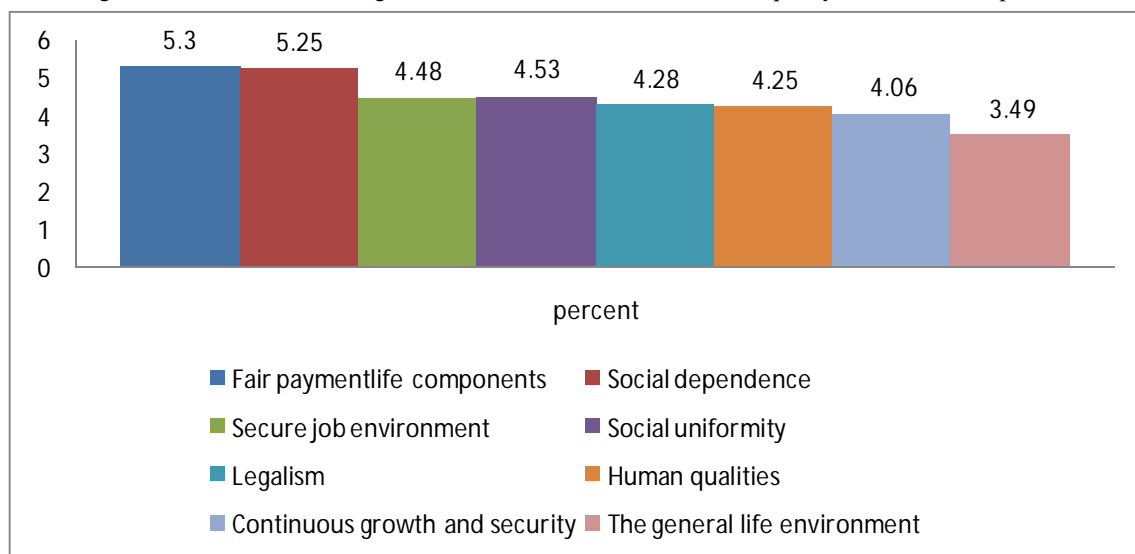
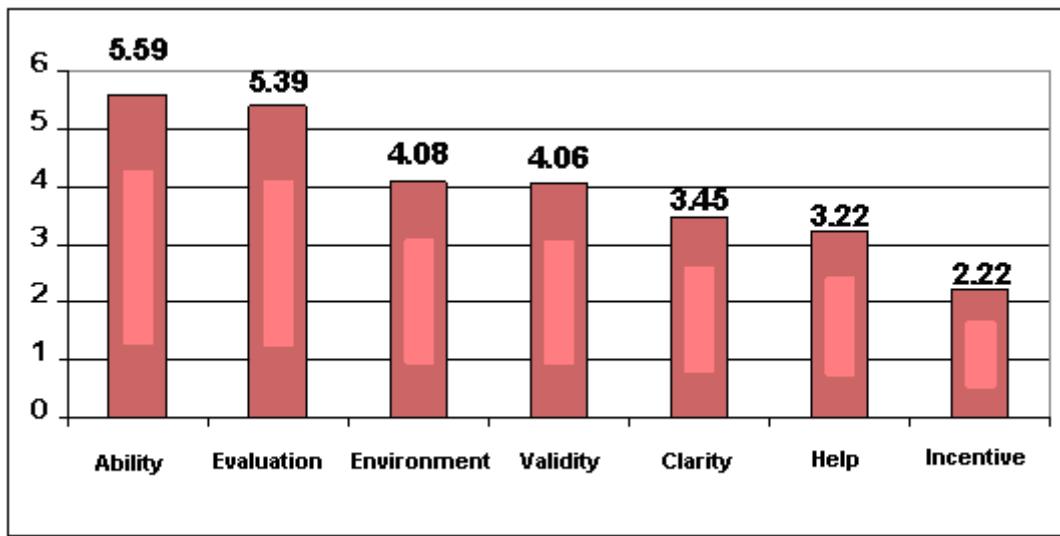


Figure 11: The results of average rank from Friedman's test to rank the employees' function components, the results obtained from research hypotheses



## Conclusion

Table 9 shows that all research hypotheses were confirmed. Meanwhile, the present research shows that as better and higher the quality of work life, fair payment, proper and secure job environment and conditions, continuous and stable opportunity for growth and security, social dependence of employees' work life, general environment, social uniformity and consistency in organization together with legalism, and human qualities development, effects employees' function positively, and in a phrase, the function becomes more and better, and an effective cycle is created to continuously increase employees' function.

## Suggestions Based on Research Hypotheses

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 1

- Designing and implementation of a fair pay and wage system that can motivate the employees' more desirable function in the organization, and help individuals' stay in the organization.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 2

- Don't use nonstandard or undesirable, dangerous, unsanitary tools and instruments.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 3

- It is suggested that by creating a healthy environment in the organization and providing the additional services like retirement plans, security programs, security programs, installments, etc. Give more assurance to employees about job security and stability.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 4

- It is suggested that the employees' tasks and responsibilities be explained for them clearly to have a clear understanding of what they should do.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 5

- Tiredness caused by working too much can have negative results in their family life and vice versa. Therefore it is suggested that in order to prevent the interference between the employee's job issues and their family problems, proper work hours and well-timed vacations can be helpful.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 6

- It is suggested that the managers and authorities, in order to strengthen the uniformity index and social consistency, pay attention to its effective factors including participatory management, creating organizational culture, and emphasizing the human values, etc., because, paying attention to each of these factors provides a ground for the employees' function increase and causes the organization purposes to move forward.

### \* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 7

- It is suggested that the managers and authorities, to observe legalism in the organization, pay attention to effective factors on it like: lack of discrimination in works and determining the policies and guidelines of the organization. Because managers, observing the lack of discrimination in assignments for the employees, caused the employees to be encouraged in work, and cause organizational attachment to occur.

**\* Suggestions for the alternative hypothesis 8**

- It is suggested that the organization with a cultural preparation based on trust and providing the required educations, and providing the related and required information by the employees, the background for employee's self-regulation and self-controlling is provided, and the superior managers' time is spend for more important matters and issues, and future programming and organization progress.

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