

## A Study of the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Entrepreneurship of the Faculty and Staff Members: A Case Study

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship between the Quality of Work Life (QWL) and the faculty member's and staff's entrepreneurship in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch during academic year of 2011-2012. The research method was descriptive-correlational. The population included all the faculty members and staff (N=337) of which 170 were selected through stratified random sampling technique. The measuring instruments were two questionnaires: one on the QWL, including 18 items; the other on the entrepreneurship, including 48 items. It was revealed that the reliability coefficients using Cronbach's Alpha for the two questionnaires were 0.85 and 0.82, respectively. The results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between the QWL and entrepreneurship and also between the QWL and ambiguity tolerance, risk preference sense of independent. However, there was no significant relationship between the QWL and need for achievement, internal control center and creativity.

**KEYWORDS:** Quality of work life; Entrepreneurship; Faculty members; Staff; University

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### INTRODUCTION

Human resources are valuable resources that the organization progress and excellence is dependent to them. An organization is successful which could create the conditions and dynamics of the evolution and development of manpower that they use their skills and talents to serve their organizations. The managers are more successful who are able to improve life of their personnel along with their own personal life. The QWL is a category that as an essential background exists in every organization in order to empower the manpower and it could be considered the main key for management success in each organization. In the programs of the QWL, the main focus is on this issue that an environment to be created that satisfies the needs of personnel and to be able to absorb, preserve, raise and enhance of personnel (Dehghan Niri, 2009, p. 129). The programs of the QWL include any kind of improvement in organizational culture which is lead to growth and excellence of personnel in the organization (Philip, 1988, quoted by Mir Kamali, 2008). On the other hand, the organizations must be able to develop new solutions and approaches to innovation and creativity if they want to survive and continue their work. The movement engine of such successful and efficient organizations is entrepreneurship (Reisi, 2008, p 85). Entrepreneurship is the ability to create and build something from nothing in practice (Timoonse, 2005 quoted by Sharma, 2007, p 30). Essentially human creative activities are those activities that exist in people by creating, building and acquiring a business enterprise or organization, rather than looking at something, analyzing or individual description. These activities need the ability of danger calculation and reduction of probable failure and entrepreneur is someone who among the people of society accepts dangers and renovates one to use new methods and solutions and creates several economic works and creates values for the society. Academic entrepreneurship includes solving the scientific problems of community and government agencies, and to create an environment for development and innovation in university members, supplying the university researches to the production market and supplying new approaches an innovation in the expansion of mankind territories (Dickson, 1998, quoted by Nasimifar, 2009).

Since in universities the faculty members are the most outstanding persons, one of their important duties is transferring and producing new knowledge for the community. Paying attention to the QWL and its effects on entrepreneurship level seem to be necessary. Therefore Rahimi (2006) conducted a research as effects on the QWL of faculty members on their entrepreneurship level and entrepreneurship components. Some other researches were conducted on the QWL such as studies that show it is the job satisfaction, such as the studies of Sirgy & et al. (2007), Hua (2006), Fourie (2004), Federico (2003), Goodall (2003), Krueger & et al. (2002), Lewis & et al. (2001), Bruce (1989), Ondrack (1986). The results of Kancline & Desle (2008), Goodvine (2007), Dehghan Niri (2008) also indicate

the relation between the QWL of human sources managers of Thailand and they concluded that the institutionalization of ethics effects on three variables of personnel (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, team spirit).

Regarding entrepreneurship also its relations with different variables such as personality traits, successful intelligence, social skills, risk, participatory decision making and organizational performance (Bee Shoop, 2000; Ridd, 2005; Pak Seresht, 2006; Hossein Zadeh, 2005) were observed.

Rasmussen and Soorhim (2006) in a study titled applied education of entrepreneurship concluded that the universities can raise pragmatic students by increasing student motivation and their ability in the entrepreneurship activities (quoted by Zoheiri, 2007). Timoonse (2005) by analysis of more than 50 studies identified six features for entrepreneurship: commitment, focus and determination, leadership, opportunity-oriented, risk and ambiguity tolerance, creativity, ability to self-reliance and adaptability, and high motivation (Zali et al., 2007, p 85).

Howard (2004) examined the development of entrepreneurial capabilities (risk-taking, independence, and achievement motivation, locus of control, confidence and creativity) on 450 entrepreneurial students and observed a direct relationship between these capabilities and entrepreneurial ability. In similar research, Razqandi (2008) by the objective of prediction of most important individual and environmental factors affecting the success of superior entrepreneurs of Tehran, he conducted an educational research model on 800 persons from the entrepreneurs in 2006 and he concluded that there is a significant and positive relation between internal control center, calculated risk taking, creativity, seeking success, independence and determination and the success of entrepreneurs.

Zali et al. (2007) evaluated the entrepreneurial characteristics of the students of Mazandaran University and concluded that the characteristic of determination is more among the students, but seeking success, independence, risk taking and creativity has a little difference with the minimum acceptable score. In the same way, Samadi and Shirzadi (2007) also in their research concluded that the indices of entrepreneurial spirit (creativity, self-esteem, achievement motivation, locus of control, foresight, and risk taking) in female schoolgirls of Isfahan city is higher than average.

According to the abovementioned discourses and consistency of abovementioned researches, the current research objective is examining the relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurship (tolerance of ambiguity, risk taking, seeking success, creativity, internal control center and independence) of the faculty and staff members of the university. So if there is a relationship, by providing appropriate solutions to executives, to help them for the purpose of planning and decision making regarding this important issue. In line with these objectives, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members.
  - 1.1. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and tolerance of ambiguity of faculty and staff.
  - 1.2. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and risk taking level of faculty and staff.
  - 1.3. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and success seeking level of faculty and staff.
  - 1.4. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and creativity level of faculty and staff.
  - 1.5. There is a significant relationship between the quality of working life and the internal control center of faculty and staff.
  - 1.6. There is a significant relationship between the QWL and independence of faculty and staff.
  - 1.7. There is a significant relationship between the QWL of faculty and staff with regard to demographic variables (occupation, gender and academic background).
  - 1.8. There is a significant relationship between the entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff with regard to demographic variables (occupation, gender and academic background).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method is a descriptive-correctional type. Since faculty and staff opinions about the QWL and entrepreneurship were reviewed, it is descriptive and in addition since the relationship between the two variables was also examined, the research is correctional. The research statistical population is all the faculty and staff members working in Islamic Azad University, Izeh branch that are respectively 232 and 105 persons. 170 persons from the above population were selected through stratified random sampling technique. Tools employed in this study included two questionnaires: a) the QWL questionnaire that includes 18 close-ended questions. The questionnaire was made by Pardakhtchi (2005) and after consideration and doing some changes, it was used. b) Researcher made questionnaire including 48 close-ended questions. In order to assess the validity of the questionnaires, the content validity was used. Thus, the two different questionnaires were provided to professors and scholars and after receiving their comments, the required corrections were done in the questionnaires. To check the reliability of the questionnaires, the reliability coefficient and bisection of Gateman methods were used. The

reliability coefficient of questionnaire for the QWL was estimated by using coefficient of Cronbach's alpha as 0.85, and by using bisection as 0.72 and by Gateman method as 0.81. Also for the second questionnaire, they were 0.82, 0.72 and 0.81, respectively. For data analysis, the Pearson correlation coefficient, one way ANOVA and mean comparison test (t-test) were used. Therefore, the SPSS statistical software was used.

## RESULTS

The research findings related to the study hypotheses were reviewed as follows:

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurial level of faculty and staff members.*

**Table 1: Relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff**

Variables	r	P-value	n
Entrepreneurship and the QWL	0.30	0.001	170

The results in Table 1 indicate that there is a significant relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurship of faculty and staff members with  $r=0.30$  and  $P=0.001$  in the level  $P<0.05$ . It means null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed. These results indicate that there is a significant relation between entrepreneurship and the QWL of individuals.

*H<sub>1.1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and tolerance of ambiguity of faculty and staff.*

**Table 2: Relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurial components**

Components	QWL		
	P	r	N
Tolerance of ambiguity	0.001	0.38	170
Risk taking	0.02	0.18	170
Seeking success	0.30	0.08	170
Creativity	0.43	0.06	170
Internal control center	0.94	0.05	170
Independence	0.04	0.15	170

Results in Table 2 show that there is a significant relation between the QWL and tolerance of ambiguity of faculty and staff members with  $r=0.38$ ,  $P=0.001$  in the level  $P<0.05$ . It means the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed.

*H<sub>1.2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and risk taking level of faculty and staff.*

The results in Table 2 shows that the QWL and the level of risk taking of faculty and staff is  $r=0.18$  and  $P=0.02$  in the level  $P<0.05$ . It means the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed.

*H<sub>1.3</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and success seeking level of faculty and staff.*

Results in row 3 of Table 2 indicate that there is no a significant relation between the QWL and success seeking level of faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad Univeristy, Izeh Branch, which  $r=0.08$  and  $P=0.30$  ( $P<0.05$ ). It means the null hypothesis is confirmed and the research hypothesis is rejected.

*H<sub>1.4</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and creativity level of faculty and staff.*

The results in row 4, Table 2 indicate that there is no a significant relation between the QWL and the creativity of faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch ( $r=0.06$ ,  $P=0.43$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). It means the null hypothesis is confirmed and the research hypothesis is rejected.

*H<sub>1.5</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the quality of working life and the internal control center of faculty and staff.*

Data in row 5, Table 2 shows that there is no relationship between the QWL and the internal control center of the faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch ( $r=0.05$ ;  $P>0.05$ ). It means the null hypothesis is confirmed and the research hypothesis is rejected.

*H<sub>1.6</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL and independence of faculty and staff.*

Data in row 6, Table 2 indicates that there is a significant relation between the QWL and independence of faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch ( $r=0.15$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). It means the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed.

*H<sub>1.7</sub>: There is a significant relationship between the QWL of faculty and staff with regard to demographic variables (occupation, gender and academic background).*

**Table 3: Differences between the QWL of faculty and staff members**

Groups	Frequency	Mean	d.f.	t	P
Faculty	116	62.87	168	-2.05	0.04
Staff	54	59.2			

Data in Table 3 shows that there is a difference between the QWL of faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch ( $t = -2.05$ ; and  $P < 0.04$ ). The mean difference is equal to 3.67 and as the mean value of the QWL for faculty members is higher, so we can conclude that the faculty members have a higher quality of work life.

**Table 4: Differences between the QWL of men and women faculty and staff members**

Groups	Frequency	Mean	d.f.	t	P
Women	39	59.51	168	1.43	0.15
Men	131	62.36			

It is observed from the table 4 that the t-value calculated for the QWL of samples based on their gender is equal to 1.43 which in the level  $P < 0.05$  is not significant. So we can conclude that there is no significant mean difference between the QWL level of faculty and staff members according to their gender.

**Table 5: Differences between work life quality of faculty and staff according to their academic background**

Change resources	d.f.	Sum of squares	Mean square	F	P
Between Groups	2	251.49	125.74	1.04	0.35
Within a group	168	20095.38	120.33		
Total	170	20346.87	-		

The data of Table 5 indicates that there is no significant difference between the QWL of faculty and staff members in Islamic Azad University, Izeh Branch based on their academic background ( $F = 1.04$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ).

*H<sub>1.8</sub>. There is a significant relationship between the entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff with regard to demographic variables (occupation, gender and academic background).*

**Table 6: Differences between the entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members**

Groups	Frequency	Mean	d.f.	t	P
Faculty	116	180.66	168	-0.95	0.34
Staff	54	177.57			

The results in table 6 show that there is no significant difference between entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members ( $t = -0.95$ ;  $P > 0.34$ ), as the mean difference is equal to 3.09. It means the null hypothesis is confirmed and research hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 7: Differences between the entrepreneurship level of men and women faculty and staff members**

Groups	Frequency	Mean	d.f.	t	P
Women	39	179.05	168	0.22	0.82
Men	131	179.87			

Data of table 7 shows that there is no significant difference between entrepreneurship level of men and women faculty and staff members ( $t = 0.22$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ), as the mean difference is equal to 0.82. So the null hypothesis is confirmed and research hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 8: Differences between the entrepreneurship of faculty and staff members according to their academic background**

Change resources	d.f.	Sum of squares	Mean square	F	P
Between Groups	2	1204.42	602.21	1.55	0.21
Within a group	168	64916.41	388.72		
Total	170	66120.84	-		

As the results shown in Table 8, there is no significant difference between the entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members with reference to their academic backgrounds ( $F = 1.55$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). It means the null hypothesis is confirmed and the research hypothesis is rejected.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results show that there is a significant and positive relationship between the QWL and entrepreneurship. This finding exhibits that if the QWL be increased or in other words if the working conditions and satisfaction and motivation of members be increased, the level of entrepreneurship which is the permanent searching for changes and exploitation will be increased as well. According to this finding, this hypothesis that the QWL is along with the increase of entrepreneurship, is confirmed. The results of current research are consistent with the results of the following persons based on this issue that the QWL has a relation with job success, increase of risk taking, increase of exploitation and the increase of job satisfaction: Godinvine (2007), Sirgy & et al. (2007), Rose & et al., (2006), Hua (2006), Fourie (2004), Federico (2003), Krueger (2002), Dehghan Niri & et al. (2008), and Rahimi (2006). So maybe we can presume like this that those persons who don't have fears for spending financial funds, the results of probable failure and the existing ambiguities and from the other side they benefit from confidence regarding job security at a level of enhancement, can be entrepreneurs.

Also there is a significant and positive relation between the three components of entrepreneurship (tolerance of ambiguity, risk taking, independence). Regarding the existence of relation between tolerance of ambiguity, it seems that the improvement of the QWL can promote the individuals mental conditions and to enable them to adjust themselves so effectively with the ambiguous and not transparent conditions. Timons (2005), Covartco & Hojett (2008), and Rahimi (2006) also found out the same results as well. Regarding the component of risk taking, probably it can be said that the increase of the QWL in persons causes the feeling to need to achieve success to be increased in them and since the success and risk taking have a close relationship with each other, it leads to this issue that the persons have more tendency to do the risky activities. Regarding independence seeking, the current result is consistent and similar to this outlook which states that improvement of the QWL has a relationship with the independence seeking level in a way that probably it causes that the entrepreneurs to have an independence feeling and by certain self-reliance and freedom of action, they will do each work according to their own mental programs and time (Shahshahani, 2008). This result is consistent with the studies' findings of Timons (2005), Howard (2004), Razghandi (2008), Rahimi (2006), Zali et al. (2007), and Zabardast and Rostam Zadeh (2006) based on the relation of these two variables.

However, no significant relation was observed between the QWL and the other three components of entrepreneurship (success seeking, internal control center and creativity). Regarding the lack of relation with success seeking, it is possible that the mentioned conclusion be due to some factors such as the lack of success seeking in the individuals due to little valuing of family and society for the indicators of entrepreneurship, the lack of using virtual communicative networks for the purpose of having knowledge of the QWL and successful models of entrepreneurship in all around the world. Paying many attentions to the deficit and university funds, and as a result, it will lead to lack of willingness to drawing a successful view for the future activates. This result is inconsistent with the study results of Rahimi (2006). The reason of this inconsistency can be due to measurement tools, statistical society and the level of sampling capacity.

The other findings of research is that there is a significant difference between the QWL of faculty and staff members and the mean value of the QWL of faculty members is more than staff members. This difference can be resulted from some factors such as better conditions of faculty members in comparison to staff members; some conditions such as the obligatory hours of faculty members is lesser, their welfare facilities is more, they can teach in several universities and to receive academic affairs rewards such as authoring and researches, possibility of continuation of education, allocating scholarship and the opportunity of studies, promotion of faculty members ranks and repeated holidays of summer and between semesters, etc. But no difference was observed between the QWL of female and male respondents which is consistent with the study results of Reisi et al. (2008) and Rahimi (2006). Also it was found out that the difference between the QWL of faculty and staff members with the academic background in Humanities, Science and Technology is not significant. Yavari et al. (2008) and Rahimi (2006) during their studies reached similar and consistent results. Maybe it can be considered that the reason of lack of difference between the QWL of these persons with reference to the academic background is due to the same attention of the university authorities to the improvement of their the QWL.

Analysis of results showed no significant difference between entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members. The comment of current study researchers is that this consistency can be due to this issue that the faculty members and administrative staff both have the same objective: educating expert university students for creation of jobs and entrepreneurship. In order to create conditions and entrepreneurship fields for both the groups, it is almost common and equal. The entrepreneurship level of individuals with reference to their gender was not difference. So in this case, this hypothesis that states there is a difference between the entrepreneurship level of female and male faculty and staff members is not confirmed. This result is consistent with the results of Moradlu (2007) and Abbasi

Mardkheh (2003). Finally, it is absolutely clear that the difference between entrepreneurship level of faculty and staff members with academic backgrounds of Humanities, Science and Technology is not significant. Also the study results of Moradlu (2007), Rastkhiz Payedar (2006) and Rahimi (2006) were the same as well. Unlike this, Abbasi Mardkheh (2003) found out that there is a difference between entrepreneurship of managers with different educations which is inconsistent with the above studies. The reason of this result in the current research, based on the researchers' point of view, is due to the same policies of the university to the entrepreneurship of individuals without considering the academic background.

### Suggestions

- Since in this study, there is a positive and significant relation between the QWL and entrepreneurship, it is expected by the university to use logical policies and to consider some factors such as physical and mental security of personnel in the workplace, considering justice for payments, welfare and medical facilities, paying attention to the talents and skills of staff, taking part in the decision makings and comments regarding solving problems, encouraging the creativities and innovations, accurate and logical evaluation regarding their operation and etc. so that we can observe an improvement in the QWL. So by this case we can see the increase of entrepreneurship level of manpower in the university.
- Since a significant and positive relation was observed between the QWL and tolerance of ambiguity, it is suggested to the university to have more emphasis on the QWL by providing physical and mental securities, just payment of salaries and rewards, welfare and medical facilities and strengthening their sense of belonging in the organization, the opportunity to increase their capabilities and abilities to adjust themselves with the ambiguous and complicated situations and to take steps towards entrepreneurial activities.
- The organization can create working conditions of persons, interesting working environment with more attentions and it will lead to profits and economic health; as a result the faculty and staff members will be able to choose difficult objectives and not to pay attention to the job securities, to support their courage and expression of their comments and to get an environment to accept dangers and move towards entrepreneurial activities.
- The other result of this research is that there is a relation between the QWL and independence seeking. In this field it is suggested to the university to pay attention to the job development of personnel and to consider their pride and job greatness, the morale of not depending and some solutions to be considered that the faculty members to make their scientific researches so applicative and by learning new techniques and skills of business, to strengthen the independence and accountability morale.

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