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## ARTICLES

- MANAGEMENT OF INDIAN ECONOMY - ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT  
UNION BUDGET 2006-2007  
INDIAN ECONOMY : GENERAL REVIEW  
A.P.J. Abdul Kalam  
P. Chidambaram  
Ministry of Finance &  
Company Affairs, GOI
- DOES VENTURE CAPITAL INVESTMENT SPUR EMPLOYMENT  
GROWTH?  
Rainer Fehn & Neil Foster
- STOCK PRICE CHANGES AND TRADING IN CONTEXT OF  
INDIA'S ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION AND ITS EMERGENT  
IMPACT  
Memcha L. &  
L. Jibon Kumar Sharma
- INTERTEMPORAL CURRENCY SUBSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT  
DEFICITS  
Saziye Gazioglu &  
W. David McCausland
- A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF THE NIGERIAN TAX SYSTEM : 1980-2002  
IPO'S INITIAL RETURNS : UNDERPRICING VERSUS NOISY TRADING  
GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN  
INDIA (1960 TO 2000)  
J.O. Anyaduba  
Adel Karaa & M. Ben Arab  
Sajikumar Tulsidharan
- SERVICE QUALITY AND BANK PERFORMANCE: A COMPARISON  
OF THE UAE NATIONAL AND FOREIGN BANKS  
Hussein A.H.Al-Tamimi &  
Naceur Jabnoun

## ABSTRACTS OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

- PROBLEM OF INDUSTRIAL REVENUE IN VINDHYACHAL MANDAL  
A STUDY OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE IN CASTING AND MACHINE  
SHOP INDUSTRY IN KOLHAPUR  
Vibha Pandey  
Sarang Shankar Bhola
- A STUDY ON THE QUALITY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE IN PUBLIC  
BANKS IN KERALA  
G. Pushpangathan
- A STUDY ON THE WORKING OF TRIBAL CO-OPERATIVE WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KARBI-ANGLONG DISTRICT  
Ratan Borman

## BIBLIOGRAPHY : INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE

### BOOK REVIEWS

### ANNOTATED LISTINGS

### CONTENTS OF CURRENT PERIODICALS

### INDEX OF CURRENT PERIODICALS

### STATISTICS

### SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

### PLACEMENTS

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*Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation*

## **A Study of Quality of Work Life in Casting and Machine Shop Industry in Kolhapur<sup>1</sup>**

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### **I. Introduction**

PEOPLE CONSTITUTE THE core of an organization and it is again the people for whom the people work. This aspect is however overlooked in the glamour of technology. We are often more willing to develop and adopt new technology and are much less concerned about the people at work, their social system, their work relationship, life style and culture. Hence, their quality of work life (QWL) often suffers. In today's era both the people and technology has prime importance, because it is the people who work in structural manner with technology or techniques in the organisation.

During the last thirty years, the term QWL has frequently occurred in discussions as interdisciplinary field of inquiry and action of industrial engineering, organization theory and development, motivation, leadership, industrial relations and about techniques for facilitating change, reducing stress and evaluating the nature of the working environment. However, it is often difficult to determine exactly what the term means.

The term QWL has defined by various scholars and management practitioners but did not find unanimous approach towards the definition. On the examination of definition we find a narrow concept vis-à-vis broader concept of QWL. The narrow concept of QWL explains, workers participation in management or support localized activities and experiments to increase employee's participation etc. Where as, the broader concept explains QWL in conceptual categories viz. adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunity to use and develop human

1. The Thesis was submitted to Shivaji University, Kolhapur, on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2002, for the award of Ph.D. Degree in Business Economics, awarded on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2003, under the supervision of Dr. S K Kulkarni, Principal, Uma Mahavidyalaya, Pandharpur, District Solapur, Maharashtra, INDIA.

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capacities, future opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in work place, social relevance of work, balanced role of work in the total life space etc. One observes the definition of QWL in different economic scenario.

## II. Objectives of the Study

The present study is an attempt to study QWL, at micro level with this view in mind, the present study purports

- i. to find out determinants of QWL - the study aims at developing a theoretical frame to identify the determining factor which govern the QWL in an organization;
- ii. to admit methods of improving QWL in the light of inputs available from the survey of organization and other sources;
- iii. to develop ways and means for improving QWL at micro level in Indian context;
- iv. to ensure, if possible tools for measuring QWL in Indian context;

## III. Methodology of the Study

The research design of the study is diagnosis vis-à-vis exploratory in nature. This study requires quantitative vis-à-vis qualitative data need to collect from primary and secondary sources.

Primary data is collected from the help of field survey, observation and discussions. Secondary data is collected from annual reports of the unit, financial statements of the units, published and unpublished documents, periodicals, standards available at units, social aspects and job design structure etc.

Three-structured scheduled and one observiour were prepared to collect relevant primary data for the study. The scheduled was applied on office bearers, top management and workers to extract the needed information. The scheduled for the workers were executed in the local language i.e. Marathi.

The present study is designed to cover the population of casting and machine shop units in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra State, India.

Kolhapur is renowned for casting and machining Industry. The geography is situated at the center of nations leading industrial belt; Mumbai (capital of Maharashtra) and Banglore (capital of Karnataka State).

This process of industrialization of casting and machine shops took almost four decades in which the industry gears up well. All the necessary momentum is available at Kolhapur as far as the said industry is concern. Nevertheless, location Kolhapur is ideal to study casting and machining industry from any perspective.

## IV. Sample Design & Size

The universe itself being big, so proportionate stratified random sampling was applied in order to obtain highest accuracy. The universe

was stratified first, according to location status viz. M.I.D.C. zones, co-operative industrial estates and small scales industrial zones. In these eight stratified location groups, second level stratification is done according to ownership or constitution of units i.e. public limited, private limited and proprietary and partnership units.

#### As for the Sample Size of the Study

- 10% of units from every stratified group selected applying random sampling method (lottery method) to test the questionnaire.
- 125 casting units & 631 machine shop units were identified in district, 23 casting units i.e. 18.40% of total population were studied. Whereas 71 machine shop units; i.e. 11.25% of total population were studied.
- 27 executives and 47 workers from 23 casting units were interviewed and 71 executives and 82 workers from 71 sample machine shop units were interviewed and taken for analysis.

#### V. Outline of the Study

The research work is presented with the help of induction report style. Chapter one depicts theoretical aspects related to QWL with some contribution from researcher. Chapter two discuss the research design adopted for the study. Chapter three to six devoted for the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected, which are titled as, 'QWL and Monetary Compensation', 'QWL and safe working conditions', 'QWL and opportunity to develop human capability; Growth and Security', 'QWL and Social Integration; Social Relevance; Constitutionalism in Work organization', respectively. Chapter seven describes about the QWL and Unions. The effort had not been made so far to study the QWL in the light of unions in Indian insights; this chapter gives some inside of union and QWL relations. Chapter eight which has presented in two parts; contributes to quantification of QWL which encompasses the development of theoretical frame for quantification in first part and the quantification of sample units as per developed frame in second part and also encompasses the developed model to implement QWL in the organisation in Indian insight. The last i.e. ninth chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions. The report append with scheduled and bibliography.

#### VI. Major Observations

Some of the findings of the Study have been

- it was found to be the perception of management in casting and machine shop units that they were paying their workers as per Minimum Wages Act (MWA). Since every executive responded that, they were paying their employees as per the M.W.A., but the workers from public limited units and very few workers from private limited units, were receiving comparable good wages. Workers working with proprietary units were not receiving comparable good wages. Here good wages mean the minimum wages described by Government authority. It can be said, that the executives who were not paying their workers as per MWA either did not know about the MWA or they were hiding the fact.

- there shows the specific positive relation, between the wages paid by management and profit earned by the unit. It has seen, that less the wages, less the profit and more the wages, more the profit. Workers working in casting units were getting good pay, than workers in machine shop units.
- it has observed that productivity based incentive has introduced by management. At most of the places, especially in proprietary units the basic wages offered to workers were below the minimum wages and their worker has to produce certain quantity of jobs compulsorily. And then for producing additional quantity the worker receives the productivity-based incentives. In public limited units and private limited units productivity based incentives were offered while offering the basic minimum wages.
- the units situated in Kolhapur City and Ichalkaranji City, found with insufficient light and ventilation, than the units in industrial area.
- most of the private limited and proprietary casting and machine shop units have not concentrated on the safety aspects. These units are lagging much behind on different safety fronts viz. safety space between machines, safety guards on machines, safety goggles and shoes to workers, first aid facility, safety education and safety training to workers.
- 55.56% of total executives and proprietors in sample casting and machine shop units believed in job redesigning but only 29.63% executives and proprietors have practiced the same. It also can be concluded that the units in industry lacking in research and development efforts.
- almost all the limited, private limited and proprietorship units were lacking in basic policy making and its implementation. The basic policies viz. recruitment policy, promotion policy, disciplinary policy, performance appraisal policy, grievance procedure and training and development policy. They are also lagging in defining the goals and mission.
- very few employees were unionized. It was because, though the limited units housed very big amount of employees the number of limited units were less, on the contrary private limited and proprietary units were in large number but with few workers. So, the large number of employees in casting and machine shop units was deprived from unionism.
- the result of the quantification shows that, the public limited units fell under only A & B grades. Majority of private limited and proprietary units obtained C and D grades respectively.

Half of the casting and machine shop units obtained A and B grades. Private limited units found existing in all the grades. No proprietary units obtained A grade but they found existing in rest of all grades. Majority of proprietary units found obtained D grade, which represents poor QWL.

From the observations, it can be said that the level of QWL does not depend upon the nature of ownership. Public limited, private limited and proprietary units may have good or poor QWL.

It has observed that most of proprietary units existed in D grade, it was only because their investment was less compared to public and private limited units. QWL programs need some sort of investment in human resources, which they did not make. The QWL depends upon factors affecting on it i.e. independent variables of QWL.

### VII. Suggestions

On the basis of finding of the study, the following suggestions are given to improve QWL in Indian scenario.

- i. Employees in casting and machine shop units should get the wages according to minimum wages acts defined by Government and amendments done therein from time to time. Pay is a unique incentive, because it is able to satisfy both the, lower order physiological and security needs, and also higher needs, such as esteem and recognition.
- ii. Productivity based incentives should be introduced by all the management; on the magnitude of insufficient earnings these incentives will prove the tool of motivation. These productivity-based incentives also can be offered to the creativity. Such provision is there in Kaizen.
- iii. The arrangements of proper ventilation should be done, which ultimately keeps environment in unit fresh, proper exhaust arrangement should be done, which allows the smoke exit and could maintain the airflow. The scientific arrangements for 'ventilation helps, the proper use of natural light, this will save the cost. The advanced nations adopted natural light concept and they adjust their office time with natural light.
- iv. A large part of the safety program must be devoted to the process of educating the employee to act, think and work safely. There are many venues that, such education can take place among which includes, induction of new employees, emphasis of safety points during training sessions, particularly on the job training, special efforts made by the first level supervisors, establishment of employees safety committees etc.
- v. Every organisation should have the 'Health and Safety Policy', this should contain; arrangements for involving the workers, intention of taking into accounts; the health and safety performance of individuals at different levels while considering their career advancement, fixing the responsibility of the contractor, sub contractors, transporters and other agencies entering the premises, arrangements for informing, education and training and retraining its own employees at different levels and the public wherever required.
- vi. Job redesigning is the process of research and development. For the further progress, every unit must have some kind of research or research through job redesigning. The practice of job redesigning will offer benefits like, cost saving through new economical way of process, time saving, quality improvement, avoid monotony in work, and the foremost advantage is employees are going to get the opportunity to use their skills, views, ideas, creative aptitude, freedom etc. This aspect sponsors participative management. The job redesigning activity will provide opportunity to workers to grow, which is an important variable of QWL.

- vii. Policies do not only provide equitable treatment to employees and establish the channel of due procedures but also provide opportunity to use and develop their capabilities, it provides opportunity to grow. Policies help management to be professional. The basic policies must be implemented in the units. Every organisation should have defined goals and statement of mission.
- viii. Management should not avoid unionize efforts of employees, as far as QWL programs are concerned, beyond the negative perception of management towards the labour unions, the unions itself represent an important means of providing better QWL both as a channel for upward communications and as a vehicle for participation. It has observed most of the unions grievances are about the working environment only.
- ix. The model of quantification of QWL has been developed. Nearly 11 indicators were developed viz. National and international quality award, adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capability, future opportunity for continued growth and security, social integration in the work organisation, constitution in the work organisation, balanced role of work in the total life span, social relevance of work, management perception, collective agreement signed on terms of work. The detailed model with all variables fall under above stated indicators and the method of quantification has developed.
- x. The model of implementation of QWL in unit has developed, which recommends certain steps, begins from the management's decision to improve QWL followed by, conduct research to improve QWL on the magnitude of shortcomings in existing QWL the self assessment test, find out alternative remedies to overcome present shortcomings in QWL and construct strategies to improve, develop work culture for QWL, training and development activity; additional changes implementation of labour laws; job security etc. Analyze the feedback of training and development; do the QWL self assessment test, apply further strategies to improve QWL viz. incentive system; job redesigning, natural work units and safety system etc., analyze the developments in form of productivity, rejection, industrial relations and employees attendance etc. after following these stages rigorously researcher expects the result in the form of moderate or improved QWL. While following these stages there would be few intervening variables also viz. 'oppose from union'. To resolve the cppose from union, remedies are to increase pay, joint management team discussions and counseling. The second intervening variable would be 'Resources' viz. adequate finance, faculty for development, reengineering, develop HRD department with constitution and policies. The organisation has to give serious thought on the same. The last intervening variable would be 'Environmental factors' viz. domestic and international rivalry, economic recession, taxes, raw material market. infrastructure breakdowns, and government stability. This model is exhibited in the flow chart type.

### VIII. Conclusion

The findings of the study and contributions made through exploratory research may be of some help to the management of public limited and private limited concerns and proprietor or partnership engineering units to strategy implications. The model of quantification of QWL can be used for assessment of strength and weakness of firm on the magnitude of QWL program.

The suggestions based on findings are applicable to all engineering units in India and the units in nations offshore who have cross-cultural and socio-economic similarities. The prescriptive suggestions and quantification model may prove as role model to the engineering units in economically underdeveloped nations and the units, which are upcoming.

In today's competitive, liberalize and globalize world, besides adopting different quality modules and quality standards, implementation of QWL program is very essential due to its numerous advantages. QWL is one of the interesting approaches to motivation. It also works as a means of increasing productivity and reducing inflation and as a way of obtaining industrial democracy and minimizing labour disputes. The basic purpose of QWL is to develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for the economic health of organization.