

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT II

CHAPTER 14: QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) AND EMPOWERMENT

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CHAPTER 14

Introduction

- Quality of working deals with various aspects of work environment, which facilitates the human resource development efficiently
- Quality of working helps for development of human resources
- QWL includes and motivates the employees to learn further for present and future roles

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Quality of Work Life (QWL)

- There is no generally acceptable definition about this term
- It refers to favourableness or unfavourableness of a job environment for people
- QWL means different things to different people
- J. Richard and J. Loy define QWL as “the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy important personnel needs through their experience in the organization”

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CRITERIA FOR MEASURING QWL

- Adequate and fair compensation
- Safe and healthy working conditions
- Opportunity to use and develop human capacities
- Opportunity for career growth
- Social integration in the work force
- Constitutionalism in the work organization
- Work and quality of life
- Social relevance of work

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MAJOR SPECIFIC ISSUES IN QWL

- Pay and Stability of employment
- Occupational Stress
- Organizational Health Programmes
- Alternative Work Schedules
- Participative Management and Control of Work
- Recognition
- Congenial Worker-Supervisor Relations
- grievance Procedure
- Adequacy of Resources
- Seniority and Merit in Promotions
- Employment on Permanent Basis

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QWL AND FRINGE BENEFITS

- Fringe benefits and social security benefits result in:
 - Improvement in productivity
 - Reduction in absenteeism
 - Turnover
 - Sick leave
 - Alienation
- These benefits or maintenance activities include:
 - Medical and Health benefits
 - Safety measures
 - Legal and financial services
 - Retirement benefits etc.

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QWL AND PRODUCTIVITY

- Increase in QWL results in increase in productivity
- Continual increase in QWL eventually leads to reduction in productivity due to increase in cost of output
- Worker's output does not increase proportionately after a certain level even though QWL increases
- Improved QWL leads to improved performance

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Ergonomics

- Employees in offices who work mostly in desks suffer from different occupational diseases
- Several problems are caused due to mismatch between the employee's sitting posture, standing posture, physical movements at the work place and the requirements at the work place

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Ergonomics

- Ergonomics refers to matching the work environment to the employee's body movements and conveniences
- The purposes of ergonomics are to save human resources, protect employee's health and maximise productivity
 - Trends- companies have been designing new kind of furniture to reduce fatigue and back strain

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- Implications- the ergonomically designed furniture reduces the employees' health problems like joint pains, spondilitis etc.
- Open-space Concept- this concept has been gaining significance. This is a movement towards a more egalitarian atmosphere
- Advantages
 - Reduction in employee health problems
 - Increase in productivity and reduction in absenteeism
 - Improves levels of employee job satisfaction

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EMPOWERMENT

- Empowerment refers to enabling a lower level employee to make all the decisions required for carrying out his duties on his own and implement them
- It enables the customer to get the better service without the loss of any time
- Characteristics of empowered organization
 - Employees learn and teach the art of self leadership
 - Formulate a vision
 - Create the feeling of belongingness
 - Keep the organization strengths simple

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CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

- Management should reward the employees adequately
- Management should delegate authority and power
- Management should encourage the employees to take risk
- Provide the information of the company to all employees
- Employees should have multi skills and knowledge