

A Study on Employee morale and it's impact on QWL among the employees of Spinning mills

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between employee morale and quality of work life among employees. The construct used for this research to test the employee morale consists of intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee satisfaction. The study was conducted on a total of 150 respondents working in spinning mills located in Dindigul District. Findings suggest that high association exists between employee morale and quality of work life among the employees.

Introduction

Human resource management is considered as very important for business excellence, because employees are being considered as valuable assets of an organization and in collaboration with other aspects of the organization, they provide a meaning and sense to the organization. In many ways, quality of work life represents a blending of the very real concern for human values in today's society with an awareness that all individual devote the greater part of their mature lives to work, expending time, energy, physical and mental resources to this endeavor (Subba rao, Neelima Alfred, 2003). The current study examines the relationship between employee morale and quality of work-life among textile

employees in Dindigul district. Firstly, the relationship is examined between the different constructs of employee morale such as intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee satisfaction. Second, the relationship is examined between employee morale and quality of work life.

Employee morale

In a study on employee morale, McKnight, Ahmad and Schroeder (2001) provide a useful background on the definition of employee morale. They define it as the degree to which an employee feels good about his/her work and work environment, and use the term broadly to

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encompass constructs such as intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment and work pride. While the term morale has been criticized as being too vague (Roethlisberger, 1941), Weakliem and Frenkel (2006) suggest the term employee morale is an underlying concept of many of the noted constructs and should be used as a general term to refer to feeling about one's job. Employee morale is a fundamental component of business operations; high morale coincides with job satisfaction, high work effort, creativity and initiative, a sense of pride in one's work, a commitment to one's organization, and the desire to put the achievement of group goals ahead of personal goals, thereby enhancing an organization's performance.

Low morale, typically corresponding to high absenteeism, labor turnover, unresolved grievances or strikes, impedes the achievement of the organization's desired outcomes. (Susan, Linda, Patricia Huddleston, 2006). Widely recognized in the psychology, management, and human relations literatures as a primary factor governing worker effort and thus in determining overall company performance (Howitt, 2002), employee morale has nonetheless been difficult to quantify. Because morale is a feeling, rather than an action or outcome, it cannot be measured directly. Moreover, even among studies conducted in developed market economies, the jury is still out regarding whether morale is best evaluated as a group phenomenon (Milton et al., 1984; Smith, 1966 1976) or an individual experience (Doherty, 1988; Evans, 1992; Hart, 1994; Watson, 1988) and some confusion exists regarding how best to differentiate the causes from the manifestations of a particular level of morale (Abbott, 2003; Howitt 2002; Straka, 1993). Despite unanimous agreement in the existing

literature about the importance of morale in influencing worker performance and hence firms' profits, neither a well-defined theory nor a well-defined set of factors that contribute to a high level of employee morale has emerged (Howitt, 2002).

Two primary approaches have emerged to develop a proxy for employee morale. The first approach involves measures of job satisfaction and organizational commitment as a proxy for employee morale (Hull & Azumi, 1999; Koeske & Kirk, 1995; McKnight et al., 2001; Pestonjee & Singh, 1977; Reed, 2002). The second approach uses measures of consequences such as quit rates, grievances and strikes (Norsworthy & Zabala, 1990; Straka, 1993). The study utilizes constructs from first approach in developing our three composite measures of employee morale.

Employee satisfaction

Today's human resource managers evaluate personnel practices to meet those needs with the hope of increasing employee loyalty toward the organization. In addition to this, many organizations have begun to take a role in developing quality of work-life programs (Sakthivel Rani, Kamalanabhan & Selvarani, 2012). Job satisfaction has identified a number of factors like reward system in work, perceived quality of supervision, working conditions, and individual determinates such as status and seniority, age group, marital status, and years of experience that cause people to become satisfied or dissatisfied with their job (Mosadeghrad et al., 2008).

The satisfaction of the external customer depends on the satisfaction of the internal customers (Bailey & Dandrade, 1995). Being successful in the competitive markets depends on the level of

the satisfaction of the workers in the establishments. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the workers affects the performance of the organization.

Also the job satisfaction provides positive attitudes and behaviors of the workers (Organ, 1997). One of the most important factors that affect the behaviors of the workers in the establishments is the feeling of working satisfaction, that is to say, job satisfaction. There is growing evidence that current trends in employment conditions may be eroding levels of job satisfaction and directly damaging the physical and mental health of employees (Kenny et al., 2000). New working practices and rapid technological advances are changing the nature of many jobs (Cooper, 1999).

Quality of work life

In parallel to the importance of ethics; QWL and job-related outcomes such as job satisfaction or job commitment have been issues associated with human resource (HR) and organizational development (OD) since the beginning of 1960s (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Leopold, 2005). Quality of work life (QWL) and employee job satisfaction are increasingly being identified as progressive indicators related to the function and sustainability of hospitals. The rising complexity of the competitive business world and the cumbersome process of implementing effective social laws make ethics a suggested strategic factor in protecting hospitals from unwanted disasters (Beauchamp & Bowie, 2004; Carroll & Buchholtz, 2006; Ferrell, Fraedrich, & Ferrell, 2008). Writings and research works in management, HR, and OD often link QWL and job-related outcomes to ethics, productivity, corporate social responsibility, or employee performance (Cascio, 1998; Cummings &

Worley, 2005; Dess, Lumpkin, & Eisner, 2007; Lau & May, 1998; Leopold, 2005; Walker, 1992; Wheelan & Hunger, 2006; Yorks, 2005). Brenner (1992) suggested the explicit parts to be a code of ethics, policy manuals, employee training programs/materials, ethics seminars, management speeches, internal control systems, and ethics staff.

Quality of work life (QWL) is a philosophy, a set of principles, which holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect (Straw & Heckscher 1984). Several published works have addressed the constructs that make up the QWL domain and key elements of QWL programs, Others such as (Pelsma *et al.*) and (Hart, P.M., 1994.) found that psychological distress and morale contributed equally to the QWL. They determined that in the work climate of an occupation, QWL can be assessed by combining the amount and the degree of stress and the degree of satisfaction experienced by the individual within his/her occupational role. (Winter, R., 2000.) Viewed QWL for academicians as an attitudinal response to the prevailing work environment and posited five work environment domains that include role stress, job characteristics, and supervisory, structural and sectoral characteristics to directly and indirectly shape the experiences, attitudes and behavior. QWL encompasses mode of wages payment, working conditions, working time, health hazards issue, financial and non-financial benefits and management behavior towards employees (Islam & Siengthai 2009).

The present study examines the association between employee morale and quality of work-life among textile employees in Dindigul district.

Firstly, the relationship is examined between the different constructs of employee morale such as intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee satisfaction. Second, the relationship is examined between employee morale and quality of work life.

Methodology

The study employed the survey method, which allows for broad coverage, flexibility, and

convenience with inputs on related populations or events. The questionnaire used in the study was developed through review of literature to collect the data. The study was conducted on a total of 150 respondents working in Spinning mills located in Dindigul District. The sample chosen is based on convenience sampling method. Respondents were selected based on their willingness to provide relevant information. The responses of the respondents to the structured questionnaire were collected in a likert scale are numbered from 1 to 5.

Table 1 : Respondents' demographic profile

Demographics	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	108	72.0
Female	42	28.0
Age Group		
Less than 25 years	48	32.0
26 to 30 years	48	32.0
31 to 35 years	12	8.0
36 to 40 years	17	11.3
41 to 45 years	13	8.7
Above 45 years	12	8.0
Level of Income		
Below Rs.5000	42	28.0
Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000	36	24.0
Rs.10,001 to Rs.15,000	30	20.0
Rs.15,001 to Rs.20,000	17	11.3
Above Rs.20,000	25	16.7
Total Experience		
Up to 5 years	66	44.0
5 to 10 years	42	28.0
Above 10 years	42	28.0
Nature of Employment		
Temporary	101	67.3
Permanent	49	32.7

Independent sample t – test has been used to find difference of opinion among temporary and permanent employees toward employee morale.

Table 2 : Independent sample t – test

Nature of Employment	Size	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Temporary	101	3.31	1.255	5.532	.001**
Permanent	49	4.35	.561		

** Significant at 1% level

Since p-value is less than .001, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1 percent level. Hence conclude that there is significant difference between the opinion of temporary and permanent employees with regard to employee morale. Based on the mean score permanent employees having more morale than temporary employees.

Multiple regression analysis has been used to find, at what extent the employee morale is determined by intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee job satisfaction. The result given in Table 2 reveals that, Employee morale has positive relationship with intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and negatively associated with employee job satisfaction.

Table 3 : Regression Analysis

Predictors	R square	F	“ R square	Sig of F	B-value	t-value	Sig -t
Constant	.968	871.28	.967	.001**	-.282	-4.080	.001**
Intrinsic motivation					.054	3.895	.001**
Work meaningfulness					.064	8.524	.001**
Organizational commitment					.108	11.262	.001**
Work pride					.028	2.453	.015*
Employee job satisfaction					-.030	-4.163	.001**

** Significant at 1% level

* Significant at 5 % level

The statistical significance of the model and the R square value are shown in table 2. This indicates that the model is statistically significant at a confidence level of .01. The t-test for the significance of independent variables indicates that all the variables except work pride are significant at the level of .01. The variable work pride is significant at .05 level.

Correlation refers to any of a broad class of statistical relationships involving dependence. In the present study correlation analysis has been used to find the extent to which two quantitative variables employee morale and quality of work life are related.

Table 4 : Correlation between Employee Morale and QWL

	Mean	SD	Employee Morale	QWL
Employee Morale	3.65	1.182	1	.891**
QWL	3.76	1.034	.891**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient between employee morale and quality of work life is .891. It shows the existence of correlation between employee morale and QWL in .01 level.

The structural equation modeling (SEM) has been gaining increasing popularity due to its robustness and flexibility in establishing unidimensionality. Structural equation modeling (SEM) technique has been used to test the overall model simultaneously. Some measures of overall model fit are Comparative fit index (CFI), Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), Root mean square residual (RMR), Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) etc. Goodness-of-fit statistics (GFI) indicates that the relative amount of variance and covariance jointly explained by the model. Many researchers interpret this index scores in the range of 0.80-0.89 as representing reasonable fit; scores of 0.90 or higher are considered as evidence of good fit (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989).

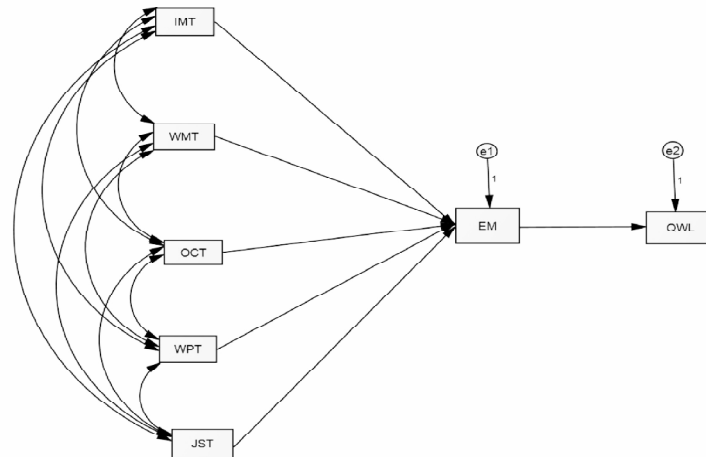


Figure - I

Initial Employee Morale mediation model

The initial model given in Figure 1 is constructed by taking variables like intrinsic motivation (IMT), work meaningfulness (WMT), organizational commitment (OCT), work pride (WPT) and employee satisfaction (JST). The observed, endogenous variables are employee morale and quality of work life. The observed, exogenous variables are intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee satisfaction. The unobserved, exogenous variables are e1 and e2. Based on the above discussion, the existence of model fit was identified using the chi-square value and the goodness of fit was assessed based on the GFI, RMR and RMSEA values. In the structural model, if the chi-square has attained the minimum value and its probability value is greater than 0.05, the model is said to be good and satisfactory.

Table 5 : Index value				
Model	RMR	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA
Default model	.037	.986	.921	.060

The model fit statistics given in table 3 prove that there is an excellent model fit with GFI greater than 0.9, RMR less than 0.05. The study examined the paths in the mediation model to determine the direct relationship between the variables and that is shown in Figure – II. It shows the existence of positive relationship between the variables.

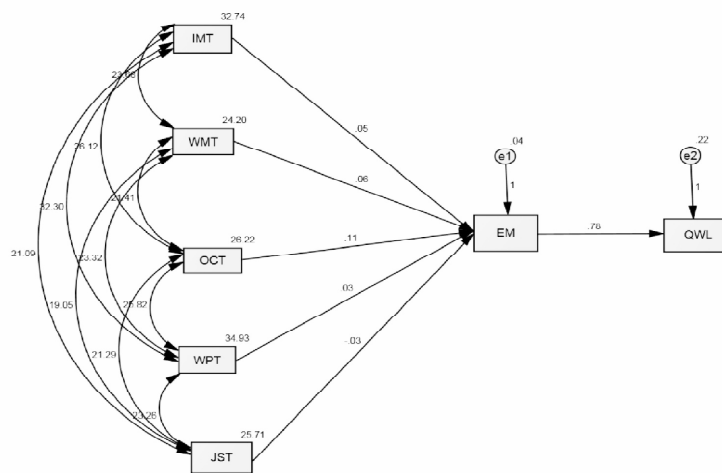


Figure- II

Final Employee Morale mediation model

Causal path analysis was performed to investigate the direct and indirect impact of intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride, employee satisfaction, employee morale and quality of work life.

In the indirect effect, organizational commitment has more effect on quality of work life with employee morale as a mediator. Employee morale has the largest overall effect on quality of work life.

Discussion

The current study contributes to our knowledge by examining the relationship between employee morale and quality of work life among the employees of spinning mills at Dindigul District. Table – II shows that there is significant difference between the opinion of temporary and permanent employees with regard to employee morale. Based on the mean score permanent employees having more morale than temporary employees. Table – III indicates that all the variables except work pride are significant at the level of .01. The variable work pride is significant at .05 level. Employee morale has positive association with intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and negatively associated with employee job satisfaction. Table –IV shows perfect positive relationship between QWL and morale of employees. The overall model fit confirmed by using structural equation modeling technique.

Conclusion

An organization's human resource management policy should maximize return on investment in the organization's human capital and minimize financial risk. Organizations seeks to attain this

by aligning the supply of experienced and qualified individuals and the capabilities of the existing employees, with the organization's ongoing and future business plans and requirements to maximize return on investment and secure future survival and success. Employee morale has significant impact on the level of QWL in Spinning mills. The dimensions of employee morale like intrinsic motivation, work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, work pride and employee satisfaction directly influences the employee morale. The performance of spinning mills can be enhanced only when the human resources are satisfied with the higher employee morale and quality of working life. The simple method of enhancing QWL may be by improving the existing job environment and also the productivity. Heavy handed administration may give temporary results, but if the goal is long term and the concentration is on outcomes verses outputs, the sensible manager will work to maximize the employees through valid measures that construct higher QWL among them.

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