



Quality of Work Life in Selected Public Universities in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

It is undeniable truth that poor quality of work life is a big challenge in today's higher learning education institutions which affects negatively the performance as well as attraction and retention of quality staff. This study focused on analyzing the level of quality of work life of academic staff of public universities and examining the factors affecting the attainment of Quality of work life in public universities in Dar es Salaam Tanzania. The study employed a case study design to provide thorough, in-depth, comprehensive, and well-ordered information concerning the social group under-study. A sample size of 138 respondents drawn from the population that was 210 academic managers and administrative staff members from Dar es Salaam University and Mzumbe University. Questionnaire and interviews were used to collect the required information. The findings revealed low quality of work life. The study recommended that universities should come up with mitigation measures to reduce the workload of academic staff since this was one of the leading factors affecting attainment of quality of work life.

Keywords: *Quality of Work Life; Academic Institutions; Universities.*

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INTRODUCTION

An organizational environment conducive for human work is one that enhances the quality of employees' work life in the organization. This means that the work environment must have the capacity to satisfy meaningfully an employee's organizational and personal needs, and also the ability to shape organizational values that better support and promote employees' health and well-being, job security, job satisfaction, competency development and balance between work and non-work life [1; 2].

Quality of Work Life (QWL) is a subset of the larger notion of quality of life, which is defined as the entire value of an individual's life, taking into account factors such as income, health, and social interactions. Louis Davis coined the word, which first appeared in research journals and the press in the United States in the 1970s. In 1972, the first International QWL conference was held in Toronto, and the same year, the International Council for Quality of Work Life was founded. Since 1980, QWL has placed a greater emphasis on employee-centered productivity programs. Since the mid-1990s, when businesses have faced economic and corporate restructuring issues, as well as rising educational levels and occupational aspirations, there has been an increase in concerns about QWL and career and personal life planning [2].

Globally, South Africa, for example, has a high quality of work life. Poor quality of work life is often regarded as a severe difficulty that leads to serious resignation and termination of employee contracts, which has a negative impact on the quality of goods and services [3]. In Kenya, employee performance and organizational competitiveness are linked to the quality of their work lives. A study conducted by Aketch et al. [4] among Kenyan University academic personnel found a favorable association between QWL and overall academic achievement in universities.

In Tanzania QWL is a source of concern in both public and private organizations, attracting both employers and employees' attention. Higher education institutions have not been spared from this expanding trend. However, only a few studies have been undertaken on this troubling subject, such as Swai [5] findings that revealed significantly positive impact on employees' QWL, with regard to conditions of work attributes of organization of work, health and safety and supervisors – employees' relationships. On the negative side, conditions of work became more precarious, characterized by heavy work load, stress, and tight work schedules. According to a study conducted by Inyomoza [6] on the quality of work life of teachers, 49 percent of teachers walk more than 5 kilometers to and from school. Around 95% of teachers say they don't have access to public transit and therefore rely on private vehicles [6]. Furthermore, the data revealed that secondary school instructors must meet a range of conditions in order to function effectively [6]. Neither the school

government nor the government, on the other hand, met these requirements [5; 6]. Teachers, on the other hand, were exhausted as a result of the excessive number of periods, resulting in poor job quality. Therefore, with this existing situation, the researchers were motivated to assess the quality of work life in selected public universities in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Objectives of the study:

- i. To analyze the level of quality of work life of academic staff of public universities in Dar es Salaam Tanzania.
- ii. To examine factors which affect the attainment of quality of work life in public universities in Dar es Salaam Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

Research Strategy

Also the study involved qualitative methods and quantitative methods approaches with the intention to examine the quality of work life and managerial effectiveness in selected public universities in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Qualitative methods were used to understand the altitude, belief of the respondents on the subject under investigation [7]. Quantitative methods were used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Also quantitative design was used in the measurement of quantity (extent) of quality of work life in the selected universities.

Sample Size

This study used a sample of 138 respondents drawn from the population that was 210 academic managers and administrative staff members from the University of Dar es Salaam and Mzumbe University. The sample size of 138 respondents was calculated using formula provided by Yamane [8].

Sampling Procedure

To attain the determined sample from the population the researcher used a two stage stratified sampling whereby the respondents were stratified as academic managers from University of Dar es salaam and those from Mzumbe University. Then from each university respondents were put in stratum according to their respective faculties or schools. Then respondents were selected from each stratum using simple random sampling which gives equal chance to each respondent to take part in study. Purposive sampling was also used to select respondents who were envisaged to have rich information with regards to study variables such as Principals and Deputy Principals, and Deans.

Data collection tools and procedures

This study employed both primary data and secondary data methods. For the secondary data, the study used documentary review and for the primary data, questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data from the University of Dar es salaam and those from Mzumbe University

Data analysis and presentation

Data was analyzed descriptively with the aid of Statistical Package for social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitatively, data was analyzed by using contents analysis. From the SPSS descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation was used to measure the whatnots of employee quality work life and managerial effectiveness in public universities of Dar es Salaam and Mzumbe University.

Table 1: To interpret the mean scores the following values and interpretation was utilized.

Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
4.30 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
3.50 – 4.29	Agree	High
2.70 – 3.49	Neutral	Moderate
1.90 – 2.69	Disagree	Low
1.00 – 1.89	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of quality of work life of academic staff of public universities in Dar es Salaam Tanzania

In this section the respondents were asked to rate themselves on the given items using a scale ranging from a minimum of one - for strongly disagree to a maximum of five - for strongly agree (see Table 1). Findings examined the level basing on the status of work condition, satisfaction with work condition provided by universities, satisfaction of the aspect of work condition, as well as response on the rate of quality of work life. Additionally, findings from interviews

insisted that the level of the quality of work life was low. So, findings on are presented in Table 2, Table 3, Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6.

The study examined the level of level of quality of work life of academic staff in public universities in Dar es Salaam. Level of quality of work life was important for the study since it could significantly affect how the staff worked (Managerial capabilities).

The level (status) of work condition

The level (status) of work conditions was analyzed in order to understand the status of quality of work life in the institutions. Table 2 shows the summary of results.

Table 2 Response on nature of work condition

No. of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	10	7.7
Good	10	7.7
Moderate	80	61.5
Low	30	23.1
Very low	0	0
Total	130	100

Table 2 shows that, 80 respondents representing 61.5% observed moderate level of work conditions, 30 respondents equal to 23.1 observed low, 10 respondents equal to 7.7% observed very good level of work condition and 10 respondents equal to 7.7% observed good level of work conditions. This data implies the working condition were largely moderate. This result was different to results of Normala, [9] in Malaysian Universities who found that work conditions were largely good in academic institutions.

Satisfaction with the work conditions provided by a University

The study investigated the satisfaction with work condition provided by the universities. Table 3 shows the summary of results.

Table 3: Response on Satisfaction with work condition

Variable	Satisfaction Level		
	High	Moderate	Low
No. of Respondents	20	80	30
Percentage	15.4%	61.5%	23.1%

Table 3 shows that satisfaction level was moderate with 80 respondents equal to 61.5% observing moderate, 20 respondents equal to 15.4% observing high satisfaction and 30 respondents equal to 23.1% observing low satisfaction. This data implies that satisfaction level with work conditions which is moderate might be reason for high turnover of staff in universities in Dar es Salaam such as lectures moving to politics, political appointments or in NGO's lucrative positions.

Level of Satisfaction with Aspects of Work Condition

Level of satisfaction with aspects of work conditions was analyzed and Table 4 gives the summary of results.

Table 4: Aspects of work condition

Aspects of Work Condition	Mean	Standard Deviation
You enjoy the work conditions of your work	2.37	0.57
Your comfortable with extrinsic rewards offered by the University	2.26	0.49
Your Comfortable with intrinsic rewards offered by the University	2.17	0.50
All departments in the University cooperate with each other whenever it is necessary.	4.06	0.56
There is a harmonious relationship with your colleagues in the University	3.14	0.64
You have a good relationship with your supervisor/s	3.49	0.68
You enjoy Maximum support for management	2.83	0.48
Average Mean Score	2.90	0.56

On the satisfaction with the aspects of work conditions, the respondents in Table 4 indicated that, All departments in the University cooperate with each other whenever it is necessary, There is a harmonious relationship with your colleagues in the University and You have a good relationship with your supervisor to a great extent as shown by a mean score of 4.06, 3.14, and 3.49 respectively. The respondents also indicated low extent to; you enjoy the work conditions of your work, you're comfortable with extrinsic rewards offered by the University, you're comfortable with intrinsic rewards offered by the University and you enjoy maximum support for management. This was shown by the low mean score 2.37, 2.26, 2.17 and 2.83. The results imply that respondents were not satisfied with some of the aspects of work condition such as extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards because of the low mean result.

The results agree with those of Kumari and Sidhu [10] revealed the moderate level of quality of work life and identified 12 factors that influence taxi drivers' QWL, including accidental and environmental risk factors, safety, health and well-being, ergonomics risks, unsocial working hours (sleep/fatigue-related risks), job and social security, extent of interpersonal relations (with coworkers), occupational stress, human relations and social aspects of work life, work and life space, adequate and fair compensation, and social relevance of work.

The results further concur with those of Park, Cho, and Lim [11] who found that organizational support and organizational health had a direct effect on the quality of work life, while organizational culture, organizational support, and personal health had an indirect effect. These findings suggested that there is a link between organizational culture, organizational support, and employee satisfaction.

Rate of Quality of Work Life in your University

The respondents were asked to rate the quality of work life in their universities. Table 5 shows the summary of results.

Table 5 Response on rate of quality of work life

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage
High	4	3.1
Medium	40	30.7
Low	86	66.2
Total	130	100

Table 5 shows that, 4 respondents equal to 3.1% said high, 40 respondents equal to 30.7% indicated that, there is medium quality of work life, 86 respondents equal to 66.2% observed low quality of work life. These findings imply that the majority of respondents (66.2%) opined that there was low rate of the quality of work life.

Also, during the interviews participant PT1 said;

“The quality of work life in our university is low because there are some issues that employees need hence they are forced to do part time jobs in other universities.”

Participant PT2 also said;

“The quality of work life is low because work load is high and not compensation is not equivalent to services rendered and that is why most academic staff leaves for either politics or other jobs”.

Results correspond with those of Jin and Lee [12] whose findings found that workplace spirituality affected all quantiles of QWL except the 90% quantile; fatigue was an affecting factor in the 20%, 30%, and 70% quantiles; and job stress in the 20%, 30%, 40%, and 60%, 70%, 80% quantiles. For workplace spirituality, the effect size was 0.33 ($p < 0.001$) in the 10% quantile, increasing to 0.45 ($p < 0.001$) in the 80% quantile.

Factors which affect the attainment of quality of work life in public universities in Dar es Salaam Tanzania

The factors affecting attainment of quality of work life was also of interest to the study and Table 6 shows the results.

Table 6 Factors affecting attainment of QWL

Factors	Workload	Job dissatisfaction	Inadequate compensation infrastructure	Government policies	Intrinsic rewards	Employees' attitude	Low benefits	Job insecurity
Mean	4.17	4.05	4.16	3.97	4.08	3.97	4.02	3.98
Mode	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	.814	1.054	1.019	1.092	.903	.933	.924	1.024
Minimum	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

One of the key objectives in this study was to establish the factors affecting attainment of QWL in universities in Dar es Salaam. The data in Table 5 revealed that, workload rated as the strongest (mean 4.17) followed by inadequate compensation (mean 4.16). This was followed by intrinsic rewards (mean 4.08). The higher the mean translates to the more persistent is as a factor affecting the attainment of QWL and further implies that could be the reason for academic staff turnover in universities in Dar es Salaam.

Also, during the interviews participant PT3 said;

'....the decision making especially from the management in many cases affects the QWL here because some decisions results to a very positive or negative response from staff. On another hand, factors like too much workload with little motivation also affect the QWL'

Participant PT4 said;

'...from my personal opinions, here I see sometimes supervisors violate work ethics which send a negative signal to staff. However, some supervisors send positive signals like providing staff trainings which add value on professional development and hence improves employees morale.'

These findings are consistent with those of Kanpur [13], who discovered that the quality of work life influences managers' decisions since employees with other persistent concerns in their lives are less likely to make the best decisions on job-related issues. Letooane [14] discovered that quality of work life is very essential and is substantially related to management effectiveness in his study on factors influencing work life quality. According to Letooane's [14] research, a manager with a bad work-life balance may be tempted to violate work ethics such as integrity and undermine managerial facts such as accountability, visionary thinking, and strategic planning. On the other hand, if the quality of work life is actually good, an individual will be settled; nevertheless, if the quality of work life is poor, the employee will be disturbed, and the managerial efficiency of his duties will be lowered or affected.

Findings also agree with those of Sinha [15] in India, who identified three emerging variables affecting the quality of work life: "relationship-sustenance orientation," "futuristic and professional orientation," and "self-deterministic and systemic orientation." According to Sinha [15], these factors play a significant role in meeting the needs of employees, and how different aspects are valued and employed at the middle managerial level for developing a unique and inimitable quality of working life within their socio-technical systems in order to elicit favorable job-related responses.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the level of quality of work life in public universities in Dar es Salaam is moderate, implying that much efforts need to be done in order to improve the situation. On another hand, the study concludes that QWL is highly affected negatively with the existing organizational related factors such as workload, job desertification, rewards, violation of work ethics, just to mention a few.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Universities to come up with mitigation measures to reduce the workload of academic staff since this was one of the leading factors affecting attainment of quality of work life.
- b. Universities or the government to draft strategies to increase the quality of work life of academic staff such as increasing their salaries, and adding more fringe benefits

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