

# **Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Career Success among Academicians in a Selected Public Institution of Higher Learning**

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## **Introduction**

Quality of Work Life (QWL) is the existence of certain set of organizational conditions or practices. QWL refers to level of satisfaction, motivation, involvement, and commitment individuals experience with respect to their lives at work (Geet, Deshpande, & Asmita, 2009). It is a closely associated constructs of life satisfaction and happiness of employees in work activities. The role of the supporting organizations such as access to resources, information, rewards and the opportunity to develop a career can affect worker productivity and improve the quality of working life. Employees who get proper salary, recognition and career development, given the autonomy and training, will feel that their contributions are valued. QWL is a concept that had been much studied and its impact on organizational practices and performance especially related to employees' well-being and turn over intention had been acknowledged (Martel & Dupuis, 2006). Previous studies had explored the relationships between QWL and the progression of employees careers (Almalki, Fitzgerald, & Clark, 2012; Aziz & Nadzar, 2011; Daud, 2010). These studies indicated that there are positive strong relationships between these variables. However, there is paucity in literature related to the nature of the relationship between QWL and career development. In this study, QWL is measured based on the dimensions of (a) health and safety needs (protection from ill health and injury at work and outside of work, and enhancement of good health), (b) economic and family needs (pay, job security, and other family needs), (c) social needs (collegiality at work and leisure time off work), (d) esteem needs (recognition and appreciation of work within the organization and outside the organization), (e) actualization needs (realization of one's potential within the organization and as a professional), (f) knowledge needs (learning to enhance job and professional skills), and (g) aesthetic needs (creativity at work as well as personal creativity and general aesthetics) (Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel, &

Lee, 2001). This measure of QWL was developed based on need satisfaction and spill over theories to capture the extent to which the work environment, job requirements, supervisory behaviour, and ancillary programs in an organization are perceived to meet the needs of an employee (Sirgy et al., 2001).

Careers can be generally viewed as a pattern or sequence of work experiences that evolve over time, that is, over the life course (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). The progression of an individual career is traditionally viewed as an upward movement on a corporate hierarchy. However, in view of the economic, organizational and workforce changes faced by organizations, the upward movement has been severely challenged leaving to the changing notions of career success. Nowadays, public institutions of higher learning play a fundamental role in economic and social development in Malaysia. For instance, Eleventh Malaysian Plan 2016-2020 is being implemented by Malaysia for emphasizing on anchoring human growth. In order to achieve such goal, quality of academicians should be highlighted so that it can increase the quality of education. However, academicians have to perform a lot of roles and responsibilities which caused them become pressured due to workload (Panatiket al., 2012). Thus, it is necessary to provide good QWL practice so that academicians are able to conduct high quality teaching and research which may increase their career success. Hence, this study focuses on determining the relationship between QWL domains and career success of academicians in a selected public institution of higher learning in Kota Samarahan, Sarawak.

## **Methodology**

The study employed the survey methodology to collect data on the dependent variable, that is, career success and on the independent variable that is, social needs, esteem needs, actualization needs, knowledge need, economic and family need, aesthetics need and health and safety need. A QWL questionnaire was adapted from Sirgy et al. (2001) and employed the seven-point Likert-type scale, as follows: 1 = very untrue of me, 2=untrue of me, 3= somewhat untrue of me, 4=neutral, 5= somewhat true of me, 6= true of me, and 7= very true of me. Subjective and objective career success questionnaires were adapted from Ng, Eby, Sorensen, and Feldman (2005). In this study, subjective career success questionnaire involves 5 questions by using five-point Likert-type scale, as follows, 1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=undecided, 4= agree,

and 5= strongly agree. Meanwhile, objective career success includes 6 items based on five-point Likert-type scale, as follows, 1 = strongly dissatisfied, 2= dissatisfied, 3= unsure, 4= satisfied, and 5 = strongly satisfied.

### Findings and Discussion

The relationship between QWL domains and career success was investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality and linearity. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationships between health and safety needs domain and career success ( $r=.48, p<. 01$ ) with high health and safety need contributed to the high career success. Meanwhile, there was low, positive and significant relationship between social needs, esteem needs, actualization needs, knowledge need, economic and family need, aesthetics need and career success (Table 1). The result was supported by past studies indicated that promotion, job proud, participation, management support and pay and benefit, organizational commitment, and providing insights are also keys factors of good quality of working life (Daud, 2010; Kanten&Sadullah, 2012; Mosadeghrad, 2013; Ng et al., 2005).

Items	Mean	SD	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Quality of Work Life</b>				
<b>Social needs</b>	5.6019	.84328	.267	.051
<b>Esteem needs</b>	5.5833	.84535	.358**	.008
<b>Actualization needs</b>	5.6389	.78558	.278*	.042
<b>Knowledge need</b>	5.9537	.76645	.302*	.026
<b>Economic and family need</b>	5.2099	.92778	.396**	.003
<b>Aesthetics need</b>	5.8241	.88038	.315*	.020
<b>Health and safety needs</b>	5.5309	.86274	.475**	.000

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The study provides evidence to prove quality of work life influences career success of employees in the organization. It is consistent with other studies that found out high level of organizational satisfaction, job satisfaction, job security, job involvement and lower turnover of employees (Mosadeghrad, 2013; Permarupan, Al- Mamun, & Saufi, 2013; Sarina & Mohamad, 2011; Taher, 2013) have significant relationship with quality of work life that influences career success of employees. Usually, career success is associated with satisfaction for individual from a psychological side. Thus, it is critical for human resource practitioners to design the job structure and policy in an organization that aligns with an improved level of QWL in order to motivate employees in achieving career success as well as increasing productivity. Future researchers should extend this study by increasing the sample size through the inclusion of other Malaysian public universities. Comparison between QWL and career success among public and private institutions is also recommended.

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