International Academic Institute for Science and Technology

International Academic Journal of Business Management
Vol. 1, No. 2, 2014, pp. 97-103.
ISSN 2454-2768

International Academic Journal of Business Management

www.iaiest.com

Environmental Factors Influencing Employees' Performance in Guilan-based Administrative Departments, Iran

Shabnam Afarin Abadeh

Department of Management, Islamic Azad University, Rasht Branch, Guilan, Iran

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the impact of environmental factors on employees' performance in organizations. This applied analytical - descriptive field study. The population consisted of executive organizations in Guilan (N=115). Two questionnaires were used in this study. The first questionnaire consisted of 30 closed questions about quality of work life with five-item Likert scale. Using Delphi method, the advisor and consultant professors confirmed the validity of this questionnaire. Also, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability and to ensure the accuracy of findings. Using SPSS software, the descriptive (central indices and frequency distribution tables) and inferential (ANOVA and Duncan) statistics were used for analyzing the data

Keywords: Organizational Factors, Employees, Guilan, Iran

Introduction:

The quality of work life is defined as having good control, good working conditions, enough payment and benefits, and more interestingly, challenging and satisfying tasks. The excellent quality of work life is obtained through considering philosophy of employee relations. It is organizational attempts to create high quality work life and gives employees greater opportunities to influence their and collaborate in organization's overall effectiveness (Jazani, 1999, p. 396).

The high quality work life documentation may be obtained through examinations of performance before and after the quality of work life. Without documentation of results, the senior management may not continue his/her strong support.

The team formation and other attitudes towards quality of work life should have the top management support and be adapted to needs and culture of organization. The quality circles are one of the leading ones. Other types of team formation are similar to quality circles.

The existence of adequate facilities and caring about quality of work life of employees, especially in public organizations create motivation and job satisfaction among employees. The involvement of employees in decision-making makes them committed to promote the organization. Feeling safe in workplace makes employees to spend more time in their jobs and try to develop their organization. This study considered employees in public organizations. The findings showed that quality of work life programs reduced staff complaints, absence rate, and disciplinary regulations conduction and increased the positive attitude of employees and their participation in proposed programs.

One of the realistic foundations of quality of work life concept is that the content, context, and autonomy jobs are too specialized and lead to employees' reduced performance and productivity. In these jobs, the employees' performance is reduced both directly (lack of optimal use of human resources) and indirectly (fatigue and dissatisfaction at work that, in turn, reduce employee morale and increase absenteeism, turnover, and mental stress) (Hackman and others, 1975, p. 57).

Therefore, refreshing working environment through using quality of work life techniques will meet these basic requirements of employees.

The studies indicate that both the work life quality and family life quality are not mutually exclusive and both determine employees' life satisfaction (Gol, 1991, p. 138).

One popular legend states that there is always tension between business objectives and high quality of work and family life. The supervisors and employees both try to reorganize and evaluate them in high levels. Spending time with a better quality impacts on working life and family life (Harvard University reports, 1998).

Since the beginning of his collective life, the human being searches for high efficiency and effectiveness. After many years and achieving systems thinking, however, he found that he may use the systems and methods analysis tools and techniques to improve the performance of organization and its employees (Mamizade, 1996, p. 243).

In order to promote the organization, it is necessary to use organizational human and behavior sciences to adapt the organization with changing and evolving environment. To adapt with environmental changes, the organizations face with critical issues including how the human resources of organization, as the organization's most strategic resource should be led to achieve organizational goals and meet employees' needs. The work life quality improvement programs (QWL) are among the techniques which are used to improve the organization.

In many cases, these two attitudes are linked together. The employees who are interested in organization and its tasks feel that their work satisfies them. In some cases, the attitudes toward quality of work life lead to this question: Is there a good quality of work life? Due to disagreement among people and since the second attitude is entirely subjective, however, the quality of working life is considered to be employees' perceptions of physical and psychological conditions in work environment (Kamdideh, 2002, p. 2).

The quality of work life program includes any improvement in organizational culture which supports employees' growth in organization. Therefore, the value system of quality of work life considers capitalizing on people as the most important variable in strategic management equation. It believes that meeting employees' needs leads to long-term improvement of organization (Shareef. Reginald, 1990, p60).

According to definitions provided in every community or every region, especially in different regions of Iran which have different cultures and different mental conceptions about life and work, the indicators for measuring quality of work life are different (Salmani, 2003, p. 77). If employees really feel that the quality of their work life is improved because of their performance or the policies of organization for increasing the productivity, this will give them more power to do their job; the natural result of such process will be creation of living and active atmosphere within the group or organization and this will ultimately increase productivity beyond the expected results and will lead to more motivation to work better and therefore, better quality of work life (Moheb Ali. 1994, p. 54).

In quality of work life programs have tried to improve employees' job satisfaction and performance through increase of their intrinsic motivation (Beach. 1991, p330).

The findings showed that quality of work life programs reduced staff complaints, absence rate, and disciplinary regulations conduction and increased the positive attitude of employees and their participation in proposed programs (Gordon. 1991, p330).

If the commitment among employees increase, a good performance will be expected from them. The employees' loyalty and commitment to organization makes them to consider the organization as their objective. The commitment to objective may be one of the motivating factors (Robbins, 2005, p. 347) and ultimately will lead to better performance.

The population of this study consisted of employees in executive organization in Gilan. This study aims to investigate the impact of safe and healthy environment and security and growing on employees' performance in organizations.

Main hypotheses:

1. There is significant difference between healthy and secure environment and employees' performance.
2. There is significant difference between growth and security of employees and employees' performance.

Methodology:

This applied analytical - descriptive field study. The population consisted of executive organizations in Guilan (N=115). Since it was not possible to access all of these organizations and many of them were not able to respond due to political and security reasons and access to information in such organizations was very difficult, the sample was selected from 42 organizations. However, 20 employees were randomly selected from each of these 42 organizations and quality of work life and performance questionnaires were distributed among them. The total number of distributed questionnaires was 840; 806 questionnaires were returned and analyzed.

Two questionnaires were used in this study. The first questionnaire consisted of 30 closed questions about quality of work life with five-item Likert scale. Using Delphi method, the advisor and consultant professors confirmed the validity of this questionnaire. Also, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability and to ensure the accuracy of findings. Using SPSS software, the descriptive (central indices and frequency distribution tables) and inferential (ANOVA and Duncan) statistics were used for analyzing the data.

Findings:

Findings of descriptive statistics:
1) Employee performance (dependent variable): minimum 25, maximum 60, mean 41.7324, standard deviation 6.3849, and variance 40.768.
2) Employee payment (independent variable): minimum 5, maximum 23, mean 13.4456, standard deviation 3.5040, and variance 12.278.
3) Environment security (independent variable): minimum 5, maximum 24, mean 11.7016, standard deviation 3.2950, and variance 10.857.
4) Human capacities development (independent variable): minimum 10, maximum 46, mean 24.7984, standard deviation 7.0492, and variance 49.692.
5) Job security (independent variable): minimum 10, maximum 49, mean 27.5093, standard deviation 6.3931, and variance 40.872.

Testing research hypotheses:
First hypothesis: There is significant difference between healthy and secure environment and employees' performance.

Table 1: Variance analysis of security of environment and employees' performance

ANOVA

Employees`performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3059.107	2	1529.554	42.425	.000
Within Groups	23614.74	655	36.053		
Total	26673.85	657			

$H_0 = \mu_{1=} \mu_{2=} \mu_3$.
H_1= At least, one of the means is different.
Since ASIMPSIG = 0.00 and this is less than α = 0.05, the H0 is rejected; therefore, it can be said that there is significant difference between healthy and secure environment and employees performance.

Table 2: Duncan test

Employees`Performance

Duncan [a,b]

Environmental Security	N	Subset for alpha = .05		
		1	2	3
Low Security	228	39.2632		
Average Security	170		41.2118	
High Security	260			44.2308
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 212.548.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

According to Duncan test, there is significant difference between different levels of security in environment. Also, it can be seen that high environment security leads to better performance among employees.

Second hypothesis: There is significant difference between security and growth of employees and their performance.

Table 3: Variance analysis of job security and employees' performance

ANOVA

Employees`Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5230.048	2	2615.024	79.174	.000
Within Groups	21567.90	653	33.029		
Total	26797.95	655			

$H_0 = \mu_{1=} \mu_{2=} \mu_3$.

H_1= At least, one of the means is different.

Since ASIMPSIG = 0.00 and this is less than α = 0.05, the H0 is rejected; therefore, it can be said that there is significant difference between continuous growth and security and employees performance.

Table 4: Duncan test

Employeees`performance

Duncan [a,b]

Job Security	N	Subset for alpha = .05		
		1	2	3
Low Security	226	38.5398		
Average Security	198		41.2727	
High Security	232			45.2586
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 217.618.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

According to Duncan test, there is significant difference between different levels of job security. Also, it can be seen that high job security leads to better performance among employees.

Discussion and conclusion:

First hypothesis:

Since ASIMPSIG = 0.00 and this is less than α = 0.05, the H0 is rejected; therefore, it can be said that there is significant difference between healthy and secure environment and employees performance. According to Duncan test, there is significant difference between different levels of security in environment. Also, it can be seen that high environment security leads to better performance among employees.

Second hypothesis:

Since ASIMPSIG = 0.00 and this is less than α = 0.05, the H0 is rejected; therefore, it can be said that there is significant difference between continuous growth and security and employees performance. According to Duncan test, there is significant difference between different levels of job security. Also, it can be seen that high job security leads to better performance among employees.

According to Duncan test, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis (human capacities development), job security, healthy and secure environment, and payment have the greatest impact on employees' performance, respectively.

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