

## **Role of quality of work life in enhancing the Employee motivation and productivity of handicraft units - A Canadian case study**

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### **Abstract**

*The economy across the globe is in dire need of some tool to boost employment opportunities and standard of living. This may bring about a more balanced and integrated parameters of economy. The various sectors deliver promising pathway for the same. On top of it, Craft/Handicraft sector is one of the top solutions for achieving this goal. The Canada's craft is increasingly being recognized for higher-grade crafts. The motivation of the employees and thus the productivity of working units in craft sector is highly influenced by their quality of work life. This study has involved a real empirical survey on different 88 British Columbian, Canadian crafts units spread into various areas of handcrafted cottage industry. The study has considered different variables like gender, nature of job and experience of employees. This research tends to impose a model exclusively based on craft workers in British Columbia, Canada.*

**Keywords:** *Craft, Productivity, Quality of work life, Motivation, handicraft.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is no denying the fact that Canada owns a lot of its identity to its rich craft heritage. Craft sector takes awesomely varied form under the artisan's brush, hand tools and hammer at some point of time in the distant past and present, being mere everyday activities and common place products in any typical countryside in any part of the country. The colourful tapestry of paintings, pottery, totem poles (wood being carved into the intricate statues and products), fine glass, musical instruments, furniture, unique textiles, ceramics, and sculpted objects represents the cultural history of Canada. As craft sector is an important part of the heritage, culture and economy, the craft sector provides a way of earning for unemployed as well as acting as a symbol of tourism attractions. The increasing demand of craft products is acting as a boosting element for the economy. As craft industry is largely environment friendly and low on energy consumption which makes it a potential key player in country's economic growth and a sustainable way for empowerment of artisans.

There are several issues that need consideration, such as financial security, health safety, skill up gradation and introduction of new technology and innovations in designs. Walton<sup>29</sup> (1975) proposed eight major conceptual categories relating to Quality of Work Life as (1) Adequate and fair compensation, (2) safe and healthy working conditions, (3) immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, (4) opportunity for continued growth and security, (5) social integration in the work organization, (6) constitutionalism in the work Organization, (7) work and total life space and (8) social relevance of work life. Several published works have addressed the constructs that make up the Quality of Work Life domain and key elements of Quality of Work Life programs.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

By considering the above mentioned facts an empirical study was undertaken to find out the factors affecting the quality of work life of the artisans engaged in craft sector. The major objective of the study is to analyze the quality of work life in the major craft sectors in British Columbia, Canada. The study was conducted in the light of following objectives:

1. To identify the different parameters influencing quality of work life of artisans in the craft sector.

2. To identify most important factor/ factors of quality of work life.
3. To analyse and compare quality of work life of different groups of employees, grouped on the basis of the nature of job.
4. To suggest a conceptual framework on the basis of findings of the study.

## **HYPOTHESES**

In line with the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. The eight factors given by Walton for the measurement of quality of work life viz, adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities, opportunity for career growth, social integration in the work organization, constitutionalism in the work organisation, work and total life space, and the social relevance of work life, do not significantly differ when employees are classified on the basis of their demographic profiles like gender and age.
2. There is no such relationship between factors of quality of work life and employees' job related profiles such as nature of job i.e. these factors are independent.
3. Job related profiles do not have any significant influence on Quality of work life of employees.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study is exploratory kind as much is not known about the perception of handicraft employees regarding quality of work life and as such no information is available on how similar problems or research issues have been solved in the past. Hence, in this case extensive preliminary work was conducted and a model has been developed to propose a unique design for comprehensive investigation. In essence this research is based on exploratory research design to better comprehend the nature of quality of work life problem in the handicraft industries as only a few studies have been conducted in this area. To quote Uma Sekaran (2006), "Although few exploratory studies are currently undertaken in the management area, researchers do explore new grounds from time to time with changing dynamics that occur at the workplace". The same is also true for research on quality of work life. At one time exploratory studies were undertaken to understand what the concept quality of work life means. After extensive interviews with various groups of people, it was considered to encompass such factors as enriched jobs, healthy work environment, stress- free work relationships, job satisfaction, work role environment, and other work related factors. Current impression is that the concept of quality of work life is too narrow and limited to be useful for research.

## **SECONDARY DATA**

The literature review here is collected from various research journals, studies and publications. Sources from which secondary data have been drawn are from British Columbia craft council, Canadian Craft federation, Craft circle, and Gallery of BC ceramics.

## **PRIMARY DATA**

The study is mainly based on primary data, obtained from a well-designed questioner covering all aspects of quality of work life. This questioner is designed to cover people with different nature of job within an organization. Therefore, two different sections are included in the questionnaire-one section is for free lancers and another for employees of different section.

## **TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION**

For data collection a structured interview schedule was prepared in accordance with the objectives of study. This was pre-tested on a small group of artisans divided into different variables. A five point rating scale was used to draw information from the respondents. In the rating scale, 5 points assigned for strongly agree, 1 for strongly disagree and for in between ratings points 4, 3 and 2 were given.

## **SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

The convenience sampling was used to gather the information for the purpose of the study. Population for this study is all the artisans and associated employees of British Columbia, Canada. Various variables are adequate & fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, immediate chance to develop human capacities, chance for continued growth and security, social integration in the work

organization, constitutionalism in organization, work and life space and social relevance of working life. For purpose of this study artisans & employees are classified into different categories on basis of job profile, hierarchy level and type of profession.

## FINDINGS

While analyzing different factors influencing quality of work life, it has been observed that employees with higher job profile have more favourable opinion than employees in the lower job profile. Following analysis shows about- is there any noticeable difference in the overall quality of work life among different groups of employees or not.  $H(0)$  "Quality of work life (QWL1/ QWL2) is not significantly different on the basis of the nature of job".  $H(A)$  "Quality of work life (QWL1/QWL2) is significantly different on the basis of the nature of job".

<b>Table 1 : Classification on field of the profession</b>			
S.No	Profession	Number	Percent
1	Paintings	12	13.63
2	Pottery	11	12.52
3	Totem Poles	16	18.18
4	Furniture	18	20.45
5	Unique Textiles	16	18.18
6	Sculpture	15	17.04
		Total=88	Total=100

Table 1 shows that out of total sample there are 12 respondents in the painting profession which comes out to be 13.63% of total respondents, 11 respondents in pottery accounting for 12.52 %, 16 respondents in Totem Poles profession accounting for 18.18 %, 18 respondents in furniture accounting for 20.45%, 16 respondents in unique textiles profession accounting for 18.18% and 15 respondents in sculpture profession accounting for 17.04% of total respondents.

<b>Table 2 : Classification on the nature of the job</b>			
S.No	Nature of the job	Number	Percent
1	Freelancer	34	38.63
2	Supervisor	18	20.45
3	Artisan	36	40.90
		Total= 100	Total= 100

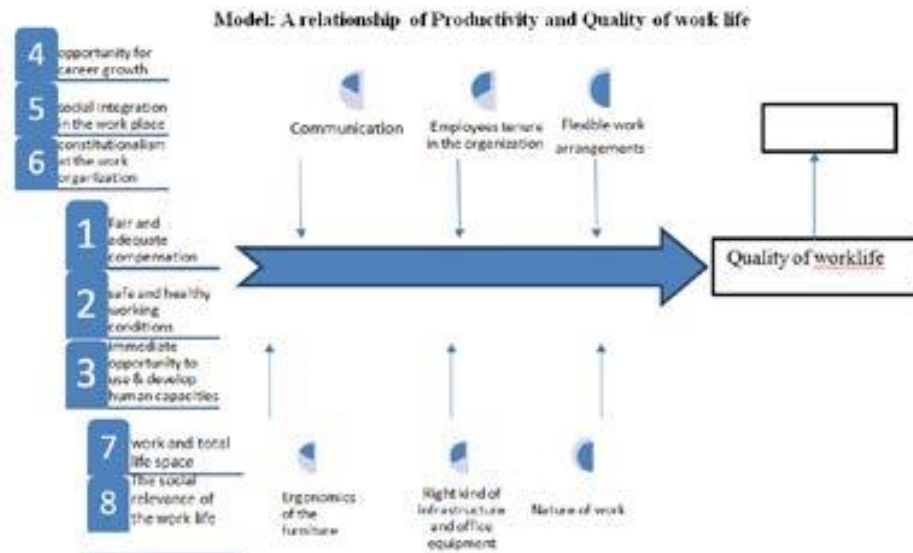
Table 2 represents that 34 respondents are Freelancer accounting for 38.63% of the total respondents, 18 respondents are Supervisors accounting for 20.45% and 36 out of total respondents are Artisans accounting for 40.90%.

<b>Table 3 : Classification on duration in profession)</b>			
S.No	Length of service	Number	Percent
1	Less than 3 years	24	27.27
2	3 to 5 years	16	29.54
3	5 to 10 years	21	23.86
4	10 years or above 10 years	17	19.31
		Total=88	Total=100

Table 3 illustrates the number and percent of the total respondents on the basis of duration in their present profession. 24 out of 88 respondents are working in the same profession for less than 3 years accounting for 27.27%, maximum number of respondents fall in the category of 3 to 5 years i.e. 26 which represents 29.54% of the total respondents. 21 respondents

are working in the same profession for 5 to 10 years accounting for 23.86%. There are 21 respondents who are working in their current profession for 10 years or above which comes out to be 19.31% of total respondents.

**Conclusion:** This study has attempted to correlate the productivity and a satisfaction derived out of quality of work life. Various factors of work environment determine the satisfaction, productivity and profitability of the organization. The model attempted in this paper if implemented well by decision makers may enhance the work life quality and productivity simultaneously.



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