QUALITY OF LIFE OF INDIAN MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

We describe multi-domain Quality of Life (QOL) in terms of 25 different predictors. Controlling for Socio-Economic Status (SES) variables, significant relationships of age and other independent variables with QOL were indicated among managers in North India. Standardized partial beta coefficients revealed that the best component predictors of QOL are satisfaction with: success in coping with changes in life, one's ideas of right or wrong, trying out things, physical health, and resolution of conflict with others; and best domain predictors are satisfaction with: 'growth becoming', 'physical being', and 'spiritual being' domains. The implications for future studies and theory construction are explored.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is on the correlates of QOL among the managers in industries in north India. Primarily, three questions are addressed: (i) in general what relationships are revealed between variety of satisfaction variables and overall QOL, (ii) to what extent are these general relationships altered by introduction of SES control variables such as education, salary, age, and sex, and (iii) what is the relative contribution of the independent variables considered in explaining the variance in overall QOL? We selected satisfaction variables covering 9-domains of QOL, namely, (1) My body & health; (2) My thoughts & feelings; (3) My beliefs & values; (4) Where I live & spend time; (5) The people around me; (6) My access to community resources; (7) The daily things I do; (8) The things I do for fun & enjoyment; and (9) The things I do to cope and change.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data analyzed here are obtained from 207 managers, including 167 males and 40 females, aged 30 years and above. These were drawn from manufacturing and service industries located in the National Capital Region of Delhi and two neighboring states' industrial belts, one in Uttar Pradesh and the other in Haryana, all in North India. QOL, as a dependent variable, was measured by the instrument designed by Brown, Dennis and Renwick [1]. The extent of a person's QOL in each of three main-domains, *Being; Belonging;* and *Becoming* is determined by two factors: 'importance' and 'satisfaction'. Each domain is further constituted of three domains amounting to a total of nine. QOL consists of the relative importance rating and satisfaction rating attached to each dimension under each domain. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's) were calculated by the authors for Importance, Enjoyment/satisfaction, and QOL scores within each domain and sub-domain. For Importance, all domain and sub-domain indices exceeded 0.70, except for Spiritual Being (0.68) and Community Belonging (0.62). For Satisfaction, all coefficients exceeded 0.70 (two sub-domains were greater than 0.80).

Twenty-five independent variables included in this study were grouped in eleven major categories:

socio-economic status, personal background characteristics, physical being, psychological being, spiritual being, physical belonging, social belonging, community belonging, practical becoming, leisure becoming and growth becoming. Socioeconomic status comprised of education and annual salary of managers only. Background characteristics include age and sex of the managers. Rest of the 9 domains of QOL included some selected 21 statements /variables out of total 54 statements of the instrument. Twenty one questions, posed as "How satisfied am I with…," determined satisfaction measured on five-point scale (ranging from 1=*Not At All Satisfied*, to 5=*Extremely Satisfied*). Here satisfaction measure in Physical Being domain covers physical health & nutrition, Psychological Being covers mental health and freedom from worry & stress, Spiritual Being covers beliefs of right & wrong and helpfulness, Physical Belonging includes housing and personal space, Social Belonging covers closeness to family-similar to informal familial participation, and speaking to acquaintances-similar to informal non-familial participation; Community Belonging includes, 'the amount of money I have-similar to financial status', connection to meaningful Activities and other resources available to most members of the community; Practical Becoming embraces the work being done at the job; Leisure Becoming accounts for availing vacations & holidays for recuperation and finally most important of all the Growth Becoming domain includes all the five item of the instrument that hug improving self and adjusting to life's changes.

Pearson correlations were used to determine the general relationship between independent variables and scores of overall QOL. Subsequently, the Socio-Economic Status variables (education & salary) were applied as controls and the partial correlations between the remaining variables and overall QOL were found. Finally, standardized partial beta coefficients were computed using multiple regressions with overall QOL as dependent variable, providing a measure of the relative contribution of each predictor in accounting for QOL.

RESULTS

Of the nine major categories of factors only Socio-Economic Status category (education; salary) fails to relate significantly. Of the background characteristics, only 'Age' is positively and significantly related to QOL. In fact, Managers in the late middle age (55 yrs & above) cherish 'Overall Quality of Life' more than the managers in the 'Early Adult Age' (30-35 yrs). Looking at each of the nine categories or nine sub-domains of QOL, high positive correlations are observed of satisfaction scores of all satisfaction factors with QOL (range 0.411 to 0.670). Under Social Belonging, satisfactions with 'Being close to people in my family' (similar to Informal familial participation) and 'Speaking with acquaintances' (similar to Informal non-familial participation) show positive association with QOL. Similarly, for the Physical Belonging domain, 'Having space for privacy' & 'The House or apartment I live in' are positively associated with the QOL. Satisfaction with 'The work I do at my job' (Practical Becoming domain) also has a high relationship with QOL. 'Coping with changes in life'; 'My solving my own problems' are the most strong relation with QOL while all other satisfaction factors under 'Growth Becoming' indicate weaker relationships.

With these relationships, we addressed the potential effect of control variables. Our specific concern was whether the general relationships noted with respect to Background variable and variables under each of Physical Being, Physical Being, Spiritual Being, Physical Belonging, Social Belonging, Community Belonging, Practical Becoming, Leisure Becoming and Growth Becoming remain related to QOL when control variables are introduced. SES has often been identified as a critical factor. Therefore it was instituted as a control (i.e., controlling for SES). Results show that most of the variables are significantly related to QOL independent of SES, but Sex is still not related. Age is still significantly related to overall QOL. All other variables, found earlier statistically significant in the first phase of the

analysis (zero order), still remain significant after controlling for SES, having somewhat higher relationships with overall QOL. In the present study none of the significant zero order correlations was eliminated when controlling for SES.

It is interesting to note that 11 variables (out of total 25 independent variables taken in the study) showed significant variance by contributing to prediction of QOL, betas varying between 0.194 & 0.49. The overall multiple regression was fairly efficient, accounting for 74.88% variance in overall QOL (multiple correlation = 0.865). The examination of magnitude of individual coefficients (betas) of 11 variables in the regression analysis showed that:

(i) 'Coping with changes in life' (Growth Becoming Domain), 'My own ideas of right or wrong' (Spiritual Being Domain), 'My trying out things', 'My Physical health' (Physical Being), 'My resolving conflict with others' (Growth Becoming), are the five primary, strongly significant positive predictors (Betas 0.24 to 0.49) of QOL

(ii) The Betas in descending order, from 0.224 to 0.21, correspond to 'Speaking with acquaintances' (Social Belonging **-** similar to Informal non-familial participation'), 'My nutrition & food I eat' (Physical Being Domain), 'The work I do at my job' (Practical. Becoming Domain), 'My resolving conflict with others' (Growth Becoming Domain), and 'The House or apartment I live in' (Physical Belonging Domain)

(iii) Unexpectedly, contrary to the positive non-significant zero order correlation of 'Salary' with QOL, the negative coefficient (beta = -0.194) appearing in the stepwise regression causes significant negative variance, but of less than 1% in overall QOL

(iv) Although the factor 'My solving my own problems' (Growth Becoming) explains 3.58% variance in QOL, it remains non-significant. The factor, 'Taking vacations & holidays' (Leisure Becoming) yielded positive but non-significant variance in overall QOL

Now we examine multiple correlations of independent variables SES, Age, Sex, and 9 QOL domain predictors with QOL. Here the domain-satisfaction scores, taken as independent variables, account for all the 54-items of the QOL Scale. Looking at QOL Domain Predictors:

(i) First strongest domain predictor 'Growth Becoming Domain' (b =0.657) explains highest 54.71% variance in overall QOL

(ii) Second primary strong domain predictor 'Physical Being Domain' (b =0.44) explains incremental R^2 of 4.83% in overall QOL

(iii) Third primary strong domain predictor 'Spiritual Being Domain (b = 0.41)'explains incremental R^2 of 1.77 % in overall QOL

(iv) The fourth and the fifth domain predictors are 'Leisure Becoming (b = 0.29, incremental R^2 0.88 %)' and 'Social Belonging (b = 0.246; incremental R^2 11.27 %)', respectively.

(v) Interestingly, the 'Social Belonging Domain' explains the second highest incremental variance in QOL. Hence the variables of 'The people around me" are significantly contributive in the QOL variance.

(vi) Grouping of the 5- primary strong predictors (Betas 0.24 to 0.49) in their respective domains of QOL, yields 'Growth Becoming', 'Spiritual Being' and 'Physical Being' Domains. Total variance explained by 11 significant predictors in the regression equation accounts for 71.01%. First 3-QOL components ('Coping with changes in life'; 'My resolving conflict with others' & 'My trying out things') making up for 'Growth Becoming' domain alone constitute two third of above variance (i.e., R^2 = 47.51%). Second 2-QOL components (My nutrition & food I eat & My Physical health) adding up for Physical Being domain account for (R^2 11.28%). Third QOL component (My own ideas of right or wrong) adding up for Spiritual Being domain explains incremental R^2 of 6.49 % in

overall QOL. Hence variance-wise components of QOL, explain variances, highest in 'Growth Becoming', second highest in 'Physical Being' and third highest in 'Spiritual Domains'.

(vii) The overall multiple regression was fairly efficient, accounting for 73.93% variance in Overall QOL (multiple correlation = 0.860).

This study shows that next to Growth Becoming, health (as a Physical Being), is the second dominant domain & third dominant factor predictor of Quality of life and socioeconomic status was weakly and non-significantly related to quality of life. None of the significant zero order correlations was eliminated when controlling for SES (education & salary). Age & Sex did not bear significant relation to QOL.

DISCUSSION

In terms of zero order correlations no substantial support for previous research is found as far as SES and Sex are concerned. A substantial support is found for zero order correlations for Informal non-familial participation ('Speaking with acquaintances') and Informal familial participation ('Being close to people in my family'), and Financial satisfaction (The amount of money I have). Switching to the partial correlations, the significance of SES (education & salary) fail to eliminate significant relations of zero order, and prove not efficacious in accounting for QOL. Age, Sex and education do not serve as predictors while Salary is a negative predictor with limited variance in QOL,

The strongest QOL component of coping changes in life and strongest QOL domain predictors belonging to the Growth Becoming, and also components of nutrition & physical health in the Physical Being domain along with beliefs of right and wrong under Spiritual Being domain, signal to us that there is a shift underway in the industry. These three domains outweigh significantly other domains in predicting Quality of Life in the industry. To stay competitive and growing, managers need to adopt good nutrition and health consciousness, personal values, beliefs of right or wrong and connection to people around. Our study of correlates of quality of life offers potential for future research in this direction.

This study suggests that theory building-efforts should consider growth becoming, physical being and spiritual being components in the development of future models to account for Quality of Life. The study offers implications for Human Resources Management strategies, suggesting more tangible output from use of above components and components of Quality of Work life for designing policies and creating organizational environment where both QWL and QOL are issues of interest.

REFERENCES

[1] Brown, I., Renwick, R. & Raphael, D. (1997). *Quality of Life Instrument Package*. Toronto: Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto.