



Exploring the relationship between work environment and quality of life

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between work environment factors and overall quality of life in Hubli-Dharwad. Data were collected from 384 respondents to examine how various elements, including work-related social interactions, time management, financial situation, job opportunities, and governance, impact individuals' perceptions of their quality of life. The results reveal that while social interactions and effective time management are positively correlated with life satisfaction, key challenges such as financial insecurity, limited job opportunities, and lack of trust in local administration significantly hinder quality of life. Over 63% of participants reported dissatisfaction with their financial situation, and 40.88% expressed dissatisfaction with local job opportunities. Additionally, nearly 78% had little to no trust in local governance. The study concludes that improvements in both the work environment and socio-economic conditions, including better financial stability, employment opportunities, and enhanced public trust, are essential for fostering an improved quality of life. This research highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach, integrating workplace reforms and broader socio-economic policies, to address these issues. Future studies should further investigate the impact of specific interventions on quality of life in similar contexts.

Keywords: Work environment, quality of life, social interactions, financial satisfaction, job opportunities, local governance

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, the nature of the work environment plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's overall well-being and satisfaction with life. As employees spend a significant portion of their daily lives at work, the physical, psychological, and social aspects of their workplace inevitably influence their quality of life. A healthy work environment not only enhances productivity and motivation but also fosters mental and emotional stability, job satisfaction, and a sense of fulfillment.

Quality of life is a broad and multidimensional concept that encompasses physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, and personal beliefs. When considered in the context of employment, it extends to include factors such as job security, work-life balance, organizational culture, and interpersonal relationships at work. The dynamic interaction between these elements can either enhance or diminish an individual's quality of life.

The relationship between work environment and quality of life has been widely studied across disciplines such as organizational psychology, occupational health, and human resource management. Scholars have emphasized that the work environment is a critical factor influencing employees' physical and psychological well-being, which in turn affects their overall quality of life.

The term "work environment" encompasses both the physical and psychosocial conditions under which employees operate. According to Chand and Katou (2007) [2], it includes elements such as organizational culture, leadership style, physical workspace, workload, and interpersonal relationships. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines quality of life as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of culture, value systems, goals, expectations, and concerns. Research has shown that the physical aspects of the work environment—such as lighting, ergonomics, air quality, and workspace design—directly influence employee health and

comfort (Vischer, 2007) [6]. Poor physical conditions can contribute to fatigue, discomfort, and stress, ultimately decreasing job satisfaction and life satisfaction.

Psychosocial elements, including job autonomy, support from supervisors, recognition, and opportunities for growth, play a significant role in enhancing employees' mental well-being. Karasek and Theorell's (1990) [4] Job Demand-Control model posits that high job demands coupled with low control lead to stress and reduced quality of life, while high control and support mitigate stress and improve well-being.

A supportive organizational culture that fosters collaboration, respect, and inclusion is strongly linked to higher levels of employee engagement and psychological safety. Studies by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) [1] indicate that positive interpersonal relationships at work act as a buffer against burnout and contribute to greater job satisfaction and life balance.

Work-life balance has emerged as a key determinant of quality of life in contemporary research. According to Greenhaus and Allen (2011) [3], organizations that provide flexible working arrangements and respect personal time are more likely to retain satisfied and productive employees. Lack of balance, in contrast, often results in work-family conflict, emotional exhaustion, and diminished life quality.

Evidence suggests that organizational interventions aimed at improving the work environment—such as employee wellness programs, mental health support, and leadership training—can have a measurable impact on quality of life outcomes. For instance, LaMontagne *et al.* (2007) [5] demonstrated that comprehensive workplace health programs reduce psychological distress and improve employee morale and retention.

This article explores the intricate connection between the work environment and quality of life, highlighting how factors such as leadership style, workload, organizational support, and physical working conditions contribute to

employees’ overall well-being. Understanding this relationship is crucial for organizations aiming to create supportive, inclusive, and sustainable workplaces that not only drive performance but also prioritize the holistic development of their workforce.

Research Methodology

The cities of Hubli and Dharwad, which exemplify key aspects of urbanization, were chosen for this study. The cities have a total of 82 wards, from which two wards were selected: ward no. 11 and 19 from Dharwad city, and ward no. 32 and 44 from Hubli city, due to their heightened urbanization, a principal focus of the study. An eligible individual from each family, including 400 respondents, has been selected; they must be over 30 years of age, married, and possess an educational background.

In the current study, 100 participants were chosen from four wards. Of the 400 respondents, 384 provided valid responses by submitting full questionnaires. Sixteen respondents were excluded due to incomplete questionnaires and failure to return them. The data was gathered from all 384 members of the Hubli Dharwad Municipal Corporation. Data was collected via questionnaires and schedules, along with discussions with key informants and observational methods. The questionnaire and interview schedule were developed in both English and Kannada to obtain accurate responses regarding the quality of life of inhabitants in the Hubli-Dharwad area.

Result

Table 1: Work environment and Quality of life

Way of Spending time and Quality of life	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very dissatisfied	6	1.56
Moderately dissatisfied	99	25.78
A little dissatisfied	55	14.32
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	17	4.44
A little satisfied	13	3.38
Moderately satisfied	12	3.13
Very satisfied	182	47.39
Chat with Co-workers and Quality of life		
More than 3 times	211	54.94
2-3 times	81	21.09
Once	72	18.75
Never	9	2.34
Don't know / Not applicable	11	2.88
Feeling of Restrained and Quality of Life		
All the time	12	3.12
Often	7	1.82
Occasionally	245	63.8
Never	111	28.9
Don't know / Not applicable	9	2.36
The financial situation of Respondent's and Quality of Life		
Very satisfied	37	9.64
Fairly satisfied	26	6.77
Satisfied	42	10.93
Not at all satisfied	243	63.28
Don't know / Not applicable	36	9.38
Finding Job in Hubli-Dharwad city and Quality of Life		
Very satisfied	21	5.46
Fairly satisfied	75	19.54
Satisfied	54	14.06
Not at all satisfied	157	40.88
Don't know / Not applicable	77	20.06
Trust on Local Administration and Quality of Life		
Very satisfied	13	3.38
Fairly satisfied	17	4.45
Satisfied	11	2.86
Not at all satisfied	299	77.86
Don't know / Not applicable	44	11.45
Working Environment in City and Quality of Life		
Very satisfied	39	10.15
Fairly satisfied	33	8.59
Satisfied	95	24.74
Not at all satisfied	173	45.05
Don't know / Not applicable	44	11.47
Total	384	100

The data reveals significant insights into how various aspects of work and living conditions influence the quality

of life among respondents in Hubli-Dharwad. A large proportion of individuals (47.39%) reported being very

satisfied with the way they spend their time, which suggests that time management or engagement in meaningful activities contributes positively to their well-being. Similarly, frequent communication with co-workers was prevalent, with 54.94% engaging in chats more than three times a day. This level of social interaction in the workplace likely plays a crucial role in enhancing emotional support and job satisfaction.

However, the responses also highlight areas of serious concern. A striking 63.28% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their financial situation, indicating that economic insecurity is a major factor negatively impacting quality of life. Furthermore, when asked about the availability of jobs in the Hubli-Dharwad region, 40.88% reported being not at all satisfied, suggesting a lack of suitable employment opportunities and possibly contributing to stress and frustration. The sentiment toward local governance was also overwhelmingly negative, with 77.86% expressing no trust or satisfaction with the local administration, indicating a deep discontent with public services and civic management.

In terms of the working environment in the city, 45.05% of respondents were not at all satisfied, pointing to the need for improvement in workplace conditions and infrastructure. While feelings of being restrained were mostly reported as occasional (63.8%), it still indicates the presence of stressors within the work setting that should not be overlooked. Overall, while interpersonal dynamics and personal time management seem to contribute positively to quality of life, broader systemic issues such as economic hardship, limited job access, and poor governance significantly detract from overall well-being.

Discussion

The findings of this study emphasize the multifaceted nature of quality of life, particularly regarding the interplay between work environment factors and socio-economic conditions. While some positive aspects were noted—such as satisfaction with time use and workplace social interactions—the results also reveal substantial dissatisfaction in critical areas like financial stability, job opportunities, and trust in local administration, which collectively hinder overall well-being.

Social interaction at work emerged as a key contributor to quality of life, with more than half of the respondents engaging in conversations with co-workers' multiple times a day. This aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that social support at work can act as a resource to buffer against stress and improve job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007)^[1]. In fact, studies have shown that supportive relationships within the workplace promote not only individual well-being but also organizational performance (Vischer, 2007)^[6]. Similarly, respondents' high satisfaction with their time use supports findings from other research that time management and engagement in personally meaningful activities are associated with better quality of life (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011)^[3].

However, the financial dissatisfaction expressed by 63.28% of participants presents a critical concern. Financial insecurity is well-documented as a significant stressor that diminishes life satisfaction and is associated with poorer health outcomes (Karasek & Theorell, 1990)^[4]. The lack of satisfaction with local job opportunities (40.88%)

exacerbates this issue, suggesting that insufficient access to stable employment contributes to economic anxiety, which is detrimental to mental and emotional well-being. This finding aligns with the work of LaMontagne *et al.* (2007)^[5], who noted that job insecurity and poor labor market conditions can lead to chronic stress and reduced life satisfaction.

In addition to economic factors, the data reveals a profound dissatisfaction with the local administration, with 77.86% of respondents expressing low trust in public governance. This finding is consistent with research by Greenhaus and Allen (2011)^[3], who emphasized that organizational and institutional trust is crucial for individuals' sense of security and overall quality of life. A lack of trust in local administration can exacerbate feelings of alienation and frustration, diminishing engagement with community development and governance processes.

The dissatisfaction with the working environment in Hubli-Dharwad (45.05%) further highlights the importance of creating supportive, comfortable, and empowering workplace environments. According to Vischer (2007)^[6], physical and psychological work conditions significantly affect employee performance, mental health, and job satisfaction. The prevalence of occasional feelings of restraint at work suggests that organizational structures may not always provide the necessary resources for employees to feel autonomous and supported, which can lead to stress and burnout over time.

Overall, while aspects like interpersonal relationships and time management show potential benefits for quality of life, structural issues such as financial insecurity, limited job opportunities, and poor governance are the most significant barriers. As Bakker and Demerouti (2007)^[1] argue, work environments should be designed to reduce stressors and enhance resources. Policymakers and organizational leaders must therefore focus on improving employment prospects, financial stability, and trust in public institutions to enhance residents' overall quality of life.

Conclusion

This study has explored the significant relationship between work environment factors and the overall quality of life for residents in Hubli-Dharwad. The findings suggest that while certain elements, such as workplace social interactions and personal time management, positively influence individuals' well-being, several critical issues, such as financial dissatisfaction, limited job opportunities, and a lack of trust in local administration, present significant barriers to improving quality of life.

The study emphasizes the importance of creating supportive and engaging work environments where social connections, autonomy, and meaningful work are prioritized, as these factors have a direct impact on emotional and mental well-being. However, the results also highlight the need for broader socio-economic reforms to address the financial insecurities and limited employment prospects that continue to affect a large portion of the population. Additionally, improving governance and strengthening public trust can further enhance quality of life by fostering a sense of security and stability among citizens.

To improve the quality of life in Hubli-Dharwad, it is essential for both organizational leaders and policymakers to focus on creating more equitable and supportive systems, addressing job market gaps, and ensuring the provision of

sufficient social and economic resources. Ultimately, enhancing the work environment alone may not be enough without comprehensive socio-economic and governance reforms that support a holistic approach to quality of life.

Future research should consider examining the impact of specific workplace interventions and local policy changes in greater detail, particularly in regions with similar socio-economic challenges. Such research could further inform strategies that bridge the gap between work satisfaction and broader life outcomes.

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