

## QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND ACEDAMIC DUAL – CAREER COUPLES JOB SATISFACTION

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### ABSTRACT

Dual career faculty couples face a unique set of challenges within the academic world. While these couples face the same challenges as all dual career couples, faculty couples have to also combine these normal stresses with special challenges of working as a faculty member. Aim of this research is to establish the relationship between Dimensions of Quality of Work Life and the factors of job satisfaction. The sample consists of 55 academic dual careers from affiliated engineering colleges of Chennai city, India. The questionnaire was designed based on the attribute and variables of quality of work life and job satisfaction reviews and questionnaire from past studies. The constituted variables in the study were subjected to for their validity and reliability. Reliability of the variables quality of work life and job satisfaction was 0.78 and 0.81 respectively. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test used to calculate the significance value of variables. Spearman and Kendall tests were used to test the relationship between the variables. Results showed the significant positive relationship between dimensions of quality of work life and job satisfaction.

**KEYWORDS:** Quality of Work Life, Job Satisfaction, Academic Dual Career Couples, Affiliated Engineering Colleges, Chennai, India

### INTRODUCTION

Several decades ago there was a global social pattern where husbands were considered to be the bread winners, whereas wives stayed at home and were mainly engaged in bringing up their children and doing household chores. However, this pattern has changed dramatically and irreversibly in global level in general and in Europe and USA in particular. As a result, today both, husbands and wives have their own career aspirations and this has caused a range of implications for their families, as well as, organizations employing them. However, dual-career couples and working parents might be subjected to pressure in their attempts to balance their work and family responsibilities. And this pressure is even greater when dual-career couples have a child or children and the pressure is associated with the child care when both parents are at work and a sense of guild felt by some working parents for not being able to spend enough time with their children. The way in which dual-career couples devote their time and divide their responsibilities gives insight into the importance they place on work and family roles (Papp, 2000). A line of thinking that has gained traction in terms of helping dual-career couples negotiate their time is to re-conceptualize their lives as consisting of three careers – his, hers, and the career of the family (Levner, 2000).

36% of the American professoriate is part of an academic couple, 38% of academic couples work in the same department. 88% of faculty who successfully negotiated a dual hire at their current institution indicated that the fire hire would have refused the position had her or his partner not found appropriate employment. 47% of faculty with academic partners not that they have lost professional mobility as a result of their partnerships. Meeting the needs and expectations of dual-career academic couples - while still ensuring the high quality of university faculty - is one of the great challenges

facing universities. Academic couples (those with both partners working in an academic environment) represent a deep pool of talent. Yet, dual-career academic hiring often remains difficult and controversial. The Clayman Institute's 2008 study, *Dual-Career Academic Couples: What Universities Need to Know*, surveyed 30,000 faculty at 13 of the nation's leading public and private research universities. The report reviews practices, policies and programs for administrators to successfully work with the hiring and retaining of dual-career academic couples.

Employee perception of the support their company provides them in balancing career with family roles affect critical employee attitudes such as employee commitment, job satisfaction, and employee morale, Chusmir, (1986); Magid, (1983). Other studies have identified a causal relationship between employee perceptions of the support of their company with employee productivity and have established a correlation of worker's attitude of QWL concepts with employee morale, employee loyalty to the organization, and overall job satisfaction. Those of us in family-friendly firms do spend less time on work and more on life outside work—but our job performance is no different from that of people in non-supportive organizations, and we are more committed to our organizations. Kirk H. Schulz and Noel N. Schulz, 2005 suggested six tips for academic dual working couples work life balance to have a balance between work and life are Know thyself and your partner, Be Organized, Time Versus Money, Issues related to Children, Time for you, Miscellaneous Tips and Advice. Several decades ago there was a global social pattern where husbands were considered to be the breadwinners, whereas wives stayed at home and were mainly engaged in bringing up their children and doing household chores. However, this pattern has changed dramatically and irreversibly in global level in general and in Europe and USA in particular. As a result, today both, husbands and wives have their own career aspirations and this has caused a range of implications for their families, as well as, organizations employing them. Organizations have to introduce specific measures and initiatives in order to assist their dual-career couples and parent employees to achieve work-life balance, and thus to achieve their commitment and contribution to the achievement of organizational objectives in an effective manner.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Sekaran (1986) illustrates a number of critical issues in dual-career families: (a) their need for flexible work patterns, enabling them to balance the demands of family and career; (b) the need for revised benefits plans that will allow couples to start families without jeopardizing their career prospects; and (c) their need to be freed from anxieties about child care when they are at work. Work responsibilities and family obligations compete for time and attention in most working adults. The more time individuals allocate to one arena, the less they have to allocate to the other, Moen, Waisman-Manor, & Sweet, (2002). When individuals feel that too many demands of one domain are unmet, they experience work-family conflict, which is consistent with a conflict approach (also referred to as depletion or resource drain) to the relationship between work and family roles, Edwards & Rothbard, (2000); Greenhaus & Beutell, (1985); Lambert, (1990). However, when individuals are able to allocate their time and energy to meet the demands of each domain, they feel successful in balancing work and family. This is consistent with past literature that has defined work-family balance in terms of satisfactorily resolving competing demands emanating from the work and family domains, Bohlen & Viveros-Long, (1981); Clark, (2000); Greenhaus & Beutell, (1985); Higgins, Duxbury, & Johnson, (2000); Kossek, Noe, & DeMarr, (1999). If members of dual-career families face problems in simultaneously meeting the demands of work and family, what would be their perceived attitude toward work if quality of work-life concepts and benefits were supported by the organization? The research supports that many managers in organizations cite issues with lost time at work, lack of motivated workers, and loss of worker productivity resulting from work-family conflicts. Absenteeism, employee turnover, and job satisfaction attributable to the existence or non-existence of quality of work-life concepts in the workplace are also concerns of managers as cited in the research

It is a fact nowadays that “the number of dual-career couples is increasing and the trend is worldwide. DuPont, for example, has 3,500 dual-career couples in the workforce of 100,000”, Aswathappa and Dash, (2007). Werner and DeSimone (2009) explain this dramatic increase in the numbers of dual career couples with increasing role and rights of woman in society and changing family values. However, dual-career couples and working parents might be subjected to pressure in their attempts to balance their work and family responsibilities. And this pressure is even greater when dual-career couples have a child or children and the pressure is associated with the child care when both parents are at work and a sense of guilt felt by some working parents for not being able to spend enough time with their children. Specifically, according to a survey conducted by Alcorn (2011) 43 per cent of working parents struggle with depression, whereas 80 per cent catch up on work nights and weekends, and 88 per cent have stated that they suffer from at least one stress-related health problem since becoming a working parent. Moreover, numerous other studies of the same nature have. Shelley A. Haddock, Toni Schindler Zimmerman, Scott J. Ziemba, (2006) In order to successfully balance work and family life, both employers and employees have significant tasks, and both employers and families benefit from family-friendly policies. This study shows that workplace and organizational support, supervisor support, job/professional autonomy, and workplace flexibility are the most important variables among workplace strategies.

Gary Kiger and Dr. Pam Riley Our findings suggest marital satisfaction is affected more by immediate family-related variables (e.g., emotion-work satisfaction) than by the availability of work-related benefits. For men, a perception of family cohesion and satisfaction with the emotion-work arrangement in the marriage had the most significant effect on marital satisfaction. For women, the more satisfied she was with her job and the more hours per week she spends on housework, the less marital satisfaction she reported. The more satisfaction a woman reported with the emotion-work and with the household-task arrangements in the relationship, the more marital satisfaction she reported. Eve Sprunt and Susan Howes, Chevron, 2012 the challenges women face with relocation and childrearing should be handled by employers as dual-career couples issues. However, that does not mean both genders necessarily have the same value systems or perspectives. Women place a much higher priority on protecting their partner’s career.

This may change in time as more women assume an equal financial role in family life. The differences between women and men tend to be reduced for couples making nearly equal contributions to household finances. Some of the strategies adopted by organizations for dual career couples are Telecommuting, Offering, Job Sharing, etc, Career and Life Counseling, Offering Flexible Time Off, Employing Both Partners, Marc Sher & Mary, (2006) in any discipline in which the density of positions is low, dual career couples will have difficulties finding jobs in the same area. In a male-dominated profession, these difficulties will disproportionately affect women. In recent years, college and universities have begun to recognize the “two-body opportunity”. By considering the two-body problem as a two-body opportunity, institutions can get top-notch faculty, who are happy, productive and likely to stay, and who provide an excellent role model for undergraduates.

Chandranshu Sinha, (2012) the three emerging factors were “relationship-sustenance orientation”, “futuristic and professional orientation” and “self-deterministic and systemic orientation”. The results indicate that these factors have substantial roles to play in satiating the needs of the employees and how at middle managerial level different aspects are valued and employed for developing a unique and inimitable quality of working life within their socio-technical systems for eliciting favorable job-related responses. The concept of quality of work life appeared near the end of the 1960s, encompassing a variety of theoretical concepts that aimed at counterbalancing organizational problems. Luthans (1998) believed that the concept of quality of work life had become an important social issue around the world while in previous decades the only focal issue was the quality of peoples’ personal lives. Today quality of work life is a dynamic

multidimensional concept that includes such concepts as job security, rewarding systems, promotional opportunities, and involvement in decision-making Processes.

Seyed Mehdi Hosseini (2010) argues that career satisfaction, career achievement and career balance are not only the significant variables to achieve good quality of work life but quality of work life (QWL) or the quality of work system as one of the most interesting methods creating motivation and is a major way to have job enrichment which has its roots in staff and managers' attitude to motivation category that is more attention to fair pay, growth opportunities and continuing promotion improves staff's performance which in turn increases QWL of employees.

Huzzard (2003) also points out that the concept of „quality of work life“ in 80s was a general term to include a set of conditions in different fields such as organization, work environment, and partnership. This was an equivalent to concepts such as “humanization of work” in Germany, "improvement working conditions” in France, or “protection workers” in some Eastern Europe countries. These differences imply different views to aspects of quality of working life. In other words, in the 80s, the concept of quality of working life detached psychology and approached a social approach; which was a technical perspective of organization and team. Moreover, the concept of quality of work life is related to the social-technical systems in job enrichment which is associated with employees' participation and responsibilities in its own place. According to Royuela, Tamayo and Suriñach (2007), European Commission (EC) proposed ten dimensions for QWL, which are (1) intrinsic job quality, (2) skills, life-long learning and career development, (3) gender equality (4) health and safety at work, (5) flexibility and security, (6) inclusion and access to the labor market, (7) inclusion and access to the labor market, (8) social dialogue and worker involvement, (9) diversity and non-discrimination, and (10) overall work performance. Based on the literature questionnaire was formulated to measure the Quality of work life and job satisfaction on academic dual career couples.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study used a descriptive survey design. The purpose of descriptive surveys, according to Ezeani (1998), is to collect detailed and factual information that describes an existing phenomenon. A thorough review of literature was conducted before selecting the topic of the study. In this study, we focused on understanding the factors affecting quality of working life that is working towards the job satisfaction of academic dual career couples. In other words, this study examines the reasons behind what of academic dual career couples perceives about high-quality working-life experiences towards job satisfaction employed by affiliated engineering colleges.

The target populations of the study were 55 academic dual career couples who were selected from various affiliated engineering colleges to participate because very little empirical research work has been carried out for this group to understand the construct of QWL on job satisfaction of academic dual career couples. As a result, they are in better position to observe and experience the work behaviors and attitudes towards factors affecting quality of working life and job satisfaction in institution. This study aims to fill the niche by studying the perceptions of couples for quality of working life experiences towards job satisfaction.

It is hoped that this would provide more realistic and reliable data and information about the impact of efforts made by the affiliated engineering colleges for employment of dual career couples. Moreover, by understanding the reasons behind dual career couples' perception of QWL experiences, intuitions would be able to satisfy the various needs of the academic dual career couples' and in return elicit favorable job-related responses. Therefore, the findings regarding this group add another perspective to the management literature regarding factors that affect the construct of QWL on job satisfaction of academic dual career couples. The population was taken for survey from academic dual career couples

employed in various affiliated engineering colleges, based in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. A total enumeration sampling technique was used to select 55 academic dual career couple.

### **Objectives of the study**

The purpose of this study was to determine a set of factors that can adequately represent the conception of a quality of work life and job satisfaction. It is aimed to investigate the perception of academic dual-career couple have on QWL and its relationship to job satisfaction in affiliated engineering colleges. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to achieve the following:

- To identify and determine the extent of quality of work life of employees in academic dual career couple context.
- To investigate the relationship between the Quality of Work Life and job satisfaction of academic dual career couple in affiliated colleges

This study was guided by two research questions:

- What are the dimensions that represent the QWL; and
- Are there any relationships between QWL and organizational commitment?

### **Hypothesis Formulation**

#### **Main Hypothesis**

- There is significant positive relationship between Quality of work life and job satisfaction

#### **Secondary Hypothesis**

- There is positive relationship between Work complexity and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Autonomy and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Personal Growth opportunity and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Top Management support and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Workers control and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Concerned about organizational performance and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between Personal relation to job and job satisfaction
- There is positive relationship between General happiness and job satisfaction

### **Development of the Measuring Instruments**

According to Guna Seelan Rethinam,(2008), QWL is a multi-dimensional construct, made up of a number of interrelated factors that need careful consideration to conceptualize and measure. It is associated with job satisfaction, job involvement, motivation, productivity, health, safety and well-being, job security, competence development and balance between work and non work life. For achieving the objectives of the study, a structured questionnaire was designed based on Yousuf, 1996 theory of Quality of work life Questionnaire in first part .This test in English was originally developed by Yousuf, (1996). This questionnaire having 48 Likert Type items in dispersed along 8 dimensions .The dimensions are as follows. Work complexity, Autonomy, Personal Growth opportunity, Top Management support, Workers control, Concerned about organizational performance, Personal relation to job, General happiness. Secondly to measure job

satisfaction 16 items scale originally developed by Kanungo (1982) in English was used in the present study. It is a 5 point scale with “highly satisfied” to “highly dissatisfied” response pattern. The scoring rationale is, high scores indicate high level of satisfaction and the prescribed score range is 1 to 5 where, “5” indicates high level of satisfaction and “1” high level of dissatisfaction. The odd – even split half reliability coefficient of these scales with the present sample is 0.78 and 0.81. The relevant details about the various concepts and terms used in the questionnaire have been identified with the help of review of previous studies and also with the help of experts in relevant fields.

The last section was the demographic information of respondents namely; gender, age, marital status, number of children, education level, income level, position, years of service in the respective university and in higher education sector. To increase reliability and to assure appropriateness of the data collection instrument, the questionnaire was subject to a pilot test conducted with 10 academic couples in affiliated engineering colleges of Chennai city, Tamilnadu. A certain modifications, deletions and additions have been included with the existing Questionnaire. The final draft of the questionnaire was prepared to collect the relevant data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data collected using questionnaire tested for the reliability. Most popular measure for reliability analysis Cronbach’s Alpha using SPSS applied to measure eight dimensions (Work complexity Autonomy, Personal Growth opportunity, Top Management support, Workers control, Concerned about organizational performance, Personal relation to job, General happiness )of Quality of work life and six variables of Job satisfaction. The cronbach’s values of Quality of work life 0.78 and job satisfaction are 0.81. The Cronbach’s alpha with acceptable cut off point 0.70 demonstrates that all attributes are internally consistent (Fujun, Hutchinson, Li & Bai 2007). First of all for data analyzing, we applied Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to identify the statistical society normality. The results are presented in table 1

**Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

Variables	N	Sig.
Quality of work life	55	0.041
Work Complexity	55	0.025
Autonomy	55	0.022
Personal Growth Opportunities	55	0.037
Top management Support	55	0.026
Worker’s Control	55	0.018
Concern about organizational performance	55	0.046
General happiness	55	0.028
Personal relation to Job	55	0.034
Job satisfaction	55	0.017

As table 1 shows all calculated values are less than defined error of research (0.05), so the normality of statistical society is rejected. Therefore to analyzing data, we apply some non-parametric tests. As mentioned, the purpose of the paper is surveying the relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction of academic dual career couples. So for proving the relationship between “quality of work life” and “job satisfaction”, Spearman test was been used. Also Friedman and Average tests were applied to rank “quality of work life” dimensions and to measure the “organizational citizenship behavior”, “quality of work life” and its dimensions levels in direct order.

### Correlation Test for Measuring Relationship between QWL and JS

To investigate the relationship between “quality of work life” (QWL) and its dimensions with “Job Satisfaction” (JS) of academic dual career couples and achieve more exact results, Spearman and Kendall tests were used. The results are shown in table 2:

**Table 2: The Correlation between QWL and JS**

Correlation	Spearmanr	Sig.	Kendall's tau_b	Sig.	Test Results
Quality of work life and JS	0.53	0.031	0.605	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Work Complexity and JS	0.42	0.041	0.438	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Autonomy and JS	0.46	0.016	0.522	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Personal Growth Opportunities and JS	0.34	0.009	0.377	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Top management Support and JS	0.52	0.023	0.549	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Worker's Control and JS	0.46	0.004	0.478	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Concern about organizational performance and JS	0.38	0.023	0.407	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
General happiness and JS	0.51	0.036	0.594	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected
Personal relation to Job and JS	0.42	0.005	0.478	0.000	Ho Hypothesis is rejected

As table 2 presents, there is a meaningful and positive correlation between “quality of work life” and its dimensions with “Job Satisfaction”.

### Friedman Test

To categorize the “QWL” dimensions the Friedman test was applied and the results are shown in table 3: The calculated error is less than P-value. Among quality of work life dimensions, the “Concern about organizational performance” and “Top management Support” was placed in the first places and “General happiness” was placed in last one.

**Table 3: Results from Friedman Test Application for Categorizing QWL Dimensions**

Dimensions	Mean Rank	Rank
Work Complexity	3.87	5
Autonomy	3.46	4
Personal Growth Opportunities	3.06	3
Top management Support	2.94	2
Worker's Control	4.12	7
Concern about organizational performance	2.72	1
General happiness	4.24	8
Personal relation to Job	3.96	6
P < 0.05, Sig = 0.000, N = 145, df = 4, $\chi^2 = 134.26$		

### CONCLUSIONS

The way in which dual-career couples devote their time and divide their responsibilities gives insight into the importance they place on work and family roles (Papp, 2000). A line of thinking that has gained traction in terms of helping dual-career couples negotiate their time is to re-conceptualize their lives as consisting of three careers – his, hers, and the career of the family (Levner, 2000). A large number of academic dual career couples in academics in India are playing a significant role for economic growth. This study focused on identifying the factors that associated with Academic dual career couples' satisfaction and their quality of work life. More specifically the study was held to identify the relationship between QWL and academic dual career couples' job satisfactions. All factors were found positively

associated with QWL. The study indicated that QWL is positively and significantly related to employee satisfaction. The result of this study supports that the most important determinant of QWL is general happiness followed by workers controls. It can also be concluded from the data, that the individual's family life correlates significantly with his/her level of QWL. This further suggests that a successful family life carries over into one's career and makes one more satisfied with personal achievements in the context of academic dual career couples'.

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