

Quality of Working Life and Empowerment Predicting Organizational Loyalty of Employees

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Abstract

This This research aimed to 1) study the level of quality of working life, empowerment, and organizational loyalty of employees, 2) study the correlation between quality of working life and organizational loyalty of employees, 3) study the correlation between empowerment and organizational loyalty of employees, and 4) predict organizational loyalty of employees from quality of working life and empowerment. Samples were 80 employees working in a government-owned company working to develop industrial estates. Research instrument was a questionnaire. Statistics used for analyzing data were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient, and stepwise multiple regression analysis. The results showed that 1) average quality of working life of employees was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, S.D. = .76), average empowerment was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = .75), and organizational loyalty of employees was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = .82), 2) quality of working life was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .472$) at a statistical significance level of .01, 3) empowerment was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .558$) at a statistical significance level of .01, and 4) empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees at a statistical significance level of .01, considered as 31.20%.

Keywords: quality of working life, empowerment, organizational loyalty, employees

Introduction

A government-owned company working to develop industrial estates is an organization with missions to develop and establish industrial estates and manage areas for industrial factories to corporate systematically. This is considered one of the government mechanisms to distribute industrial development across urban regions. The vision is “To be the one who brings regional one-stop industrial development to sustainability by innovation”. Clear vision and good welfare of an organization positively influence job performance of employees as these employees set work goals in accordance with the organization’s purposes, affecting quality of working life which is what an employee would obtain after working. It values life, provides job security, and helps earn the respect of others in society, resulting in happiness in life (Sangsavang, 2016). For employees to achieve happiness at work, keep job engagement, and be in positive working environment helps decrease turnover rate. Good quality of working life not only satisfies employees but also brings about job satisfaction (Hackman and Suttle, 1977). Herzberg (1959) indicated that motivator factors such as job accomplishments, respect, etc. were directly related to intrinsic motivation. These motivator factors cause an employee to appreciate their own work and performance because an employee would generate motivation for working, resulting in increased work efficiency. Partly, job satisfaction stems from a new assigned task and having full responsibility for it. Yavirach (2015) explained that empowerment was providing the power to put on performance to employees. It gives employees the decision-making power, gives an organization a distribution of power to lower levels, and helps encourage attorneys. When employees acknowledge that their work is of great value to the organization, they are motivated to work, have self-confidence and the courage to make a decision, resulting in organizational loyalty. Buchanan (1974) defined organizational loyalty as feelings of organization engagement, feelings of being a part of the organization, a commitment to purposes and values of the organization, and a willingness to perform a task in accordance with purposes and values of the organization. According to the aforementioned, it can be concluded that quality of working life and empowerment positively influence happiness, job satisfaction, feelings towards the organization, a motivation to work, and an employee engagement. These factors help build organizational loyalty and decrease turnover rate. Therefore, the researchers are interested in studying the level of quality of working life, empowerment, and organizational loyalty of employees; the correlations between these three variables; and whether quality of working life and empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees working in a government-owned company working to develop industrial estates.

Objectives

1. To study the level of quality of working life, empowerment, and organizational loyalty of employees
2. To study the correlation between quality of working life and organizational loyalty of employees
3. To study the correlation between empowerment and organizational loyalty of employees

4. To predict organizational loyalty of employees from quality of working life and empowerment

Literature Review

Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Sheldon (1971) defined organizational loyalty as attitudes or feelings towards the organization which connected between an employee and their organization. An employee would give a positive assessment of their organization, resulting in an intention and effort to achieve the organization's purposes and values. Blau & Scott (1962) defined loyalty as feelings of allegiance to supervisors. They also stated that productivity of workers was strongly correlated with their loyalty; it was much easier for supervisors to command and motivate workers to work. Buchanan (1974) suggested that organizational loyalty was feelings of organization engagement, feelings of being a part of the organization, a commitment to purposes and values of the organization, and a willingness to perform a task in accordance with purposes and values of the organization. Steer (1991) added that organizational loyalty was how an individual showed their relationship with and commitment to the organization. Characteristics of an individual with organizational loyalty were high confidence in accepting the organization's purposes and values, a genuine willingness to devote oneself to the organization, hoping that the organization would succeed, a strong desire to be one of the members in the organization, a need and an intention to work for the organization permanently, loyalty to the organization, and a readiness to tell others that they were a part of the organization.

Components of Organizational Loyalty

Hoy & Rees (1974) presented that organization loyalty consisted of 3 aspects as follows: 1) Behavioral aspect which was a behavior that an individual exhibited after experiencing basic emotions, attitudes might be either one of the causes or one of the consequences of the exhibited behavior. An individual would have attitudes towards what one did, although the action was not in accordance with the attitudes before performing it. After performing an action, attitudes could be changed in a positive way in order to reduce stress such as feelings of not wanting to move from the organization. 2) Affective aspect which was an emotion occurred from one's assessment of another person or a situation such as a love of working with the organization and a satisfaction in the organization, 3) Cognitive aspect which was an individual's values or beliefs about another person or a situation influencing an individual's cognitive process and behaviors such as a trust in the organization, Fletcher (1993) proposed that organizational loyalty consisted of 3 components as follows: 1) An expression of the historical self which was an important basis of organizational loyalty as the historical self promoted relationship and ethics without obligation, an individual with organizational loyalty would openly express their historical self. 2) An attachment that is more than a habit which was a realization of one's own responsibility to the organization, an individual would devote oneself to the organization, be loyal to the organization, and show their uniqueness. 3) Avoidance of betrayal which was proving one's sincerity to the organization. An individual would not devote oneself to other organizations or perform an action that was dangerous to the organization, fight for the

organization, express gratitude to the organization, follow the organization's rules and regulations, and devote oneself to the organization.

Quality of Working Life

Walton (1973) defined quality of working life as how an individual worked to meet their needs and satisfy their desire by considering their individuality, personal and social status, and environment in the organization supporting job success. Bluestone (1977) clarified that quality of working life was an environment that helped increase workers' job satisfaction in which they were able to participate in decision making and problem solving of the organization, affecting their working life. Quality of working life also included human resource management. The workplace environment should be more democratic so that the organizational effectiveness was increased because to give an opportunity to any member of the organization would increase workers' satisfaction such as lower absence rate, higher product quality, fewer restrictions, lower frustration, etc. Mertion (1977) stated that quality of working life had a broad meaning; it included ethics, working conditions, and working environment. Objectives of working life were to evaluate working environment and workers' satisfaction, to manage product efficiency, and to be widely accepted as a part of social stability and sustainability.

Components of Quality of Working Life

Walton (1973) mentioned 8 components of quality of working life as follows: 1) Adequate and fair compensation which represented quality of working life as everyone had economic needs and worked to meet those needs which was essential for living. An individual tended to compare oneself to others with the same type of work, therefore, in terms of compensation representing quality of working life, the following aspects needed to be assessed: 1.1 Sufficiency which meant the compensation was sufficient for living regarding society's high standards, 1.2 Fairness which was assessed from the relation between the received compensation and compensation of relating work. 2) Safe and healthy working conditions which meant working conditions that were safe for workers' physical health and safe from accidents that might occur. Clear standards of the aforementioned conditions should be determined. 3) Opportunity for continued growth and security which meant a job affecting job security and advancement regarding one's knowledge and performance, the following aspects needed to be assessed: 3.1 Development which was being assigned more work, 3.2 Advancement which was a hope to apply one's knowledge and competence to a higher position, 3.3 Opportunity to success which was an opportunity to succeed in the organization or career path and be accepted by colleagues, family, or others, 3.4 Security which was job security and appropriate income, and 3.5 Opportunity for developing and using human capacity, 4) Opportunity for developing and using human capacity, including education and training representing quality of working life which allowed an individual to use one's own capacity to solve problems in an appropriate way to succeed in life. This opportunity for developing human capacity needed to be assessed in the following aspects: 4.1 Autonomy which was a worker's freedom to control one's own work, 4.2 Complicated skills which was to what extent a worker applied more one's knowledge and skills than usual, 4.3 New knowledge and an empirical truth

which was developing one's knowledge and guidelines to perform a task, and consequences were correct and acceptable, 4.4 Missions which was being able to perform every single step of an assigned task by oneself, 4.5 Plan which was planning before performing an assigned task, 5) Social integration which was working and collaborating with others to succeed in work goals, social integration was related to working environment of the organization. The relation between personnel in the organization affected working environment as follows: 5.1 Free from prejudice which was working with others without bias or prejudice, 5.2 No social stratification in the organization or team, 5.3 A change in collaboration which was a positive change of everyone in the team in working together, 5.4 Team support which was a supportive working environment, understanding individuals' characteristics, and emotionally and socially supporting, 5.5 Acknowledgement of the important of collaboration, 5.6 An open communication which was an open communication between personnel, 6) Constitutionalism which was developing guidelines on how to collaborate and respecting individuals' privacy representing quality of working life. Privacy could be assessed in the following aspects: 6.1 Personal data which was protecting personal data, that is, a personnel had rights to only provide essential personal data related to work to the executive, 6.2 Freedom of speech which was rights to speak about work, policies, economics, or social of the organization to the executive without a fear of the consequences, 6.3 Equality which was an equality in terms of personnel, restrictions, consequences, compensation, and job security, 6.4 Respect for work and humanity, 7) Work and total life space which was an ability to balance between work and personal life, 8) Social relevance of work life which was being responsible for one's own work, resulting in acknowledgment of one's own work's values such as a feeling that one's organization was a part in a political event or others.

Regarding quality of working life affecting organizational loyalty of employees, Praisuwan (2019) found that quality of working life was correlated with organizational loyalty of private company employees at a statistical significance level of .05. Chainarong (2015) found that quality of working life was correlated with organizational loyalty of Wang Tai Hotel staff ($r = .72$) at a statistical significance level of .01. In addition, Phetpankan & Thabhiranrak (2018) found that quality of working life was correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r=.83$) at a statistical significance level of .01.

Empowerment

Conger & Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as encouraging an individual to acknowledge their efficiency using the organization's both official and unofficial guidelines. Healthfield (2006) indicated that empowerment was creating an environment where an individual was encouraged and supported to make a decision and feel in control of one's own consequences of their work. Yavirach (2015) explained that empowerment was giving a power to an individual, helping an individual to have a power in decision making, distributing power to lower levels, and encouraging attorneys.

Components of Empowerment

Robbins et al. (2002) stated that psychological empowerment consisted of 4 dimensions as follows: 1) Meaning which was encouraging a personnel to acknowledge their work's values

and have a relationship with one's own ideology and standards. 2) Self-efficacy which was encouraging a personnel to believe in one's own capability so that they showed their competence and put a lot of effort into work. 3) Self-determination which was encouraging a personnel to acknowledge their freedom in choosing, decision making, and initiating. 4) Personal consequence which was helping a personnel to gain a perception of consequences of one's own work. The executive should encourage all 4 dimensions of empowerment so that a personnel was empowered.

Regarding empowerment and organizational loyalty, Meethavornkul & Jadesadalug (2018) revealed that psychological empowerment was correlated with organizational loyalty at a statistical significance level of .01. Zaki (2018) found that there was a correlation between empowerment and organizational loyalty at a statistical significance level of .01. Ded & Sazkaya (2018) also found that empowerment was correlated with organizational loyalty at a statistical significance level of .01.

4. Methodology

4.1 Methodology

This research is a quantitative research in which the researchers determined 2 predictor variables which were quality of working life and empowerment. These 2 variables were used to predict 1 criterion variable which was organizational loyalty of employees. Research methods were as follows: population and samples identification.

4.2 Research Methods

4.2.1 Population in this research was 650 employees in total, working at a government-owned company working to develop industrial estates. There were 327 out of all employees who work at headquarters.

4.2.2 Samples in this research were employees working at the headquarters of a government-owned company working to develop industrial estates. The researchers determined sample size with statistical program of Dr. Daniel Soper (Soper, 1995). Finalized sample size was 67. Anticipated effect size was 0.15, indicating that effect size was medium, the desired statistical power level was 0.8, the number of predictors was 2, and probability level was .05. The researchers then collected samples with accidental sampling by which the researchers asked employees for cooperation to fill in the questionnaire. After collecting data, the number of respondents in total was 80 which was 19% higher than the calculated number.

4.3 Research Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of 4 sections. The 1st section was a set of 6 checklists regarding the respondent's general information, including gender, age, marital status, job position, education, and work experience. The 2nd section was a 17-item questionnaire regarding the respondent's quality of working life. According to Walton (1973), quality of working life was assessed from 5 aspects: 1) adequate and fair compensation, 2) safe and healthy working conditions, 3) opportunity for continued growth and security, 4) opportunity for developing oneself, and 5) work-life balance. The 3rd section was a 12-item questionnaire regarding the respondent's empowerment. Robbins et al. (2002) explained empowerment in terms of an

integrated model, indicating that empowerment was correlated with personnel's behaviors and working environment. Finally, the 4th section was a 10-item questionnaire regarding the respondent's organizational loyalty. According to Hoy & Rees (1974), organizational loyalty represented the relationship between an employee and the organization. The higher the organizational loyalty, the less the turnover rate of employees.

For the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th section, the respondents were required to answer to what extent each statement corresponded to their notions, feelings, or behaviors. The questionnaire was a rating scale questionnaire ranging from strongly agree, agree, moderately agree, disagree, to strongly disagree. The score ranged from 5, 4, 3, 2, to 1, respectively. The index of item-objective congruence (IOC) was then calculated. In regard to content validity, any item with an IOC of 0.5 or higher was considered acceptable for the study Tuntavanitch & Jindasri (2018).

The researchers tried out the questionnaire with 40 employees working at headquarters of Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand. Each item was then calculated discriminating power using corrected item total correlation coefficient. According to Insombat (2001) discriminating power of each item should be 0.2 or higher. Any item with a discriminating power of lower than 0.2 should be eliminated. Afterwards, each item was calculated reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Any item with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .07 or higher was considered highly reliable. Discriminating power and reliability of the questionnaire were shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Number of Items, Discriminating Power, Reliability

Variables	Items	Discriminating Power	Reliability
Quality of Working Life	17	.488 - .738	.921
Empowerment	12	.641 - .926	.965
Organizational Loyalty	10	.453 - .870	.921

Discriminating power of quality of working life, empowerment, and organizational loyalty of employees were .488-.738, .641-.926, and .453-.870, respectively. In terms of reliability, the numbers were .921, .96, and .921, respectively.

4.4 Research Instrument Development, Data Collection, and Statistical Data Analysis

Researchers asked employees for cooperation to fill in the questionnaire by google form. Statistics used for analyzing data were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient, and stepwise multiple regression analysis.

5. Results

5.1 General Information of Samples

In terms of gender, out of 80 employees in total, there were 58 females, considered as 72.50%. There were 52 employees aged between 21-30 and 31-40 years old, considered as 65%. There

were 54 employees who were single, considered as 67.50%. There were 70 employees who were in a Practitioner Level (Level 3-8), considered as 87.50%. There were 42 employees who got a bachelor's degree, considered as 52.50%. There were 57 employees who had 11-year-or-more and 2-to-5-year work experience, considered as 71.25%.

5.2 The Level of Organizational Loyalty of Employees, Quality of Working Life, and Empowerment

This research discovered that average organizational loyalty was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = 0.82), average quality of working life was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, S.D. = 0.76), and average empowerment was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = 0.75).

5.3 The Correlation between Quality of Working Life and Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Table 2

The Correlation between Quality of Working Life and Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Variables	Organizational Loyalty	
	r	P
Quality of Working Life	.472**	.000

**Statistically significant at .01 level

Quality of working life was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .472$) at a statistical significance level of .01.

5.4 The Correlation between Empowerment and Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Table 3

The Correlation between Empowerment and Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Variables	Organizational Loyalty	
	r	P
Empowerment	.558**	.000

**Statistically significant at .01 level

Empowerment was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .558$) at a statistical significance level of .01.

5.5 Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of Organizational Loyalty of Employees Predicted from Quality of Working Life and Empowerment

Table 4

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Predictor Variable	R	R ²	Adj R ²	SE _{est}	F	P
Empowerment	.558	.312	.303	.683	35.341**	.000

**Statistically significant at .01 level

This research discovered that empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees, considered as 31.20%.

Table 5

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis in order to Find the Equation for the Prediction of Organizational Loyalty of Employees

Predictor Variable	b	SE b	β	t	P
Constant	1.439	.391		3.682**	.00
Empowerment	.613	.103	.558	5.945**	.00

**Statistically significant at .01 level

According to stepwise multiple regression analysis, it was discovered that empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees. The equation for the prediction was as follows: Organizational Loyalty of Employees = 1.439+.613 (Empowerment). When converting a raw score to a z-score, the equation for the prediction was as follows: Organizational Loyalty of Employees = .558 (Empowerment).

7. Conclusion

According to a 17-item questionnaire regarding quality of life, average quality of working life was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, S.D. = 0.76). According to a 12-item questionnaire regarding empowerment, average empowerment was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = 0.75). According to a 10-item questionnaire regarding organizational loyalty of employees, average organizational loyalty of employees was in a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, S.D. = 0.82). After analyzing the correlation between variables, it was found that quality of working life and organizational loyalty of employees and empowerment and organizational loyalty of employees were correlated at a statistical significance level of .01 ($r = .472$ and $.558$, respectively). According to a Stepwise multiple regression analysis, it was found that empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees at a statistical significance level of .01, considered as 31.20%.

8. Discussion

This research found that quality of working life was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .472$). The researchers see that employees of a government-owned company working to develop industrial estates are satisfied with their quality of working life because a government-owned company provides welfare and benefits as many as a government or private agency does. Therefore, employees wish to keep working for the organization until they are retired. These findings are in accordance with Chainarong ((2015 research in which she found that quality of working life was correlated with organizational loyalty of Wang Tai Hotel staff ($r = .72$) at a statistical significance level of .01. Phetpankan & Thabhiranrak (2018) also found that quality of working life was correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .83$) at a statistical significance level of .01.

This research found that empowerment was positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees ($r = .558$), and empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees, considered as 31.20%, at a statistical significance level of .01. The researchers see that empowerment makes an employee personally believe that they belong to the organization because they have a power to make a decision regarding their work, therefore, organizational loyalty is occurred. This is in accordance with the research of Suwannasri (2017) She stated that empowerment was encouraging power and potentials of an individual. An individual would be in control of their work, resulting in feelings of engagement and being a part of the organization, organizational loyalty is then occurred. This is also in accordance with the research of Meethavornkul & Jadesadalug (2018) in which they found that psychological empowerment was correlated with organizational loyalty at a statistical significance level of .01. Moreover, Zaki (2018) found that a volunteer with high psychological empowerment (46%) had high organizational loyalty (44%). In addition, it was revealed that empowerment could predict organizational loyalty of employees. Garcia-Bernal (2005) stated that when an employee was empowered, they were psychologically satisfied and satisfied with their work, resulting organizational loyalty and increased work efficiency. Speitzer (1995) explained that psychological empowerment resulted in achievements affecting job satisfaction. Dobbs (1993) also explained that empowerment increased work efficiency of workers and improved working environment. Furthermore, Garcia-Bernal (2005) stated that satisfaction was psychologically important, and job satisfaction resulted in organizational loyalty and increased work efficiency of personnel.

9. Recommendation

Recommendations for Applying the Results

This research found that quality of working life and empowerment were positively correlated with organizational loyalty of employees. Therefore, the executive should encourage quality of working life of employees. When an employee's quality of working life is increased, organizational loyalty is also increased, and turnover rate is decreased, creating a long-term employee. The executive should also encourage empowerment by providing an employee the power to make an important decision. The employee would have more opportunities to

demonstrate one's capability. Once organizational loyalty of employees is increased, turnover rate is decreased, and employees would work for the organization for a longer period of time.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for future research or studies are as follows: an experimental research should be conducted in order to assess organizational loyalty of employees before and after improving quality of working life of employees to see to what extent quality of working life affects organizational loyalty, also, organizational loyalty of employees should be assessed using experimental method before and after providing the power to employees to see to what extent empowerment affects organizational loyalty.

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