

# Faculty Members Quality of Work Life in Kashan University of Medical Sciences in 2012

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## Abstract

**Background:** Quality of work life (QWL) is one of the most important factors for motivating humans and improving work. As one of the main assets for a university, faculty members should have a good QWL. However, few studies have been done concerning the QWL in faculty members and there are differing results from these previous reports.

**Objectives:** This study aimed to investigate the faculty members' QWL in the Kashan University of Medical Sciences.

**Materials and Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted on 65 faculty members of the Kashan University of Medical Sciences during 2012. Faculty members were randomly selected from a list that was prepared through the Kashan University of Medical Sciences website. The data-gathering instruments consisted of two parts. The first part consisted of questions concerning demographic information, while the second part was the Walton's quality of work life questionnaire. For statistical analyses, t-tests and one-way analyses of variance were used.

**Results:** The subjects consisted of 64.6% men, 33.8% were in the medical college, 43.1% lived in a personal house, and 43.1% were instructors. The results of the study showed that faculty members' overall QWL was  $72.98 \pm 9.62$ . No significant differences were observed between the subjects' mean QWL with regard to place of work, scientific ranking, and living location.

**Conclusions:** QWL has an important impact on attracting and retaining employees, thus, it is necessary to pay greater attention to the faculty members' QWL.

**Keywords:** Faculty Members, Quality of Work Life, Medical Education

## 1. Background

Universities, as the most important educational and research centers, have an effective role in community promotion towards educational, social, cultural, and economic goals. Faculty members are one of the main components of this educational system (1).

Faculty members are one of the most important parts of a university, and their task is to produce and transfer new knowledge to society. Therefore, attention to their work environment is one of the main tasks of university authorities (2). Quality of work life (QWL) is one of the most important factors for motivating humans and improving work (3).

Many studies have been done concerning QWL, and the results have shown a positive relationship between QWL and certain variables within an organization. Important variables include job satisfaction, job performance, and type of workplace (4-6).

Results of studies by Kermansaravi et al. (2), Yilmaz et al. (7), and Sabharwal et al. (8) show positive significant relationships between QWL and job satisfaction in faculty members. Previous studies of QWL have shown a positive

relationship between QWL and demographic information (9, 10). However, Rahimi et al. (11) and Moradi et al. (12) reported that there is no relationship between these two factors. Soltanzadeh et al. (13) have shown that faculty members have a high QWL. However, Norshahi and Samiei reported that faculty members' QWL is not desirable (14).

Considering the different results from previous studies, and the lack of studies in Kashan, this question comes to mind that "how the QWL of the faculty members of the universities is?"

## 2. Objectives

This study aimed to investigate the faculty members' QWL in Kashan University of Medical Sciences.

## 3. Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted on faculty members in Kashan University of Medical Sciences during 2012. The Kashan University of Medical Sciences has three colleges including the medical, paramedical, and the nursing and midwifery colleges, with 32, 48, and 24 faculty

members, respectively. The samples were selected through random sampling, and based on the list of different colleges' faculty members prepared through the website. The required numbers from each college were then randomly selected from the list. The sample size was calculated based on a pilot study with eight faculty members (three, three, and two from each college, respectively) in which the mean QWL was  $72.00 \pm 8.45$ . Then, using the following parameters, 69 subjects were estimated to be needed ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $\sigma = 8.45$ , and considering that the instrument can estimate the QWL with a precision of 2 points [ $d = 2$ ]). However, we recruited 100 faculty members to compensate for possible drop-outs from our original selections.

The data-gathering instruments consisted of two parts. The first part consisted of questions on demographic information (sex, scientific ranking, living location, and workplace). The second part was a modified version of Walton's quality of work life questionnaire. Some questions were removed and some were added or modified through a content validity assessment phase. The questionnaire ultimately consisted of 31 items in 6 domains of work life including: appreciate, facilities, relationships, personal issues, skills, and workload. All items were answered through a Likert-scale format with four choices (excellent = 1; well = 2; satisfactory = 3; and inadequate = 4). The minimum possible score was 31 and the maximum score was 124. The content validity of the tool was confirmed by 10 faculty members in the Kashan University of Medical Sciences. The questionnaire's reliability was assessed through an internal consistency method on 20 faculty members and Cronbach's alpha was 0.785.

The only inclusion criterion was a desire to participate in the study.

After selecting the participants, the researcher referred to them individually and explained the study aims. If the participant agreed to take part, the questionnaire was given to them and they were requested to respond in a quiet and private environment and return it to the researcher within one day.

### 3.1. Ethical Considerations

Permissions for this study were obtained from the authorities in the university prior to data collection. All participants were also assured of data confidentiality and that their personal information would remain confidential. The participants consent was through verbal assent and their agreement to take part and returning the completed questionnaires were considered as their consent. Moreover, the study aims were fully expressed to the participants and further information concerning the aims of the study was included in the first page of the questionnaire.

### 3.2. Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 13 software. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test the normal distribution of the QWL. Independent sample t-tests were used to examine the difference in the mean QWL with regard to living location. Also, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the difference between the mean QWL with regard to other demographic variables. P values less than 0.05 were considered significant in all tests.

## 4. Results

From a total of 100 faculty members working in the Kashan University of Medical Sciences, 65 completed and returned the questionnaire. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the subjects.

The mean score of faculty members' overall QWL was  $72.98 \pm 9.62$ , which is an average level. The one-way ANOVA determined there were no significant differences between the overall QWL score of faculty members with either workplace or scientific ranking ( $P > 0.05$ ). Moreover, the t tests showed no significant differences between the overall QWL scores with living location and sex (Table 2). Furthermore, no significant differences were observed between the scores of the domains in the QWL and demographic information.

## 5. Discussion

The results of the present study showed that the faculty members' QWL was  $72.98 \pm 9.6$ . Studies have shown that faculty members' QWL is not desirable (11, 14, 15). These studies have shown that QWLs of university faculty members are influenced by a number of factors and changes in these factors may affect their QWL (2, 11). The current study did not find a significant relationship between QWL and workplace. This finding is consistent with the results of the study by Rahimi et al. (11). This finding might be attributed to the fact that all of the workplaces were similar with regard to job security, working conditions, facilities, and university rules. It seems that faculty members are satisfied with their job and would remain at their job if they have an opportunity for growth and development. Furthermore, as reported by Bindu and Yashika (16), faculty members do not work for prestige and financial factors.

This study did not show a significant relationship between QWL and living location. This finding shows that QWL is not related to the settings found in the subject's private life.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Faculty Members' Characteristics in Kashan University of Medical Science<sup>a</sup>

Variable	Frequency	Did Not Respond
<b>Sex</b>		2 (3.1)
Male	42 (64.6)	
Female	21 (32.3)	
<b>School</b>		18 (27.7)
Medical	22 (33.8)	
Paramedical	6 (9.2)	
Nursing and Midwifery	19 (29.2)	
<b>Living location</b>		13 (20)
Residential Complex	24 (36.9)	
Personal House	28 (43.1)	
<b>Scientific ranking</b>		17 (26.2)
Instructor	28 (43.1)	
Assistant Professor	13 (20.0)	
Associate Professor	6 (9.2)	
Professor	1 (1.5)	

<sup>a</sup>Values are expressed as No. (%).

**Table 2.** Quality of Work Life by Living Location, Workplace, and Scientific Ranking

Variable	Mean ± SD	T (or F) Value	P Value
<b>Living location</b>		1.60	0.11 <sup>a</sup>
Residential Complex	70.29 ± 8.75		
Personal House	74.60 ± 10.33		
<b>Sex</b>		-1.70	0.078 <sup>a</sup>
Male	69.90 ± 8.60		
Female	74.26 ± 9.34		
<b>Workplace</b>		2.40	0.10 <sup>b</sup>
Medicine	73 ± 10.88		
Nursing	70.05 ± 8.08		
Paramedical	80 ± 9.97		
<b>Scientific Ranking</b>		0.23	0.87 <sup>b</sup>
Instructor	72.50 ± 7.74		
Assistant Professor	72.15 ± 11.05		
Associate Professor	75.50 ± 17.69		
Professor	68		

<sup>a</sup>T-test.

<sup>b</sup>One-way ANOVA.

Our findings did not show a significant relationship between QWL and the subjects' scientific ranking. However, this finding might also be attributed to the small

number of professors in the study population. Rahimi et al. (11) and Norshahi and Samiei (14) have shown that there is a direct relationship between QWL and scientific rank-

ing. Faculty members with a high scientific ranking have more improvement opportunities. Professors, because of job consolidation and high social position, have higher job security (14), and that job security has a direct and significant relationship with QWL (2).

In previous studies, significant relationships were found between QWL and work-related factors such as work settings (i.e., safety and healthy workplace) and regulations, adequate salary, and providing opportunities for growth and promotion. Improvements in each of these factors can improve the individual's QWL (11, 14, 15). Nonetheless, in the present study, we did not find any significant relationships with work-related factors and the QWL. This can be attributed to the fact that we studied only one university. Perhaps more studies are needed to investigate the effects of these factors.

Kashan has one university for medical education, and this is a limitation of our study. Therefore, it is recommended that the same study be replicated in other universities. It is also recommended that some factors (i.e., adequate salary, providing opportunities, and regulations) should be considered for improving QWL.

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### Footnotes

**Authors' Contribution:** Mohsen Adib-Hajbaghery (MAH) and Farzaneh Maghaminejad (FM) were responsible for the study conception and design. FM performed data collection and prepared the first draft of the manuscript. MAH did the data analysis, made critical revisions to the manuscript for important intellectual content, and supervised the study.

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