

The Relation of Organizational Structure and its Dimensions with Staff's Quality of Work Life

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Abstract

Staffs are the most important capitals of the organizations. Today, focusing on quality of work life of staffs who devote more than one third of their lives to the organization is very important and valuable. The main objective of the present project was "to examine the relation between organizational structure and quality of work life of women staff in Islamic Azad university branches". Our method in this descriptive study was selected as correlation-based. The universal society included all women staff of Mazandaran's Islamic Azad university branches, 377 persons, and based on classified random sampling and with using krejcie and Morgan table, 191 persons were selected as our samples. We used "organizational structure" and "work life quality" questionnaires for gathering data. Data analyzing was performed by descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics (correlation coefficient and pierson coefficient and Regression). Results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational structure and its dimensions with quality of work life. Also, the components of organizational structure (formality, option hierarchy and centralization, respectively) were some significant predictors for quality of work life.

Keywords: organizational structure, quality of work life, staff

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of human life, employment phenomenon has been considered and women along with men have worked and carried the life's responsibility since a long time ago (Aycan and Mehmet, 2005). Women have a worldly important role in economic activities (Musavi and et.al, 2010). Women's status in each society reflects the advancement degree of that society and countries' progress is dependent on purposeful using of all its human forces and capacities including women's (Rusta and et, al, 2010). Recent studies have showed increasing focusing of societies on women and their participation in this way; we can see increasing women's participation in work force and reducing their presence in the family (Musae and et.al, 2010). In the case of women's life and employment, it can be suggested that women who have a more appropriate occupational status have a more appropriate life quality too (Javaheri and et.al, 2010). To employed women, it should be focused on women's biological, psychological and social needs for creating desirable conditions and increasing their participating motivation (Danesh, 2010). Indeed, focusing on women's logical needs and assigning appropriate jobs for them lead to increase motivation and improve their employment qualitatively and quantitatively (Sullivan et.al, 2001). The quantity and quality of work life determine the identity of each person and his role in the society (Haralambo and Holborn, 2004).

Staff work within Organizations and some organizational factors can effect on their ability and cause to its increasing or decreasing. One of these factors is the structure of organization (Robbin, 1987). Generally, the aim of organizational structure is to coordinate between human force and existing resources for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. In fact, the structure is a process that has an important role in achieving to the goal of the organization. The structure of organization is a frame in which the fundamental areas, total mission, relation system and decision center are assigned (Annick and Marc, 2009). Organizations should consider their staff's psychological-social needs (Hanlon and Gladstein, 1984). During the recent years, quality of work life programs have had an important role in increasing human force productivity and thus in efficiency and effectiveness of organizations and big companies. Strategic programs of improving the quality of work life of human resources in organizations are an introspective and expanded approach. It means that an efficient human force has an important role in the organization's evolution. Quality of work life is an extended and comprehensive program which is designed for attracting and satisfying the staff (Watton, 1973). Anyway, quality of work life needs to a collaborative attempt between managers and staff (Shani et, al, 1992). Trying to improve the organization's productivity, according to the structure and establishments of the organization, provides an opportunity for discovering underlying structural inadequacies and makes staff ready for effectively doing duties and managing affairs in a better way. Universities are those organizations which have some huge responsibilities in each society, such as to research and produce new knowledge, to maintain and transmit cultural heritage, to strengthen moral and social principles of students, to create skills and so on. Regarding to the environmental conditions and extended responsibilities of the universities, improving the efficiency of these organizations and examining and refining their structure is necessary. Examining the structural features of universities and suitability of these structures with their goals and activities and other related issues have been studied in a few case. Dissatisfaction with quality of work life is an issue influences on almost all staff without regarding to their situation and conditions in the time. We often observe fatigue, despair and anger in those staff who aren't satisfied with their quality of work life which is itself influences directly on the services an organization supplies to its own customers. If this phenomenon isn't examined, the effective progress of the organization neither improves and nor maintains. In fact, concerns and worries which are mentioned as a question are the answer of this question: "is there a relationship between organizational structure and the quality of work life of women staff in Mazandaran's Islamic Azad university branches?"

2. Theoretical and Practical Principles

2.1. Organizational Structure

Organizational structure is defined as: "a framework for the relationship of different jobs, systems and operational processes and persons and groups who try to achieve the goal (Daft, 2000). Organizational structure reflects the levels within the official hierarchy and determines the control area of managers and supervisors (Shoghi and Nazari, 2012). It should be noted that an appropriate structure is considered as an important capital for the organization (Irannezhad, 2008). According to organization studies, conducting any organizational process needs considering its requirements. One of the most important dimensions of each organization is organizational structure which we should consider it as the second major part of the organization, after the organizational goal (Powell, 2002). The formal relations between persons, the place of organization jobs and posts, the degree of accessing to information framing, to explain duties (the manner of doing things), to explain jobs, how to allocate resources, rules and regulations, mechanisms of following and performing the rules, creating cooperation between activities are some results of creating and designing the organizational structure (Cyert and March, 2007; quoted from Ahmadi et.al, 2013). Organizations have different structures which are applied based on the conditions of each organization. To Burns and Stalker, the most effective structure is a structure adjusts itself with the requirements of environment (Gresov and Drazin, 2007). Organizational structure has some dimensions including:

2.1.1 Formality

Formality refers to standard degree of organizational jobs. In a formal organization, organizational relations are explained for staff wittingly and carefully with an organizational graph. And if it is necessary, the further changes are mentioned by the manager; but in an informal organization, organizational relations are explained for staff orally and if it is necessary, they change naturally (Rezaeeyan, 2008). If a job has a high formality, its performer has a minimum freedom for doing the related activities and the time and manner of doing them.

In such a circumstance, staff is expected to use the same structures with a certain method in order to cause some predetermined results. So, when there is a high formality, we can see some explanations about certain jobs, many rules and regulations and obvious directions about work process in the organization. When there is low formality, staff's behaviors may be relatively not planned; in a such situation, persons have a more freedom in their jobs for applying their own ideas (Robbins, 2008).

2.1.2. Centralization

Centralization is defined as: power accumulation in one point and de-centralization means lack of accumulation or a little accumulation. It should be noted that centralization is related to the degree of scattering of decision options, not to geographical separation (Robbins, 1998). In another word, centralization refers to some levels of option's hierarchy which can include some decisions. In centralized organizations, top managers and those who are at the head of the organization can make some certain decisions. In de-centralized organizations, such decisions are made at lower levels (Daft, 2008). Today, managers select the degree of centralization or de-centralization by which they can put their own decisions in to action and achieve to organizational goals. What is effective in an organization isn't necessarily effective in another organization. So, managers should determine the degree of de-centralization for each organization and its units (Robbins, 2008).

2.1.3 Option Hierarchy

Hierarchy itself shows that power and responsibility should be transferred in a direct line and vertically, from high level management to low level one (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2003). Option hierarchy determines to whom each person should report. Furthermore, it determines managers' control (monitoring) area. Organizational hierarchy is determined by drawing an organizational graph (NiazAzari, 2006). So, chain of command or hierarchy is a formal organizational channel for determining option, responsibility and relations. Since these organizational phenomena are complex, no subordinate person should be under direct control of more than one superior one, meant that he should be ordered by only one supervisor and report only to him (Alaghemand, 1995).

2.2 Organizational Structure in University System

Baldrige and Adstein consider university's organizational structure as a management tool and believe that in a university setting, organizational structure-which includes management, leadership and regulation sets-, is a managerial tool which both provides a necessary ground for creating educational initiatives and is a tool for matching university with educational initiatives (Baldrige and Deal, 1983). Burton Clark believes that university's organizational structure is a framework which should both provide the opportunity for immediate reaction to different phenomena and maintain the total union of university by high level managerial loops (Clark and Baldrige, 2004). In order to prevent from chaos in the organization, the structure should be designed in such a way that it can coordinate staff's capabilities (Bennet and Bennet, 2004). So, it can't be achieved to the goal without an appropriate organization. And it is necessary to consider the kind of organization and structure for having efficient organizations. Since those working in organizations with appropriate structure are more efficient and more satisfied, the importance of organization and its design methods become more obvious (Rezaeeian, 2008)

2.3. Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life is one variable which has been recently considered by managers who are seeking to improve the quality of their human resources; although studying the indices which are useful or useless for work life has a long history (Ma, et.al, 2003). Quality of work life is a process by which all members of the organization participate in decisions which influence on their jobs and work place by an open and appropriate communicative way and in this way, their participation and job satisfaction increases and their job-related stress reduces (Dolan and Schuler, 2002). Reaction and response to personal needs and interests can increase quality of work life (Martel and Dupuis, 2006, Travis, 1995, Kimberly, 1991). Work life is based on personal feeling toward what is desirable or undesirable in a work place and it is related to the current experience in both occupational and personal areas (Knox et al., 1997). Accordingly, examining quality of work life which shows the feeling of an organizational person is very important. High quality of work life is necessary for those organizations emphasize on recruitment and reinstatement of staff. Researchers showed that refreshing continuous restructures, economizing and reorganization of health care systems have influence negatively on staff's morale and their job satisfaction (Less and Kearns, 2005).

Research considered the necessity of focusing on quality of work life at staff level and showed that focusing on important issues related to work life of administrative intermediate level staff can influence on the daily behavior and performance of the organization and its service too (Rosser and Javinar,2003).

Researchers have also presented some evidences show that quality of work life has an important effect on staff's behavioral reactions, such as organizational identity, job satisfaction, work participation, occupational effort, occupational performance and organizational transformation (Sigri et.al, 2001). Studying women's problems is one of the important problems of sociologists and researchers of different fields of women studies. Disregarding to women issues means wasting energy and capabilities of a big part of a society and no or little participation of women in different areas of the society makes reaching to many social and economic planning's impossible (Khajehnuri and Moghaddas,2008). Accordingly, considering women's problems, studying their role in the society and the manner of their leaving impression on and talking impression from different economic, social, cultural and political variables have been recently took in too deep consideration (Musae et.al, 2010). Regarding to increasingly complexity of societies and work markets and also paying more attention to the nature of human forces, the importance of women's quality of work life has an important role. Productivity depression and product quality decreasing in some countries is partly resulted from losses in quality of work life and changes in staff's interests and priorities. Staffs are seeking to find more participation in and supervision on their works. They tend to not be considered as a piece in a big system.

2.4. Research Background

Regarding to a few projects have been conducted in the field of organizational structure and quality of work life, here we refer to some projects.

Shoeb Ahmad (2013) found that the fundamental elements of quality of work life in each organization include: health and security, job security, job satisfaction, job stress, work place, work and life balance and human relations. Some strategies for improving quality of work life in organizations with centralized organizational structures including staff's participation, group work, reward, work hours table and organizational culture should be considered. Blane et.al (2007) found that those who have a higher job rank enjoy a more appropriate life quality and this effect continues to their retirement period. Analyzing the collect data of their project, Rose et.al (2006) showed that job satisfaction and job balance are among the major predictors of quality of work life. Considering nursing job and work places and quality of work life of nurses, Brooks and Anderson found that hierarchical structure of the organization with centeredness of doctors, insufficient facilities, few requirement and little salary are some elements influencing on staff's quality of work life. Mokgele(2005) found that improving quality of work life influences on organizational performance which causes organizations have a better competition in outer world. In his study," improving the quality of work life and improving productivity", Glaser(2004) showed that job redesigning and participation-based management are the most important elements in improving quality of work life and so in improving production process and performance. Bagherpour (2012) showed that there is a significant positive relationship between quality of work life and efficiency, between healthy environment, job security and efficiency, between law following in job and efficiency, and between developing human capabilities and efficiency. In their study, "Analyzing the effects of women's employment on their life quality", Javaheriet. Al (2010) found that there is a positive relationship between different indicators of job status, variability and matching job and one's skill and expertise with life quality. In fact, those who have a more appropriate job status enjoy a more appropriate life quality too. Khalili and Etebaraian (2008) showed that there is a significant positive relationship between all eight dimension of quality of work life, sufficient and just payment, secure and healthy environment, creating opportunity for continuous development and security, role of law and law following and social attachment to work life, total space of work life, social unity and developing human capabilities with organization socialability. Salman (2007) found that quality of work life reflects the type of organizational culture and management method by which staff experiences a feeling of ownership, self-regulation and self-esteem. Quality of work life leads to increase staff's performance and productivity. Since no research has conducted in Iran under this title, this research is considered as the first research aims to examine the relation between organizational structure and women staff's quality of work life.

3. Methodology

The method of this descriptive project is correlation-based which is seeking to discover the relations between variables with correlation statistics.

The statistical universe includes all women staffs in Mazandaran’s Isalamic Azad university branches in the year of 2013, with a big unit degree including Islamic Azadi university branches of Sari, Ghaemshar, Babol, Tonekabon and Chalus (N=377).Here, the sample number (n=191) was selected based on Krejcie and Morgan table, determining the samples’ size by population size.

Our sampling method was classified as random sampling based on the university branch. Firstly, we obtained information about university branches from the regional secretariat. Next, we determined the total number staffs of each university branch and then based on the formula of classified random sampling, we determined the number of samples of each university branch.

Thereafter, numbers of staff of each branch were proportionally selected for testing by a simple random sampling. Data gathering instrument is Frank.S’ Organizational structure questionnaire (Moghimi and Ramezani, 2011) which is a 14-items scale with three sub-scales including formality (5 item), centralization (4 items) and option hierarchy (5 items), and in which each item is ranked by a 5- points Likert scale. We used a researcher-made 10-items questionnaire with closed answers and based on Likert Scale-for gathering data of quality of work life. Since it is standard, credibility and reliability of organizational structure questionnaire were confirmed by different research. But for re-supporting, we examined its credibility and reliability. To determine credibility, Questionnaires were firstly presented to some expert professors to judge about their content and its suitability with questions and research objectives. Next, we formulated the final questions after obtaining their views and so we were assured about its content credibility. The reliability of organizational structure questionnaire ($\alpha=0.86$) and quality of work life questionnaire ($\alpha=0.92$) were obtained by chronbach alpha coefficient. We used descriptive statistics (frequency, frequency percentage, frequency distribution table) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and Regression analysis) by SPSS software for analysis data.

4- Results

To analyze data of descriptive statistic indices and of hypotheses testing, we firstly determined correlation degree between organizational structure and its sub-scales with quality of work life; then we studied predictability of organizational structure components on quality of work life by using multiple regression Analysis- Enter method.

Table (1): Frequency Distribution of the Studied Sample in Terms of Demographic Features

Variables	classes	Frequency	percentage
Marriage status	Un-married	19	9.95
	married	172	90.05
Service history	1-10	86	45.02
	11-20	96	50.26
	21-30	9	4.72
Education Level	A.A	45	23.57
	B.A	134	70.15
	M.A	12	6.28

According to table(1), it can be observed that in the case of marriage status, married ones with 90.05%, in the case of service history, ones with 11-20 years’ service, and in the case of education level, M.A ones with 70.15%consitute the most frequency of the sample group.

Table (2) Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient Testing between Social Phobia and its Components with Job Performance

Predictor variable	Criterion variable	Statistical index				
		N number	Calculated r	Critical r	Df Degree of freedom	Sig Level of significance
Formality	Quality Of Work life	191	0.548**	0.181	189	0.000
concentration		191	0.426**	0.181	189	0.000
Option hierarchy		191	0.389**	0.181	189	0.000
Organizational structure		191	0.617**	0.181	189	0.000

**p<0.01

According to table (2), there is a positive and significant relationship between formality and quality of work life ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.548$), between centralization and quality of work life ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.426$), between option hierarchy and quality of work life ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.389$), and generally between Organizational structure and quality of work life ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.617$).

Here, we used multiple Regression analysis with Enter Method for determining the predictability of each component of organizational structure. Tables 3, 4 and 5 show its output results.

Table (3): Statistics of Multiple Regression Analysis for Organizational Structure

Model	Multiple R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.623	0.388	0.379	7.12901

The results of multiple Regression analysis showed that the sum of predictor variables determine nearly 38 percent of variance of quality of work life.

Table (4): Results of Variance Analysis for Predictor Variables

Source of changes	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	6099.648	3	2033.216	40.006	0.000
Residual	9605.513	187	50.823		
Total	15705.161	190			

Statistical testing for correlation coefficient significance is 40.006 which is significant at level 0.01, so we can accept the hypothesis of "linear relation between variables".

Table (5): Results of Regression Coefficient for Predictor Variables

Variables	B Regression coefficient	Std..Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig level
Constant value	2.643	2.826		0.935	0.351
Formality	0.820	0.158	0.372	5.178	0.000
Concentration	0.409	0.157	0.182	2.612	0.010
Option hierarchy	0.657	0.141	0.275	4.670	0.000

According to the results of table (5), we can observe that the value of standardized Beta shows that a change in standard deviation of each variables of formality, option hierarchy and centralization lead to 0.820, 0.657 and 0.409 changes in standard deviation of quality of work life, respectively, examining Beta coefficient show that among predictor variables, formality has the highest power than other sub-groups in predicting quality of work life.

5-Disussion and Conclusion

Since the necessary thing for surviving each organization in today turbulent environment is human force and what has an important role in increasing quality of work life and satisfaction is organization structure, it is completely clear that the structure, based on its contact, dimensions and environment, has a significant influence on developing quality of work life of the organization's staff. In fact, what makes difference between creative and productive organization and other organizations is related to such structural features which are suitable with their status and situation. In terms of organization structure model, universities have some features which separate them from other organization. Many projects have examined organization structure and quality of work life with different variables, but few studies have examined the relation of the two. The result of the present project showed that there is a significant positive relationship between organization structure and its components with women quality of work life. Rose et,al(2006), Mokgele(2005), Gloser (2004), Javaheri et, al(2010) and Khaliti and Etebarian (2008) are in consistent. Employed women's quality of work life is particularly related to their life. Generally, employment constitutes an important part of one's life, so it is expected that employment status and one's attitude toward his job has a significant role in his life quality, in examining the first hypothesis, there is a positive and significant relationship between formality and quality of work life of women staff of Mazandaran's Islamic Azad university branches, it is consistent with Bagherphor's(2012).

Somerules and regulations for crating discipline and stability in behaviors are enacted in order to achieve to organization's objectives. These rules and regulations make people follow the organization and they are expected to have a formal and conventional role in the organization. Persons are enjoyed from personality, thought power, independence and seeking to freedom in doing entrusted affairs and expect from authorities to satisfy these needs. Otherwise, persons, spend their energy, time and education for doing rules or directions they don't believe in and do some work they don't believe in its effectiveness it seems that among women staffs, formality of an organization structure has the highest important in relating with their quality of work life. An organizational structure with high formality has a positive and significant relation with women's quality of work life. In examining the second hypothesis, there is a positive and significant relationship between centralization and quality of work life of women staff of Mazandaran's Islamic Azad University branches, it is in consistent with Shoeib Ahmadi's(2013) and Salman's(2007),they showed that a centralized organizational structure and an organizational culture influence on improving quality of work life. More confidence have managers insubordinates and know them as deserving ones, more authority they vestin. Centralization reflects the place and center of decision making in the organization. In some organization, decision making is very centralized, so the problems are referred to high levels in order to top authorities make decision about them and select appropriate strategies. It seems that university's women staffs prefer to enjoy a centralized structure for improving quality of work life in the organization. In examining the third hypothesis, there is a positive and significant relationship between option hierarchy and quality of work life of women staff of Mazandaran's Islamic Azad university branches; it is in consistent with Blaneet. Al (2007) and Brooks and Anderson (2005). The main and natural feature of option hierarchy is related to official powers and competencies which are belonged to different official authorities in different levels and ranks. The power of hierarchy includes some option whose owner has a power to manage the organization; this power also includes the activity of staff working in the organization. According to the obtained results, it is seems that university's women staff believes in positive and significant relationship between option hierarchy and quality of work life. in examining the fourth hypothesis, the result of multiple regression showed the predictability of each component of organizational structure about the quality of work life: formality, option hierarchy and centralization predict the highest and lowest change in standard deviation of quality of work life, respectively. Studies show that successful and excellent organizations have a powerful and effective structure. Since human resources are considered as the most important capitals of each organization, it is important to examine and identify the related factors which influence on effectiveness, productivity and achieving to the objective of the organization. This project is considered as a preliminary examination in this field and undoubtedly, the complementary findings and future research can reveal new points.

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