

**The Role of Quality of Work Life in Reinforcing Core Competencies:  
A Descriptive and analytical research in the Ministry of Health****Ali Adnan Hasan**<sup>(1)</sup>

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**Abstract:**

The research aims to diagnose the shortcomings and weaknesses in applying the dimensions of the quality of work life and the extent of their impact on employees' attitudes and behaviors, and thus their relationship to enhancing their core competencies. The scientific value of the research stems from highlighting the importance of the dimensions of the quality of professional life in improving the productive efficiency of workers in the public sector and raising the level of organizational performance. Because the quality of working life plays an important role in enhancing the core competencies of employees in the public sector, it can also be an incentive or a disincentive for any employee by adapting to the economic and social conditions in which the individual lives and the effort in their work. The researchers used a descriptive-analytical approach by adopting a questionnaire as the primary tool. The Ministry of Health was chosen as the research community through a sample survey that included the general director and their assistants, department heads and their assistants, and directors of departments and units. The sample size was 155 from Ministry of Health leaders, and the SPSS statistical program was used to analyze the data. The results of the research showed that there is a direct correlation and influence on the dimensions of the quality of work life and its contribution to reinforcing the core competencies of the ministry under investigation, which is reflected in improving its job performance in general.

**Paper type:** Research paper**Keywords:** Quality of Work Life, Core Competencies, Ministry of Health

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## 1. Introduction

The quality of work life (QWL) lies in dealing with an employee or a worker as an internal customer of the organization. The sense of employees being one of the priorities of the organization's interest will make them feel like active and dynamic members for the organizational survival and sustainability. Kadhem and Jawad (2019) stated that an organization that pays enough attention to the core needs of its employees is more likely to stay longer and prosper properly. Therefore, QWL illustrates the degree to which individuals feel psychological happiness due to their satisfaction with the circumstances of their daily lives (Hanshizume, 2001).

QWL can be a strong incentive for employees to show their creativity and abilities in performing the tasks entrusted to them with professionalism and proficiency. This is done through the organization's knowledge of the basic needs of its employees and working to arrange them in a manner from lowest to highest, as in Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The most important needs, at the base of the pyramid for employees, are health and safety at work by ensuring that they are not exposed to injury while performing work outside and inside the organization. The economic and familial needs, such as the need for sufficient wages to meet the requirements of living and the sufficient time that the employee spends with his family would be crucial needs for employees to fulfill. Thus, employees need to suit their social needs, informal interactions between employees (spontaneous meetings), as well as free time for social communication with family, relatives, and friends.

The employee needs to be appreciated by the organization as a result of his or her performance and dedication to work inside and outside the organization such as certificates of appreciation and distinction, incentive rewards, etc. At present, there has also been a need to develop job skills and knowledge, which is evident in training courses and workshops for employees to raise their job levels and enhance skills to keep pace with the rapid technological changes.

In this way, the QWL is summarized in achieving employee satisfaction through the organization's fulfillment of the basic needs of employees to ensure the growth of the organization and considering the employee as an essential and active partner for the continuity of organizational life. Therefore, the organization that obtains a high evaluation by its employees regarding the quality of work life is the one that meets the basic and crucial needs of the employees and is in continuous growth with the changes that occur in work life, (Koonmee et al, 2010).

### 1.1 Literature review

Some studies discuss the quality of work life, including the following:

Raeissi et al (2019) found that the level of work-life quality was low and required interventions to raise it. The development and appropriate implementation of successful strategies by managers and policymakers can enhance the quality of work-life balance. This includes compensation, managerial and organizational support, job security, equitable promotion practices, and stress-reduction strategies.

Raouf (2020) took into consideration aspects of work-life quality that help enhance working conditions, give employees the chance to develop their careers and become more skilled in their positions.

Aruldoss and Parayitam (2021) suggested that employers ought to be aware of the importance of quality of life and work-life balance in achieving organizational effectiveness. The study was expected to contribute to the welfare of society in terms of identifying the antecedents of work-life balance.

Al-Gharibawi et al (2023) concluded that QWL works on developing the capabilities of human resources and increasing their skills and experience at work to achieve the organizational and personal goals of employees.

Some studies discuss the core competencies, including the following:

Alvarenga et al (2019) proved that communication, commitment, and leadership appear as the three most relevant aspects. Multivariate analysis identified seven groups of competencies: leadership, self-management, interpersonal, communication, technical, productivity, and managerial.

Ng and Ramayah (2020) noticed that owner-managed SMEs can concentrate on enhancing their core competencies to generate financial performance by utilizing cutting-edge goods, procedures, and practices. Through SMEs' innovativeness and core competencies, policymakers and practitioners can obtain new insights into the challenges of maintaining the business operations and financial performance of SMEs.

Qu et al (2022) showed that core competence positively and significantly affects innovation performance, and absorptive capacity mediates the relationship between core competencies and innovation performance. Moreover, organizational culture partially moderates the relationship between absorptive capacity and innovation.

Amaral et al (2023) concluded by putting forth a theoretical hypothesis regarding how countries should determine key core competencies to improve their dynamic (regulatory) capabilities in fields that are expected to be vital to their social welfare.

There is also a study that discusses the quality of work life and core competencies, such as:

Sotonye and Konya (2020) explained that the quality of work life directly impacts an employee's ability to develop and utilize core competencies within an organization. A positive work environment, including flexible hours and skill development opportunities, fosters motivation and engagement, contributing to strong performance outcomes. Factors such as work-life balance, job satisfaction, and supportive leadership practices contribute to this positive work environment.

The main question of the research problem, is whether to what extent the Ministry's administration realizes the importance of quality of work life and the extent of its impact on enhancing the core competencies of its workers and thus their overall performance.

Furthermore, the main purpose of this research is to determine the extent to which the Ministry of Health incorporates work-life quality into its core competencies.

## **2. Material and Methods**

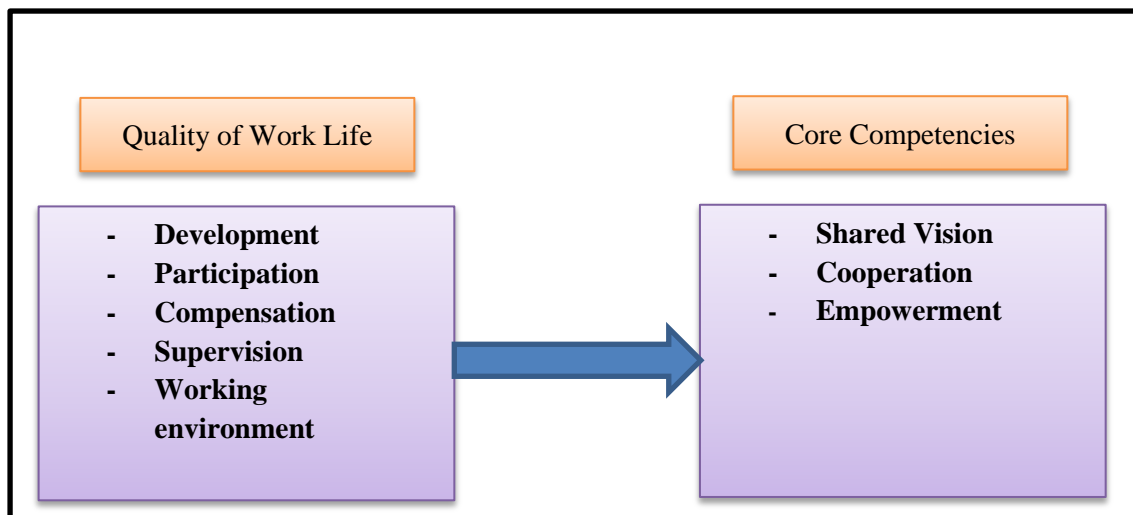
The researchers used a descriptive analysis method, which is commonly used by researchers to understand various social phenomena, to understand the interaction between quality of work life and core competencies. This approach makes it possible to analyze phenomena realistically by using the data and information gathered to comprehend the situation, conclude, pinpoint the causes of the phenomenon, and identify potential solutions.

### **2.1 Research Tools**

The primary instrument used by the research to gather data for its applied side was a questionnaire that was created using a set of ready-made indicators that had previously been tested in successful corporations after being modified using validity and reliability tests to account for the peculiarities of the local environment.

### **2.2 The hypothetical scheme of the research**

A conceptual research design is created to illustrate the logical relationship between relevant primary or secondary variables. The choice of variable dimensions depends on the intellectual capabilities of the researcher, administrative literature, and available resources. The design represents the relationship and influence between the research variables, represented here by the independent variable, the quality of work life and its dimensions (development, participation, compensation, supervision, and work environment), and the dependent variable, the core competencies and their dimensions (shared vision, cooperation, and empowerment), as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** :The hypothetical scheme of this research

### 2.3 The research hypotheses

To achieve the research question, objective, and hypothetical framework, this research relied on the following hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of work life and dimensions of core competencies.

There is an effect between the QWL and core competencies.

### 2.4 The research sample and population

The research group was represented by middle- and high-level managers of the different Ministry of Health units, as well as by the leaders, directors, and leading cadres of each unit, and samples were taken from this group using the intentional sampling method. There were 155 people in the sample.

### 2.5 The concept of QWL

Quality of work life (QWL) is the overall well-being and satisfaction of employees within an organization. It includes factors like physical working conditions, job security, career development opportunities, work-life balance, and employee involvement. Prioritizing QWL not only benefits employees but also organizations, as it enhances productivity, reduces absenteeism, and reduces stress (Miswadi and Mansor, 2023)

The QWL is significant when the employee feels that the organization treats him as an internal customer by meeting his material and moral needs. That would create a convenient environment for an employee who is willing to work hard and increase his or her efforts to be more productive at the same time. (Sirgy et al, 2008) stated that QWL programs will create appropriate work conditions to require employee role expectations and decrease the gap when comparing stress of working and non-working life. Moreover, QWL can help employees deal with various role identities and reduce the demands of work. QWL is considered one of the basic and important technologies that contribute to prospering the organization by providing three factors: "motivation and satisfaction, willingness to take responsibility, and commitment to work." (Al-Gharibawi et al, 2023). QWL contributes to increasing the participation of working individuals directly by participating in decision-making and increasing productivity (Salimi and Seaidian, 2019). QWL has great importance at the level of organizations and working individuals such as reducing work turnover rates, and absenteeism, increasing job satisfaction, organizational identification.

It contributes to strength the organization's ability to attract qualified working individuals, and enhances its competitiveness (Salem, 2018). Moreover, QWL seeks to develop working conditions that meet the needs of working individuals by looking at the extent of his or her involvement in the work (Teryima et al, 2001).

## **2.6 The dimensions of QWL**

QWL contains a set of dimensions, development, participation, compensation, supervision, and working environment, adopted from (Adikoeswanto et al, 2020). They will be clarified in detail in the following:

### **2.6.1 Development**

It simply means the efforts that the organization provides to improve and enhance employees' knowledge and skills to obtain higher positions in the organization. Thus, employee development is defined to highlight some concepts related to formal training, education, work experience, relationships, and skills and abilities that assist employees in building various and long-term personal and professional competencies to prepare them for jobs and positions in the future (Jehanzeb and Mohanty, 2018).

### **2.6.2 Participation**

It is clarified through the opportunity that is available for them to perform, implement, complete, accept, and discuss their daily assessment responsibilities related to their daily work duties (Adikoeswanto et al, 2020).

### **2.6.3 Compensation**

Refers to fairness in paying salaries represents the employee's feeling of being able to achieve equality in comparison to the duration of his work. Either internal justice is represented by the level of wages paid to jobs being consistent with the value of the job, or external justice is represented by the employee's feeling that the wage he or she receives is higher or equal to corresponding organizations (Abd Al-Aali, 2019).

### **2.6.4 Supervision**

Points out two kinds of instrumental and socioemotional supervision. The initial one could be explained when the superiors create a socially positive environment through expressing goodwill, positive feelings, and a trusting relationship. The second refers to collaboration between superiors and employees in dealing with professional problems by providing beneficial and useful information about the job to solve those problems (Orgambidez and Almeida, 2020).

### **2.6.5 Working environment**

The environment, in which employees work, plays an important role in influencing their abilities and skills. The job environment, employees feel meets their needs, and encourages them to give their best and to be changed and what can survive is an organization that can adapt to its environmental changes (Adikoeswanto et al, 2020). Thus, the working conditions surrounding employees while performing their tasks, including moral, material, and spatial conditions, will motivate them to provide the best of their abilities. (Zween and Al-Hasnawi, 2017).

## **2.7 The Concept of Core Competence**

Core competencies refer to unique capabilities or strengths possessed by an organization that provides a competitive edge over its rivals. They are often characterized by being difficult for competitors to imitate or replicate. These competencies can encompass various aspects such as technology, knowledge, processes, and relationships with stakeholders, and organizational culture (Sten et al, 2020). Core competencies are essential for organizations to gain a competitive edge. It is their collective knowledge and distinctive capabilities that give them a competitive edge. Identifying and developing these competencies requires understanding

strategic objectives and aligning internal resources effectively. These competencies can range from operational excellence to strong customer relationship management skills. They also benefit society by fostering innovation through cross-pollination across industries and sectors.

### **2.7.1 The Dimensions of Core Competence**

Core competencies can be identified by three characteristics the first core capability is timing. The organization can develop its product in a period that it cannot competitors imitate. The second is resources and skills efficiency: i.e. the absorptive capacity of an organization to acquire new skills the new ones exceeds the absorptive capacity of competitors, and the third is difficulty linking skills and resources to imitate it (Al-Shaikhli and Al-Kubaisi, 2011). The core competence includes a set of dimensions, shared vision, cooperation, and empowerment, adopted from (Alrubaiee, 2012). They will be explained in detail in the following:

### **2.7.2 Shared Vision**

The shared vision represents the common interest between employees and the organization regarding goals, objectives, policies, priorities, and expectations that the organization seeks to reach. An organization that has a good sharing of its vision with its employees will undoubtedly lead to achieving high achievements by building innovative services and goods (Ussahawanitchakit, 2008).

### **2.7.3 Cooperation**

An organization that works to build strong trust, motivate others, inspire enthusiasm, and enable employees to deal with conflicts, will be able to reach optimal results and create a suitable atmosphere for effective teamwork (Berger et al, 2018). Thus, the work team plays a vital role in completing tasks without boredom or routine, as well as completing the work of departments that suffer from work momentum within the company (Al Jader, 2017). Furthermore, it is difficult to imitate by others and is formed as a result of the cooperation of all departments of the organization and produces collective knowledge for the organization's members (Jatheer and Jihad, 2018).

### **2.7.4 Empowerment**

Empowerment refers to the process that requires four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Employees feel that their work is personally important to the overall organizational effectiveness through empowering them to feel confident and perceive the significance of their contribution (Alrubaiee, 2012).

## **2.8 The practical aspect of the research**

### **2.8.1 Measure variables**

Table 1 below represents the arithmetic means and standard deviation for the research variables. The following is an explanation of the table:

### **2.8.2 Quality of work life variable**

Table 1 shows the variable of quality of work life and its sub-dimensions for the ministry under investigation, where the arithmetic mean of the total variable of quality of work life was 3.70, which is higher than the value of the hypothesized mean of 3, and with a standard deviation of .60, which demonstrates the importance of this variable. At the ministry level.

### **2.8.3 The core competencies variable**

Table 1 below shows the core competencies variable and its sub-dimensions for the ministry under investigation, where the arithmetic mean for the total core competencies variable reached 3.60, which is higher than the hypothesized mean value of 3, and with a standard deviation of .61, which demonstrates the importance of this variable to Ministry level.

**Table 1:** Arithmetic means and standard deviation of the research variables

Table: Descriptive Statistics for Variables		
Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quality of work-life variable	3.70	.60
core competencies	3.60	.61

### 2.8.4 Testing the research Hypotheses

Considering the research question, objective, and hypothetical framework, several hypotheses have been formulated. The following explanation applies to the movement of stocks:

The first hypothesis states that there is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of work life and dimensions of core competencies.

The second hypothesis states that there is an effect between the QWL and core competencies.

#### 2.8.4.1 Testing the first main hypothesis

The correlation matrix in Table 2 shows that there is a strong and direct correlation at a significant level of 0.01% between the core competencies and the quality of work life, as the value of the correlation coefficient reached .715\*\*, which supports this. The t of favoritism reached 5.717 and the value of its significance is .000.

It is clear that the existence hypothesis is accepted, for the initial primary hypothesis claims that a statistically significant correlation exists between the QWL and core competencies and their dimensions.

**Table 2:** Correlation matrix

		core competencies
quality of work life	Spearman correlation coefficient	.715**
	Sig	.000

#### 2.8.4.2 Testing the second main hypothesis (the effect between the quality of work life and the core competencies)

Table 3 shows that the calculated F between the total core competencies variable and the total quality of work-life variable for the Ministry reached 32.777. This means that there is an impact of the quality of work-life variable on the core competencies variable for the Ministry, and we note a value of  $\beta = .765$ , which indicates that any change of 1 in the quality of work life will lead to a change in the fundamental competencies of .765, as indicated by the value of the coefficient of determination R Square, which is a descriptive measure used to interpret the extent of the regression equation's usefulness in estimating the evaluation. It represents the percentage of decrease in errors when using the regression equation, and its amount was .733a, which means that the amount of .733a of the variance occurring in the core competencies is variance explained by the Quality of Work Life that the model contains, and that .235 is a variance It is explained by factors that were not included in the regression model, as indicated in the moral table, which shows a value of .000b in the outputs of the statistical system, which is confirmation of the presence of effects of the quality of work life in achieving the core competencies of the ministry sample of the research, and from this, we determine that the second major hypothesis is accepted. It claims that (there is a significant effect of the QWL on achieving core competencies)

**Table 3:** The impact matrix

		core competencies
The quality of work life	F	32.777
	Sig	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	$\alpha$	.733
	$\beta$	.765
	R <sup>2</sup>	.733 <sup>a</sup>

### 3. Discussion of results

**i.** The results showed that the variable quality of work life and its sub-dimensions for the ministry under investigation had an arithmetic mean of 3.70, which is higher than the value of the hypothesized mean of 3 and has a standard deviation of 0.60, which demonstrates the importance of this variable at the ministry level. This is somewhat similar to what Raouf (2020) study concluded in terms of explaining the importance of the quality of work life in improving the conditions of workers, which reflects positively on the development of their abilities and skills.

**ii.** The results showed that the core competencies variable and its sub-dimensions for the ministry under investigation reached the arithmetic mean for the total core competencies variable 3.60, which is higher than the hypothesized mean value of 3 and has a standard deviation of .61, which demonstrates the importance of this variable to the ministry level. This is somewhat similar to what Amaral et al (2023) concluded regarding the importance of core competencies and their impact on improving the performance of organizations and thus achieving the well-being of society.

**iii.** The research community relied on quality of work life to core competencies, with a higher arithmetic average level 3.70, and worked with relative interest 73%, which means that the amount of variance occurring in the core competencies is variance explained by the QWL that the model contains, and that .235 is a variance. It is explained by factors that were not included in the model.

**iv.** The Ministry sought to adopt quality of work life to develop core competencies with a relatively high arithmetic average and a high interest rate of approximately and rely on administrative leadership responsible for all directions, QWL, in general, received the attention of the organization in question because the leadership Senior management in any organization has an active role in achieving the goals it wants to reach, as shown by the proportions that were previously explained, as senior management has an effective role in improving cohesion and reaching the required differentiation to keep the organization always at the forefront.

### 4. Conclusions

The QWL acts as an indispensable incentive to demonstrate the hidden competencies of employees. On the other hand, the quality of work life employs to balance the social and professional lives of employees to ensure their job satisfaction and provide their best. Any organization cannot maintain high levels of performance without providing employees with the necessary material and moral needs to increase their skills and develop their competencies. Thus, that would enable the organization to achieve high levels of performance and qualified employees to develop the organization and keep developing with rapid changes. The Ministry of Health has shown a high interest in quality of work wife, in light of its endeavor to expedite the start of initiatives and procedures that generate ideas independently of the strategic objectives, in addition to having the automatic participation of its joints in achieving good internal cohesion. According to the results obtained in this research, we conclude that there is a direct positive



relationship between the QWL and the core competencies, indicating that increased interest in the quality of work life leads to a high rate of Competencies retention. In addition to this effect between the variables, it can be invested by the ministry to motivate competencies to stay with them and thus achieve the goal of retention, and to exploit onboarding programs to facilitate the process of social integration and help workers to adapt to the work environment and culture of the organization.

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## دور جودة حياة العمل في تعزيز المقدرات الجوهرية بحث وصفي تحليلي في وزارة الصحة

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## مستخلص البحث

يهدف البحث إلى تشخيص أوجه القصور ونقاط الضعف في تطبيق أبعاد جودة الحياة الوظيفية ومدى تأثيرها على اتجاهات وسلوكيات الموظفين، وبالتالي علاقتها بتعزيز مقدراتهم الجوهرية. وتتبع القيمة العلمية للبحث من إبراز أهمية أبعاد جودة حياة العمل في تحسين الكفاءة الإنتاجية للعاملين في القطاع العام ورفع مستوى الأداء التنظيمي. ولأن جودة الحياة العملية تلعب دوراً مهماً في تعزيز المقدرات الأساسية للموظفين في القطاع العام، فإنها يمكن أيضاً أن تكون حافزاً أو مثبطاً لأي موظف من خلال التكيف مع الظروف الاقتصادية والاجتماعية التي يعيش فيها الفرد والجهود المبذولة في عملهم. استخدم الباحثون المنهج الوصفي التحليلي من خلال اعتماد الاستبيان كأداة أساسية. تم اختيار وزارة الصحة كمجتمع للبحث من خلال مسح عينة شملت المدير العام ومساعدتهم، ورؤساء الأقسام ومساعديهم، من مدراء الأقسام والشعب والوحدات. وبلغ حجم العينة 155 من قيادات وزارة الصحة، وتم استخدام البرنامج الإحصائي SPSS لتحليل البيانات. وأظهرت نتائج البحث أن هناك علاقة ارتباط وتأيير مباشر لابعاد جودة حياة العمل ومساهماتها في تعزيز المقدرات الجوهرية في الوزارة المبحوثة مما ينعكس على تحسين ادائها الوظيفي بشكل عام.

نوع البحث: ورقة بحثية

الكلمات الرئيسية: جودة حياة العمل ، المقدرات الجوهرية ، وزارة الصحة.

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