

# **CHAPTER 9**

## **CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS**

## 9.1 Summary of the Study

Quality of work life represents a real concern for human value with an awareness that all individuals devote valuable part of their lives to work. Quality of work life is basically the quality of life that an employee experiences at his work place. QWL involves all aspects of employees work life like—economic, social, psychological and organizational. In a wider use, quality of work life covers all the aspect of work related life, including pay and allowance, working conditions, working hours, benefits and service, career development, human relations etc., that are relevant to employees satisfaction and motivation. Originally quality of work life activity occurred during the period 1969-1974, when a broad group of researchers, scholars, union leaders and government personnel became interested in how to influence the quality of an individual's on the job experiences (Nadler and Lowler, 1983).

Dissatisfaction with working life is a great problem, which affects almost all employees, regardless of position or status. The present study undertook detail investigation on the different approaches of quality of work life of sugar mills in Bangladesh.

The present study was undertaken to assess the views of employees on quality of work life (QWL) of five selected sugar mills (Syampur Sugar Mills Ltd., Rajshahi Sugar Mills Ltd., Natore Sugar Mills Ltd., Rangpur Sugar Mills Ltd. and Joypurhat Sugar Mills Ltd.) in Rajshahi Division in Bangladesh. The present study attempted to achieve the following objectives :

1. To illustrate social profile of sugar employees and to measure their level of job commitment, job satisfaction and trade union involvement.
2. To make a comparative learning of existing and expected QWL of different sugar mills.

3. To investigate the reaction of employees about the existing and expected QWL in the sugar industry.
4. To see the impact of designation and the perception on QWL.
5. To see the impact of age and experience on QWL.
6. To identify hierarchical effect in perceiving quality of work life.
7. To find the effect of quality of work life on group cohesiveness.
8. To determine the priorities assigned by the employees to various determinants of QWL.
9. To analyze the problem areas of QWL in the concerned sugar mills vis-à-vis industry.
10. To suggest some measures to be taken in improving QWL in the sampled industries.
11. To make some recommendations for policy making in the light of findings of the present study.

A sample of 1000 employees was drawn from five sugar mills out of 7009 employees (representing about 15 % of the total manpower strength). In selecting subjects stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used. Data were collected from the sample subjects of the five sugar mills during the period from September, 1999 to March, 2000. Each subject was contacted personally and data were collected from the subject after making him convinced about the objectives and importance of the present study.

Three sets of questionnaires (for existing and expected QWL, QWL for five hierarchical levels and the effect of QWL on group cohesiveness) were administered to each of the subject. Out of 1000 subjects 150 subjects furnished the necessary information for existing and expected QWL, 650 subjects furnished the necessary information for QWL regarding hierarchical levels and 200 subjects filled up questionnaires for the effect of QWL on group cohesiveness. Likert

scaling methods were applied in the preparation of the questionnaires. One questionnaire was prepared for employee's to analyze the perceptions and expectations about the quality of work life in the selected sugar mills. Ten determinants of QWL were selected for this questionnaire and each component carried two questions. A second questionnaire was prepared for employees to analyze hierarchical effect in perceiving quality of work life. Nine major factors of QWL were selected for this questionnaire and out of 52 items of QWL factors 43 items were true keyed and 9 items were false keyed in this questionnaire. The other questionnaire was prepared for employees to analyze the effect of quality of work life on group cohesiveness. This third questionnaire was prepared according to the guideline of Survey Research Centre, University of Michigan. A pilot survey was conducted to ascertain the workability and face validity of the questionnaires.

To attain the objectives of the study, following variables have been examined during the investigation.

#### **Independent Variables:**

- a. Level of employees : executive, supervisor, skilled employee, semi-skilled employee and unskilled employee.
- b. Demographic variables : designation, experience and age.
- c. Departments of the organization: administration, cane, factory and finance department.

#### **Dependent Variables :**

- a. Quality of work life (QWL) of the employees.
- b. Group cohesiveness of four departments (groups).
- c. QWL factors.

The data were processed through microcomputer and grouped into different categories according to age, experience, education, designations (officer, supervisor, staff, worker), hierarchical levels (executive, supervisor, skilled employee, semiskilled employee, unskilled employee) and departments (administration, cane, factory, finance) of the sugar industry. Difference between the means were found out and the Z-values and t-values were computed to see the extent of difference and the significance level while studying existing and expected QWL and the differences among the hierarchical levels with respect to perception of QWL. Correlation and regression were computed to see the effect of QWL on group cohesiveness.

The following are the major findings based on the examination of the hypotheses:

*Hypothesis – 1: There is a significant gap between the existing and expected quality of work life among the sugar mill employees.*

A comparison of the existing and expected mean score of the QWL determinants showed that except for QWL determinant *job stress*, there were clear and wide gaps between what is actually perceived to be present and what is expected. Z-values for all the ten QWL determinants were significant at 1% level of significance. This result indicated that a significant gap between the actual and expected quality of work life was in the sugar mill employees. It can be said that though there was little job stress in the sugar mills, the employees want an environment, which ensures their professional growth, career development, financial solvency and job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis–2: The designation, experience and age of employees do not alter their rating of the existing and expected quality of work life in sugar industry.*

The results of analysis proved that the designation, experience and age of employees did not alter their rating of the existing and expected quality of work life in sugar industry. The findings indicated that most of the determinants of QWL do need immediate attention from the government and the concerned authorities to improve the quality of work life.

The analysis regarding hypotheses one ( $H_1$ ) and two ( $H_2$ ) showed that sugar industry was functioning in an environment, where four major determinants of QWL, i.e., *participation in decision making, pay and allowance, compensation* and *career advancement* were largely missing and the employees would like to see an environment that includes these determinants.

*Hypothesis-3: There are differences among five hierarchical levels across and between the department in perceiving their quality of work life.*

From the overall results it was revealed that lower levels employees had low quality of work life in comparison to higher levels like—executive and supervisor levels of the sugar industry. From this study it was evident that employees of lower levels (white collar and blue collar employees) had little autonomy to execute functions which contain decision making and their salary was comparatively very low as compared to executives and supervisors. These findings indicated the class difference in the sugar industry. On the observation and analysis of whole matters it was found that relationship between QWL factors and hierarchical levels was skewed. The results of analysis of variance showed significant hierarchical level differences for all the four departments (administration, cane, factory and finance). These results indicated that responses of five hierarchical levels (executive, supervisor, skilled employee, semiskilled employee and unskilled employee) of sugar industry were heterogeneous on all factors of QWL for all the four departments (administration, cane, factory and finance). These results supported that there were differences among hierarchical levels. Within subjects variance it was also found significant for all departments.

*Hypothesis - 4: The quality of work life has a definite effect on group cohesiveness (GC).*

The present study pointed out that four factors of QWL *social integration in the work organization, constitutionalism in the work organization, work and total life space and social relevance of the working life* were positively and significantly correlated with group cohesiveness for all four departments (administration, cane, factory and finance). All other QWL factors were positively correlated with group cohesiveness for all departments and the correlations were found mostly significant. A stepwise regression analysis was done to examine the effect of QWL on group cohesiveness. These results indicated that there was a definite effect of QWL on group cohesiveness (GC).

Quality of work life is related to productivity and job satisfaction. A poor QWL in an industry has an important effect on the mass production, quality of product and job satisfaction. It is important to provide an environment in which the employees work with satisfaction in all respects and maintain a sound social life. Ultimately employees' satisfaction can produce a better quality output and enhance their productivity.

## **9.2 Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **9.2.1 Conclusions**

From the analysis of the results of the study following major conclusions emerged:

- (1) Employees of sugar mills in Bangladesh are mostly dissatisfied with the existing quality of work life. The employees feel that the quality of work life in sugar mills is not conducive for their professional growth and career development. The QWL factors like—*pay and allowance,*

*participation in decision making and compensation* have an adverse impact on job satisfaction and productivity in the sugar industry.

- (2) Employees of sugar mills rated *career advancement, pay and allowance* as the highest in the expected determinants of QWL.
- (3) Employees of sugar mills showed that a significant gap exists between the actual and expected QWL.
- (4) The designation, experience and age of the sugar mill employees did not alter their rating of the existing and expected quality of work life.
- (5) Executive's level showed the highest score, while unskilled employees of sugar mills showed the lowest score in perceiving their quality of work life.
- (6) The present study revealed that the QWL factors show more or less consistent pattern of scoring for the different groups (hierarchical levels).
- (7) The individual who enjoy greater benefits in terms of pay, fringe benefits and promotional opportunities in the sugar industry considered the quality of work life as favourable.
- (8) Sugar mill employees expressed in understanding the relationship of quality of work life to group cohesiveness that a significant and positive effect of quality of work life on group cohesiveness.

#### **9.2.2 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in the light of the findings of the present study for policy implications and desired changes in QWL of sugar industry. This will indeed, improve the level of productivity of employees and make them satisfied with the present job.

- (1) Amenities at work ought to be improved at the earliest as poor amenities make the employees dissatisfied.
- (2) The unions should realize the importance of QWL and strive towards its improvement. Especially trade unions can take steps to develop human resource by way of arranging seminars and lectures etc. Unions should also take joint efforts with management for the improvement of quality of work life.
- (3) Employees are dissatisfied with management's cooperation in their career development. As such management of sugar industry can provide career-counseling facilities to the employees to guide them in their career development.
- (4) Employee involvement concept is getting boosted-up now a days. The lower level employees should be given participation in organizational decision making process. These will certainly develop a sense of belongingness in them.
- (5) Management should undertake adequate training programmes for employees to make them satisfied, educated as well as motivated.
- (6) Salary scales should be revised as rate of inflation is increasing which results into hike in the prices.
- (7) Employees of lower levels perform major tasks for the betterment of the industry. Management and policy makers should take care in order to make them satisfied in work and out side the work.
- (8) Proper amount of autonomy should be given to employees. They should be assigned tasks which are full of involvement, challenge and risk. It will be surely improving their performance.

- (9) Good interpersonal relations result into organizational efficiency. Management should feel that if they support the employees whole heartedly, the goals of the sugar industry would be achieved.

The recommendation given in the light of the findings of the present study for the improvement of quality of work life of sugar mill employees which will help better performance, employer-employee relations and over all well being of the sugar industry.