

A Study On Impact Of Interpersonal Relationships On Quality Of Work Life: Special Reference To Educational Sector In Kanpur

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ABSTRACT

With the changing scenario, the organisations are facing various threats and challenges, one of which is to satisfy the workforce. With increased competition, the interpersonal relationships are no longer the way they used to be. Because now individuals are competing in the race, and hence they don't have same bond sharing as they used to have earlier. But one cannot ignore the importance interpersonal relationships play at work. Happier and satisfied workforce tends to perform better and stay in the organisation for longer period. The study aims to focus on the importance of interpersonal relationships at work and its impact on Quality of Work Life. The study is descriptive in nature. Data collection was done using structured questionnaire. The target population comprises of faculty members of educational institutions in Kanpur region. Convenience sampling was adopted to collect data from 400 employees. The research found that there is a positive correlation between interpersonal relationship and QWL. Regression results also indicates that interpersonal relationship impacts the QWL. This paper may benefit the society by motivating people to improve their interpersonal skills and organisations should take appropriate measures to enhance the interpersonal relationships of their employees so that the QWL is maintained.

Keywords : *Interpersonal relationship, Quality of Work Life, educational institutions, relationship with superiors, open communication.*

1. Introduction

Interpersonal relationships may be defined as the association between people who are working together in the same organisation or under one roof. It plays a significant role in the productivity and growth of organisations. The kind of relationship that exists in the organisation determines the work environment in which tasks and activities are to be completed by individuals. Interpersonal relations have the ability to make people happy, healthy and stress free and hence feeling of fulfilment is experienced (Juneja, 2017). Many studies have been conducted to analyse interpersonal relations at work as it will help the managers to make right decisions in the context of assigning work based on personalities, behaviours. Interpersonal relationship involves a situation of a real interaction between individuals or a mental representation of the relationship between self and others (Wilde & Dozois, 2019). Interpersonal relations in the organisations cannot be ignored because they tend to develop as we work together. Man being a social animal forms the bonds with people whom he is surrounded with. Interpersonal communication which is a major component of interpersonal relationship basically refers to communication which happens between two people (Hanson, 2008) influenced by communication messages from each other through face-to-face interaction (DeVito, 2010) and other various medium such as technologies (Zhou, 2016; DeVito, 2005). As people are both influenced by and part of their surroundings, people depend on the relationships they form to help them survive and meet their basic requirements. An interpersonal relationship can be described by "mutual interaction and behaviours," which allows people to interact with others in order to meet their needs. Seen on numerous scales ranging from casual acquaintances to intimate relationship caused by differing demands between two or more individuals (Imamoglu, 2008).

Because people are both influenced by and part of their surroundings, people depend on the relationships that they form to help them survive and meet their basic requirements. An interpersonal relationship can be described by "mutual interaction and behaviours," which allows people to interact with others in order to meet their needs. Witnessed on numerous scales ranging from casual acquaintances to intimate relationship caused by differing demands between two or more individuals (Kuehner, 2006).

Quality of work life is a basic and important requirement of the organisations now. It has become important for organisations to attract and retain talented and efficient workforce and ensure that they perform their duties and tasks effectively. Quality of work life is multidimensional in nature as it involves various factors to ensure organisational commitment, job satisfaction, motivation, job security, work life balance.

India is one of the developing economies where education system needs to be emphasised in order to generate fruitful results in the form of young sharp minds. For this reason, the teaching fraternity or faculty members have to be satisfied. When it comes to satisfaction of employees, unlike other sectors, the education sector also needs to improve or maintain its QWL. The challenging system in education sector, the increased workload, technological changes in teaching pedagogy, student teacher relationship, the mindset of students, the competition, everything has changed drastically. One common thing which is seen in all organisations is the impact of interpersonal relationships which gives healthy and stress-free environment for employees. When employees build bonds at workplace, they become happier to perform, their mental health improves and hence the quality of work life is also improved.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Interpersonal Relationship

According to Hochwarter, et al. (2004), the interpersonal relationship in organizational context may be defined as the social skills that enable the employees to relate with one another. It is becoming quite significant for the organisations as nowadays more team work and more of service-oriented jobs are increasing.

Anushiya R. & Shalini A, (2023) has laid emphasis that Interpersonal relationship can also be considered as personality traits or capabilities that leads to psychosocial outcomes. Paulhus & Martin, 1988 defined Interpersonal relations as the relation between friends, family and the social circle whom we hang with

According to Juneja (2017), Interpersonal relationships play a very significant role in the performance and outcomes of people at workplace. The relationships between individuals at workplace determine the work environment of the organisations where various work, tasks and duties will be performed by people. Interpersonal relationships have the ability to give the employees a feeling of fulfilment.

Brad Gilbreath (2004) has identified that support from supervisors has significant impact on the wellbeing of employees and he found that behaviour of supervisor and employee wellbeing has significant association.

Interpersonal relationship may be defined as the association between people having similar mindset, tastes and preferences. People with some commonality enter into good interpersonal relationship.

Cohen et al., (2007) has found various drivers or factors of quality of work life out of which interpersonal relationships, good communication is also part of QWL program.

Wan & Chan (2012) performed research on employees of casino to measure their QWL and he found that apart from various factors like compensation, good promotion policies, good level of supervision and open communication plays a very crucial role.

2.2 Quality of Work Life

QWL or Quality of work life may be defined as the favourableness or unfavourableness of the work environment of an organization for its employees. It is a generic term that covers feelings of person towards every aspect of his work like incentives, rewards, recognition, interpersonal relationships etc.

"Quality of work life" is a generic phrase that covers a person's feelings about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relationships, and its intrinsic meaning in a person's life.

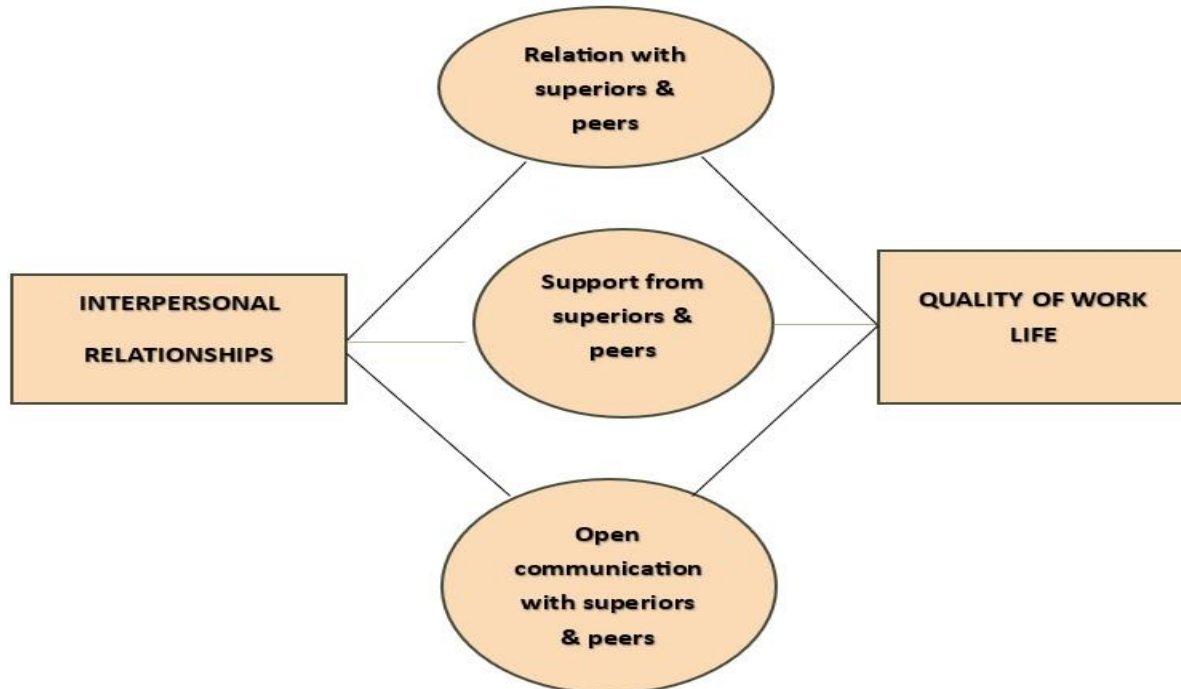
Dr. Neelam Chakravarti (2021) has said that the term 'Quality of Work Life' has been around for almost four decades but still it is new notion in India. Louis, David, Walton, Rose & et al, Walton, Louis, Davis, Rose & et al, Robbins & Fernandes provided number of QWL measurements for various industries. As per this research, the impact of QWL vary from industry to industry. Educational institutions are unique place to work, also the situations, the circumstances of working there are different. It is necessary to comprehend significance of QWL for education industry too.

One really needs to satisfy the workforce. Pay scale, work environment, HR policies, supervision, QWL, management and WLB are most important that fosters satisfaction among employees (Orooj Siddiqui and Dr Gaurav Bisaria, 2022) .

Also, when it comes to work performance booster, changing trends like one of the research focused on analysing effect of implementing Green HRM practices that impacted work performance of employees (Farhina Sardar Khan, Syed Shahid Mazhar, 2022)

It might be very difficult to retain talented people in nation like India where the labor market keeps changing rapidly (Syed Afzal Ahmad, Asma Farooque, 2023).

Fig 1 The Proposed Model based on Literature Review



Source : Self designed

3. Need of Study

Quality of work life is an essential requirement of any organisation. Like any organisation, academic sector too needs to ensure that their employees are satisfied. This could be done by providing the right work environment. Interpersonal relationship being one of the most critical factors that leads to satisfaction of employees is considered here and it shapes the work environment of organisations. So, the study is undertaken on educational institutions of Kanpur to determine how interpersonal relations among employees could contribute towards ensuring quality of work life.

4. Research Gap

Man is a social animal and in order to fulfil the social need as also mentioned in Maslow's need hierarchy theory, people want to be associated with family, friends and others. Hence, it becomes very important to ensure good interpersonal relations at work too so the study aims to bridge the gap between interpersonal relationships at work and its association with quality of work life. Many researches have been carried out on work environment claiming interpersonal relationships an important aspect of work environment but very less researches have tried to discover the relationship between interpersonal relationship and its impact on quality of work life. So, the study tries to fill the gap that exists in the body of knowledge.

5. Objectives

The major objective of the research is to find out the impact of interpersonal relationships on quality of work life in educational institutions.

The minor objectives are: -

- To study the impact of relationship with superiors and peers on quality of work life.
- To study the impact of support from superiors and peers on quality of work life.
- To study the impact of open communication with superiors and peers on quality of work life.

6. Hypothesis

The null hypothesis formulated is as follows-

Based on minor objectives, the hypothesis formulated is-

H_{oa}- Relationship between superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has no significant relationship.

H_{ob}- Relationship between support from superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has no significant relationship.

H_{oc}- Relationship between open communication with superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has no significant relationship.

7. Research Methodology

7.1 Sampling Procedure

The study undertaken is descriptive in nature as it aims to describe the interpersonal relationship and quality of work life at workplace and also determine the impact of interpersonal relationship on quality of work life. The sample size of 400 was chosen using Yamane formula ($n = N / 1 + N (e)^2$) Where, n = sample size; N = population size and e = margin of error which is +- 5%). The convenience sampling was adopted as the researcher approached the employees of educational institutions as per the accessibility and convenience. The sample area was Kanpur.

7.2 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data has been used. For collecting primary data, a structured questionnaire was prepared comprising of two sections. The first section comprises of demographic information, namely, gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, designation and experience of the respondents. The second section comprises of 10 statements designed to measure the three dimensions of interpersonal relationship i.e. relationship with superior and peers, friendly and supportive behaviour of superior and peers and open communication. For collecting secondary data, various journals, articles, websites and books have been referred.

7.3 Statistical Tools

Likert scale was used and respondents were asked to rate on scale of 1 to 5, where 1 denotes strongly disagree and 5 denotes strongly agree. The questionnaire was circulated using Google forms to the faculty members of educational institutions of Kanpur. IBM SPSS versions 29 was used to find the reliability of questionnaire and to analyse the data. For descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation was used. And for inferential statistics, i.e. for testing of hypothesis correlation and regression have been used.

7.3.1 Research Instrument

The questionnaire comprises of statements as mentioned below-

Table No. 1 Questionnaire

Relation with Superiors & Peers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I share good and healthy relationship with my superiors and peers.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My peers and superiors involve me in decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel treated fairly by my superiors and peers.	1	2	3	4	5
Support from Superiors & Peers					
4. My colleagues are friendly and supportive.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have my peers and superiors to help me out.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My peers and superiors encourage me to perform well.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have peers to share my feelings or when I feel down.	1	2	3	4	5
Open communication with peers and superiors					
8. There is open communication with my superiors and peers.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am satisfied with the interaction with my peers and superiors.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel free to communicate with my superiors.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My institute is able to maintain the quality of work life of its employees.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Data Analysis

8.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach Alpha through IBM SPSS software Version 29. The Cronbach's alpha value of the questionnaire comprising of 11 items was found to be 0.941 which is an acceptable one since it met the criteria of being above 0.7. Further, the reliability of all constructs of workplace environment was checked. The Cronbach's alpha value of the first, second and third construct was reported as: Relation with superiors & peers (0.775); Support from superiors & peers (0.906); Open communication with superiors and peers (0.929).

8.2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The results of demographic profile presented in Table 2 shows that out of 400 respondents, 204 (51%) were males and 196 (49%) were females. Regarding the age of respondents, 223 respondents (55.80%) lie in age group of 25-35 years followed by 71 respondents (17.80%) in age group of 36-45 years which was followed by 54 respondents (13.50%) in the age group of 46-55 years. 28 respondents (7%) lie in category of below 25 years and 24 respondents (6%)

lie in age group of above 55 years. 273 (68.30%) respondents were married and 127 (31.80%) were single. The educational qualification of the respondents was 323 (80.80%) having masters degree, 71 (17.80%) had PhD and 6 (1.50%) respondents were graduates. 219 (54.80%) were having designation of Assistant Professors followed by 140 (35%) with designation of Associate Professors and 41 (10.30%) were Professors. 236 (59%) had teaching experience of 5-10 years; 87 (21.80%) respondents had experience of less than 5 years and 77 (19.30%) had experience of more than 10 years.

Table 2 : Respondents Demographic data

	Frequency	Percentage of frequency
Gender		
Male	204	51%
Female	196	49%
Age		
Below 25 years	28	7%
25- 35	223	55.80%
36-45	71	17.80%
46-55	54	13.50%
Above 55	24	6.00%
Marital Status		
Single	127	31.80%
Married	273	68.30%
Qualification		
PhD	71	17.80%
Masters	323	80.80%
Graduate	6	1.50%
Designation		
Assistant Professor	219	54.80%
Associate Professor	140	35.00%
Professor	41	10.30%
Experience		
Less than 5 years	87	21.80%
5-10 years	236	59.00%
More than 10 years	77	19.30%

Source : Excel designed & results extracted from SPSS

8.3 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis of the variables was identified through mean and standard deviation using IBM SPSS software version 29. As from Table no. 3, the mean scores of the items indicates that overall, the faculty members at educational institutions in Kanpur are quite satisfied with their interpersonal relationships. The cumulative average (mean) was calculated of each constructs The construct (Relationship with superiors and peers) has the highest mean score (3.6) indicating the faculty has good terms with their fellow colleagues and superiors. It was followed up by open communication with superiors and peers (3.5) which indicate the faculty can freely communicate with their superiors and peers. And, lastly followed up by support from superiors and

peers (3.22) which also indicate that the superiors and peers are supportive. The lowest mean score was of Open communication, the employee believed that there was less interaction between superiors and peers. The mean score of Quality of Work Life (3.35) indicates the respondents were quite satisfied that their organisation is able maintain Quality of Work Life of its employees.

Table 3 : Descriptive Statistics

Items	N	Mean	Std Deviation
1. I share good and healthy relationship with my superiors and peers.	400	3.69	1.393
2. My peers and superiors involve me in decision making.	400	3.58	1.459
3. I feel treated fairly by my superiors and peers.	400	3.67	1.467
4. My colleagues are friendly and supportive.	400	3.6	1.416
5. I have my peers and superiors to help me out.	400	3.36	1.231
6. My peers and superiors encourage me to perform well.	400	3.59	1.337
7. I have peers to share my feelings or when I feel down.	400	3.67	1.367
8. There is open communication with my superiors and peers.	400	3.44	1.424
9. I am satisfied with the interaction with my peers and superiors.	400	2.78	1.238
10. I feel free to communicate with my superiors.	400	3.45	1.433
11. My institute is able to maintain the quality of work life of its employees.	400	3.35	1.379

Source : Excel designed & results extracted from SPSS

Table 4 : Descriptive data of respondents

Items	Strongly Agree-5	Agree-4	Neutral-3	Disagree-2	Strongly Disagree-1
1. I share good and healthy relationship with my superiors and peers.	171	79	31	92	27
	42.80%	19.80%	7.80%	23%	6.80%
2. My peers and superiors involve me in decision making.	168	63	45	82	42
	42%	15.80%	11.30%	20.50%	10.50%
3. I feel treated fairly by my superiors and peers.	180	68	35	73	44
	45%	17%	8.80%	18.30%	11%
4. My colleagues are friendly and supportive.	157	79	51	72	41
	39.30%	19.80%	12.80%	18%	9.80%
5. I have my peers and superiors to help me out.	69	155	65	73	38
	17.30%	38.80%	16.30%	18.30%	9.50%
	140	93	57	81	29

6. My peers and superiors encourage me to perform well.	35%	23.30%	14.30%	20.30%	7.30%
7. I have peers to share my feelings or when I feel down.	160 40%	84 21%	55 13.80%	67 16.80%	34 8.50%
8. There is open communication with my superiors and peers.	133 33.30%	88 22%	47 11.80%	87 21.80%	45 11.30%
9. I am satisfied with the interaction with my peers and superiors.	34 8.50%	90 22.50%	108 27%	89 22.30%	79 19.80%
10. I feel free to communicate with my superiors.	136 34%	85 21.30%	47 11.80%	86 21.50%	46 11.50%
11. My institute is able to maintain the quality of work life of its employees.	112 28%	98 24.50%	48 12%	102 25.50%	40 10%

Source : Excel designed & results extracted from SPSS

From table No.4, one can see the respondents feedback towards the statements. Majority of them have given positive response towards the interpersonal relationship.

8.4 Hypothesis Testing

For testing the hypothesis, multiple correlation and multiple regression is used. The statements R1, S1 & OC1 have been considered to test the hypothesis.

8.4.1 Correlation Results

The study has adopted the correlation analysis to find out relationship between independent variable and its three constructs (Relationship with superiors & peers, Support from superiors & peers, Open communication with superiors & peers) and dependent variable (Quality of Work Life). Table No. 5 present the correlation analysis.

Table No. 5 : Correlation Analysis

		QWL	R1	S1	OC1
QWL	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N		400		
R1	Pearson Correlation	.649**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	400	400		
S1	Pearson Correlation	.609**	.612**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	400	400	400	
OC1	Pearson Correlation	.636**	.546**	.684**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	400	400	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source : SPSS generated

H_{1a} - Relationship with superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has significant relationship.

From the Table No. 5, it is concluded that Pearson Correlation of Relationship with superiors & peers and Quality of Work Life has *strong positive correlation* and *statistically significant* ($r = .649$, $p < .001$). Hence, H_{1a} was supported.

H_{1b}- Relationship between support from superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has significant relationship.

Support from superiors & peers was found to be *strongly positive and statistically significant* ($r = .609$, $p < .001$). Hence, H_{1b} was supported.

H_{1c}- Relationship between open communication with superiors and peers and Quality of Work Life has significant relationship.

Open communication with superiors & peers was found to be *strongly positive and statistically significant* ($r = .636$, $p < .001$). Hence, H_{1c} was supported.

Since, the constructs R1, S1 & OC1 have supported their alternate hypothesis respectively so H_{1a}, H_{1b} & H_{1c} are accepted.

8.4.2 Regression Results

Table No. 6 Regression Results

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.739 ^a	.545	.542	.933

a. Predictors: (Constant), OC1, R1, S1

b. Dependent Variable: QWL

Where OC1 is open communication with superiors & peers,

R1 is Relationship with superiors & peers,

S1 is Support from superiors & peers

As indicated in table no.6, we can see that R-square value is 0.545, which means that our independent variable (Interpersonal Relationship) causes 54.5% change in the dependent variable (Quality of Work Life).

Table No. 7 : ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	413.994	3	137.998	158.395	.000 ^b
	Residual	345.006	396	.871		
	Total	759.000	399			

a. Dependent Variable: QWL

b. Predictors: (Constant), OC1, R1, S1

Where OC1 is open communication with superiors & peers,

R1 is Relationship with superiors & peers,

S1 is Support from superiors & peers

The table no.7, ANOVA results shows that p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, hence we say that there is a significant relationship between independent variable i.e. Interpersonal Relationship and dependent variable i.e. QWL.

Table No. 8 Coefficient Results Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.347	.146		2.377	.018	.060	.634
	R1	.373	.044	.377	8.581	.000	.288	.459

S1	.154	.049	.158	3.129	.002	.057	.250
OC1	.312	.046	.322	6.755	.000	.221	.402

a. Dependent Variable: QWL

The table no.8 shows the coefficient results. As indicated that the beta value of R1, S1 & OC1 is 0.377, 0.158 & 0.322 which means that change in independent variable (Interpersonal Relationship), the construct R1 by one unit will bring about the change in dependent variable i.e. QWL by 0.377 units. Furthermore, the positive beta value indicates a positive relationship between R1 & QWL. Or in other words, we can say that R1 increases by one unit the QWL will also increase by 0.377 units.

The construct S1 by one unit will bring about the change in dependent variable i.e. QWL by 0.158 units. Furthermore, the positive beta value indicates a positive relationship between S1 & QWL. Or in other words, we can say that S1 increases by one unit the CL will also increase by 0.158 units.

The construct OC1 by one unit will bring about the change in dependent variable i.e. QWL by 0.322 units. Furthermore, the positive beta value indicates a positive relationship between OC1 & QWL. Or in other words, we can say that OC1 increases by one unit the CL will also increase by 0.322 units.

This supports our hypothesis H_{1a}, H_{1b} & H_{1c}.

9. Conclusion

Interpersonal relationships at workplace have a positive and significant impact on Quality of work life. Unhealthy relations at work, no support from superiors or colleagues, in effective or less communication can affect the mental health of employees as they tend to be stressed and unhappy.

So, it is imperative that educational institutions and other organisations too must recognise the importance of interpersonal relationships. The research has contributed towards the welfare of society as the results creates awareness in the society that how much interpersonal relationships is important and how it can significantly impact QWL. The study also creates awareness amongst the organisations to take steps and measures to improve the interpersonal relationships at their workplace so that their employees become happy and develop a favourable attitude towards work and organisation. This automatically improves their QWL. The benefit of having good interpersonal relationships is that it makes the employees happy and relaxed, this in turn increases their work performance by making better working environment. All this is related to growth of employees, organisations, society and country. Certain limitation was also faced by the researcher like lack of time to obtain the data, limited sample area as the study was confined to Kanpur region. Future researches can focus on other cities and towns or states to get better results. Also, employees were hesitant to share their honest feedbacks in the responses. The study focused on educational institutions only, future researches can be done on other sectors. Work environment with healthy interpersonal relationships will be stress free, calm and happy leading to enhanced job satisfaction and better QWL.

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