An Assessment of Green Quality of Working Life Dimensions: A Study at Public Institutions in Southern Zone State of Malaysia

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to assess the perceptions of employees on green quality of working life at the public organizations in Southern Zone State, Malaysia namely as Johor State, Malacca State and Negeri Sembila State. In this study, the Green Quality of Working Life dimensions consists of job satisfaction, salary, supervisory support, social relationship with management and colleagues, training and development, team-based practices and leadership. The number of respondents involved of this study for three states are 520 respondents with overall average rate of response is 83 percent. The findings on the average total score of agreement on Green Quality of Working Life showed that the dimensions of Job satisfaction at Johor State scored the highest with 61 percent, the average total score on Salary showed Negeri Sembilan State scored the highest with 62 percent, the Supervisory Support total average score shows the Malacca State scored the highest with 62 percent. The dimension of The Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues and Training and Development showed that the total average score at Johor State scored the highest with 56 percent for both dimensions whilst the total average score for Team-Based Development dimension, Johor State also scored the highest with 63 percent. The Leadership dimension shows the highest average total score is Negeri Sembilan State with 61 percent.

Key Words: Green Quality of Working Life, Job Satisfaction, Training and Development, Team-Based Practices.

Introduction

Quality of work life (QWL) refers to the level of happiness or satisfaction with one's career. Those who enjoy their careers are said to have a high quality of work life while those who are unhappy or whose needs are otherwise unfilled are said to have a low quality of work life (Indumathy and Kalamraj, 2012). In most of the organization today, the QWL is viewed as an essential dimension of the quality of life and for organizations as to attract and retain workers. The quality of work life approach considers people as an "asset" to the organization rather than as "costs" as it believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions (Indumathy and Kalamraj, 2012). The QWL affects quality of life in work competency, health, time management and wealth of life (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004)).

QWL is comprehensive and program designated to improve worker's satisfaction, strengthen workplace learning and help workers better manage the change and transition which affects almost all workers regardless of position or status (Grant, 2005). In the service organizations especially often unfolds within the constraints of limited fiscal resources and increasing demands for service accountability (Wallach & Mueller, 2006).

Kosny and Eakin (2008) added that despite some of the intrinsic rewards the work offers, jobs in the organizations can be difficult and demanding, characterized by high demands, long working hours, low pay, expose to violence and infectious disease, conditions which may be deleterious to worker health and safety (Baines 2004), that is where green quality of working life is in the focused of working life activities at the workplace. Employees in service organizations are often exposed to extensive negative feedback and overloaded with responsibility for helping from one to another that can affect their quality of time with family and friends (Marshall, Barnett & Sayer, 1997).

According to Niels (2003), the satisfaction of employees was originally achieved by ensuring that work experience satisfied a common set of needs. These needs amount to improving employees' quality of work life. The focused of the employee pleasures and pressures at work and the effort to initiate the so-called green quality of working life has been applied at work organizations which enable its members at all levels to actively; participate in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. This green value based process is aimed towards meeting the goals of enhanced effectiveness of organizations and improved quality of life at work for employees.

Green Quality of working life is defined as the favorable conditions and environments of a workplace that support and promote employee satisfaction by providing them with job satisfaction, salary and incentives, supervisory support, social relationship with management and colleagues, training and development, team-based practices and leadership. However, some researchers point out that Green Quality of Work Life (QWL) is not only related to personnel's well-being and their attitudes and feelings towards their job but also affected their pleasures and satisfaction at work (Marcel & Dupuis, 2006)). According to Hans Prujit (2000), quality of working life often assumed in two directions, one is for eliminating negative aspects in work and work situation and other instruction is modification of work and situation of work to improve employee's ability and to encourage important behavior for individual and community.

Literature Review

In the perspective of the green quality of working life the following dimensions of the study were determined as follows:

Variables	Source
Green Quality of Working Life	
▪ **Job satisfaction**	
In the job satisfaction, the following elements like personal satisfaction, valuable contribution to the success of organization, good use of knowledge and skills, convenience physical work environment, opportunities to grow and learn new skills and the proudness to be part of the organization in green management initiatives are counted as the elements of job satisfaction in green quality of working life.	Elise Ramstad (2009)
▪ **Salary**	Huang, TC, Lawler J. Lei CY (2007)
The elements of salary received by green job is appropriate as per job assigned.	
▪ **Supervisory Support**	
The elements of supervisory support is important to build the harmony and successfulness of the green work initiatives. The supervisory support like providing the resources like equipment, materials, information, etc. helps employees to do green job effectively. Supervisory support help employees to do green job with more freedom and work autonomy.	Sirgy MJ., Efraty D., Siegel P., Lee DJ. (2001)
▪ **Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues**	
The elements of social relationship with management and colleagues includes the way of management keep informed on the latest news and information to employees on green that affect the sense of team spirit, speak up and voice their opinions frankly on green management and any problem can be solved with the formal and informal way with the optimistic of organization future with the support on social relationships with management and colleagues.	White M., Hill S., McGovern P., Mills C., and Smeaton D. (2003)
▪ **Training and Development**	
The elements in training and development that affect the green quality of working life as long term development, investment and incentives, comprehensive program, career development, improve development and employee evaluations.	Kozlowski SWJ., IIgen DR (2006)
▪ **Team-Based Practices**	
The elements in team-based practices include team-based process, team-based development and team-based management.	Cheung, MFY and Wong CS. (2011).
▪ **Leadership**	
The elements of leadership that affected the practices of green quality of working life is team-based leadership, high-performance based leadership and value-based leadership.	

Research Objective

The main objective of this study are to assess on the perceptions of public institutions employees on green quality of working life in Southern Zone State of Malaysia, namely as Johor State, Malacca State and Negeri Sembilan State.

Research Methodology

a. **Research Design** – this study used a descriptive approach with the aim to assess the perceptions of green quality of working life

b. **Research Instrument -** A questionnaire is the research instrument based on Mc Donald (2001) "*Quality of Working Life Questionnaire*" which was modified to meet the need and requirement of this research. The other researchers work on Quality of Working Life like Elise (2009), Huang, Lawler and Lei (2007) and Kozlowski and IIgen (2006) were also adopted and adapted to suit the research requirement in designing the research questionnaires. The number of statement for each scales of dimensions were as follows:

Scale	Number of Item Statements
Green Quality of Working Life	14
▪ Job Satisfaction	7
▪ Salary	1
▪ Supervisory Support	3
▪ Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues	5
▪ Training and Development	14
▪ Team-Based Practices	18
▪ Leadership	17
Total	65

Green Quality of Working Life questions and measured using a -point Likert-scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Moderately Agree, (4) Agree and (5) Strongly Agree. The researcher adapts the questionnaire and adjusted according to the requirements and need of green quality of working life research.

c. **Data Collection -** The data collection of this study was focused at the the city centre of Southern Zone State of Malaysia, namely as Johor State, Malacca State and Negeri Sembilan State. Data was collected within four months starting from August 2016 to November 2016.

Southern Zone State Description
▪ Johor State
Johor Bahru was formerly known as **Tanjung Puteri** or **Iskandar Puteri**, is the capital of the state of Johor, Malaysia and its metropolitan area is the third largest in the country. It is also the busiest city in Johor state. Many industrials and manufacturing companies and public institutions located in Johor Bahru.
▪ Malacca State
Malacca, officially **Melaka** (s a state in Malaysia and located in the southern region of the Malay Peninsula, next to the Strait of Malacca. Malacca is known as a historical city and so rich of the cultural heritage of Malaysian races. Most of the industries and manufacturing companies located in Melaka City, the capital city of Malaysian state of Malacca. Many industrials and manufacturing companies and public institutions located in Melaka City.
▪ Negeri Sembilan
Seremban is a town and the capital of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, located within Seremban District. The town's administration is run by the Seremban Municipal Council. Most of the industries and manufacturing companies land public institutions located in Bandar Seremban.

The number of respondents at Johor Bahru City Centre are 270 respondents with rate of response is 55 percent whilst the Bandar Hilir City Centre respondents were 115 respondents and rate of response is 100 percent. The Seremban City Centre number of respondents are 130 respondents that counted on 93 percent for rate of response. Table 1 shows the number of respondents and rate of response of the Southern Zone State that involved in the research.

Table 1: The Rate of Response at Southern Zone State of Malaysia

Southern Zone State of Malaysia	No of Respondents	Number of Return Questionnaires	Rate of Response %)
Johor State – Johor Bahru City Centre	275	152	55.0%
Malacca State – Bandar Hilir, Malacca City Centre	115	115	100.0%
Negeri Sembilan State – Seremban City Centre	130	120	93.0%

Research Findings

The research findings were presented as follows:

a. Demographic profile of employees in Malaysian Public Institutions in Southern Zone State of Malaysia are summarized by majority of demographic as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Majority Demographic Profile of Respondent

No	Demographic Variable	Majority	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	54.2
2	Citizen	Citizen	100.0
3	Age	21-30 Years	51.5
4	Race	Malay	86.5
5	Religion	Muslim	88.9
6	Education Level	Diploma	31.5
7	Job Category	Clerical	31.8
8	Monthly Income	RM 1,001 – RM 5,000	81.2

The results as shown in Table 1 shows the gender majority of respondents participated in this study were female with 54.2 percent and 100 percent of respondent was Malaysian citizen. The survey respondents are composed primarily of age between 21-30 years, accounting for 51.5 percent of the respondents. In term of race, 86.5 percent of respondent are Malay and 88.9 percent are Muslim respondents. There is 31.5 percent majority respondents have their diploma in education level and 31.8 is made up of clerical job for respondent job category. Monthly income of RM 1,001- RM 5,000 contributed to 81.2 percent.

b. **The Research Findings of Green Quality of Working in Southern Zone State of Malaysia**

The research findings on Green Quality of Working Life were presented in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3: The Perceptions of Public Institutions Employees on Green Quality of Working Life in Southern Zone State of Malaysia

No	Item Statement	Johor State (Johor Bahru City Centre)	Malacca State (Bandar Hilir Malacca)	Negeri Sembilan State (Seremban City Centre)
A	**Job Satisfaction**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
1	I get personal satisfaction from the green work I did in my job.	73	68	65
2	I feel my green work makes a valuable contribution to the success of the organization.	71	71	62
3	I believe on the green work I am assigned is to do to make good use of my knowledge and skills.	63	45	58
4	The convenience physical work environment enables me to do my green job effectively.	59	52	63
5	The organization offers me opportunities to grow and learn new green skills.	45	58	54
6	I am satisfied to be a part of this organization	52	61	45
7	Overall, I would say my sprit on the green job is high	65	52	42
	Average Total Score	**61**	**58**	**56**
B	**Salary**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
8	The pay I received for my green job is appropriate, considering the work I am assigned to do.	52	55	61
9	The incentives of doing the green job is reasonable and manageable	49	58	62
	Average Total Score	**51**	**57**	**62**
C	**Supervisory Support**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
6	My supervisor regularly lets me know what is expected of me in doing my green job effectively.	42	54	54
7	My supervisor provides the resources I need (equipment, materials, information, etc.) to do my green job effectively.	48	85	52
8	My supervisor gives me the individual help and support I need to do my green job effectively.	68	64	51
9	The organization offers me opportunities to grow and learn new green skills.	50	52	56
10	My green work group has a sense of team spirit.	73	54	48
	Average Total Score	**56**	**62**	**52**

D	**Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
11	Management keeps their employees informed of their latest green news that affects employee interest.	70	45	48
12	Employee can speak up and voice their opinions frankly about green management without fear of being punished.	58	62	45
13	If I have a grievance or other personal problem in my green work, I can usually expect to have it resolved fairly.	54	52	42
14	I am optimistic about the future of this organization in term of green management.	44	62	41
15	I am proud to be a part of this organization	61	42	58
16	Overall, I would say my sprit on the green job is high.	51	48	61
	Average Total Score	**56**	**52**	**49**
E	**Training and Development**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
17	The organization emphasizes on long-term development for green employee training plans.	42	52	52
18	The organization frequently evaluates green employee training programs.	62	45	41
19	The organization develops and traces green employee training plans.	52	62	62
20	The organization maintains adequate budget for green employee training.	45	63	52
21	The organization green training activities for the employees are comprehensive.	62	52	34
22	The green training activities for the employees require extensive investments of time/money.	53	51	42
23	The green training activities for the employees are continuous.	54	47	55
24	The organization incentive for green employee's development has encouraged employees to commit themselves to perform better.	47	61	41
25	The green training offered by the organization provides career development opportunity.	56	60	43
26	The organization offers green behavioral training which helps to teach employees about corporate culture and its values.	68	52	52
27	The green training helps improve employees' performance.	62	55	56
28	The employees are properly trained when there is a new piece of green equipment.	61	65	34
29	Employees are strongly encouraged to develop their skills in green management.	63	52	45

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30	Availability of comprehensive green training policies and programs are always reliable for employees.	62	45	47
	Average Total Score	**56**	**54**	**43**
F	**Team-Based Practices**	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
31	Green teams have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	87	65	54
32	Green teams treat members as equals, regardless of rank, culture, or other differences for management successfulness	77	66	55
33	Green teams focus both on the green task and on how well the group is working.	90	54	53
34	Green teams revise their thinking as a result of discussions or information collected.	56	52	48
35	Green teams are rewarded for their achievements as a team/group.	47	50	65
36	Green teams are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations.	53	51	42
37	Green team members communicated mostly directly and personally with each other's.	66	44	41
38	Green project-relevant information was shared openly by all team members.	52	43	42
39	Green team members were happy with the usefulness of the information received from other team members.	50	51	55
40	Green team recognized the specific potentials (strengths and weaknesses) of individual team members.	53	52	52
41	Green team members were contributing to the achievement of the team's goals in accordance to their specific potentials.	48	41	54
42	Green team members helped and supported each other as best as they could.	53	47	58
43	Suggestions and contributions of green team members were discussed and further developed.	49	56	52
44	Green team members acknowledged conflict and worked to resolve issues on the team.	59	55	71
45	Green team members helped others on the team by sharing knowledge and information.	66	53	68
46	Green team members would freely share information (technical, market, etc.) with others on the team.	63	45	66
47	Green team members demonstrated interest and enthusiasm during team activities.	77	44	68
48	Green team members acknowledged the contributions made by others on the team.	79	46	70
	Average Total Score	**63**	**51**	**56**

G	Leadership	% of Agreement	% of Agreement	% of Agreement
49	Ability to arouse enthusiasm and to build optimism in green working practices.	49	58	56
50	Ability to create green group synergy.	54	56	74
51	Ability to build green team bonds.	58	72	58
52	Ability to express green team working encouragement.	61	45	65
53	Ability to provide green task motivation.	48	56	71
54	Ability to be persuasive in green work.	65	50	71
55	Ability to be a change catalyst in green working environment.	70	45	48
56	Helps employees to make working on their green tasks more pleasant.	44	43	52
57	Way to treats green team members as equals.	51	55	58
58	Ability to explain the way how the green tasks should be carried out.	53	50	62
59	Ability to decide what and how things shall be done in green management.	58	55	66
60	Focus to maintain definite standards of green work performance.	46	53	68
61	Skill to demonstrate good communication skills.	87	51	69
62	Potential to demonstrate positive leadership qualities in green management.	45	54	45
63	Ability to develop practical and realistic programs in green management.	71	62	55
64	Ability to analyze problems in green management and arrive at appropriate solutions.	62	66	54
65	Show enthusiastic and motivated in performing duties in green management.	63	63	58
	Average Total Score	**58**	**55**	**61**

The overall findings shows that the total score of an agreement for Green Quality of Working Life dimensions were summarized as per shown in Table 4.

Table 3: The Summarize Findings of Green Quality of Working Life at Southern Zone State, Malaysia

No	Green Quality of Working Life	Johor State (Johor Bahru City Centre)	Malacca State (Bandar Hilir Malacca)	Negeri Sembilan State (Seremban City Centre)
	Green Quality of Working Life Dimensions	**Average Total Score (%)**		
1	Job Satisfaction	61	58	56
2	Salary	51	57	62
3	Supervisory Support	56	62	52
4	Social Relationship with Management & Colleagues	56	52	49
5	Training and Development	56	54	43
6	Team-Based Practices	63	51	56
7	Leadership	58	55	61

The findings on the average total score of agreement on Green Quality of Working Life showed that the dimensions of Job satisfaction, Johor State scored the highest with 61 percent, the average total score on Salary showed Negeri Sembilan State scored the highest with 62 percent, the Supervisory Support total average score shows the Malacca State scored the highest with 62 percent. The Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues total average score showed that Johor State got the highest score with 56 percent whilst the Training and Development total average score shows that the Johor State score the highest 56 percent, the total average score for Team-Based Development, Johor State scoring the highest with 63 percent and the Leadership dimension shows the highest average total score is Negeri Sembilan State with 61 percent.

Recommendation and Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are required for improving and enhancing the green quality of working for employees and management in public organizations specifically at Southern State Zone of Malaysia:

1. **Job Satisfaction** – the management should be able to initiate the conducive working environment and conditions intrinsically and extrinsically to enhance the job satisfaction with the following:
    - Encourage employees to make clear what is important to them and why they purse a particular route in public organizations as to build the job satisfaction from the beginning at the workplace
    - Encourage employees to learn to live with creative and to set aside their emotional tension and anxiety of the work
    - Look out for problems and be open to new solutions, make dialogue and open discussion to any issues, problems and challenges at the workplace as to build up a kind of quality way of life

2. **Salary -** Salary and additional benefits have both surface and symbolic value that need the management to pay highly concerned on this matter as it can be called as rewards for employees. Rewards take the form of money, benefits, awards, and incentives. Factors such as motivational impact, cost, and fit with the organizational system must be considered when the management designing or analyzing a reward or salary system:
    - Financial support
    - Overtime work to add salary
    - Increment for good income
    - Incentives like medical and insurance

3. **Supervisory Support** – the employees believed the supervisory support is good for both the organizations and employees morale:
    - Supportive and motivation to employees
    - Encouragement and support
    - Understanding employee problem
    - Confidence and trust
    - Guidance and understanding of work problem

4. **Social Relationship with Management and Colleagues -** Increase the harmony of relationships and friendship at the work place will help employees increase their self-motivation for Green QWL in the following aspects:
    - Feeling respect of each-others
    - Feeling complicity in relationships between employees and colleagues and superiors

- Feeling compassion and affective support, sharing good times, laughing, playing and teasing with peers and management at certain period of time can help to build up the happiness at the workplace and gives impact towards Green-QWL.

5. **Training and Development –** the management need to be focused and emphasize of the training and development for enhancement of employees as per suggested:
   - Organizations should emphasize the long-term development of the training program in the organization to more comprehensive green groups
   - Strongly encourage employees to develop their skills through continuous green training activities in the organizations
   - Organization should give more incentive for green employee's development to encourage them to commit them to perform better and to get more career development opportunities.
   - Organization should frequently evaluate green employee training programs to ensure their employees are strongly enough to improve their performance.
   - Organizations have to provide more investment to build a comprehensive green training and programs.

6. **Team-Based Practices –** the working team need to be professional in handling the work as a team with the following suggestions:

   - Fostered good team-work in the green work
   - Open-communication within team members
   - Conflict and crisis avoided and solved at the earliest stage
   - Participation in team decision making

7. **Leadership –** the leaders in the organizations need to pay attention on the following:

   - The organization leaders should offers more opportunities to grow and learn new green skills to their employees to ensure the employees will get their personal satisfaction from the green work that they do.
   - The organizations should give their employees freedom to speak up and voice their opinions without fear to enables they do the green job effectively.
   - The leader should be more focus to provide the resources and give the support to create a sense of team spirit among green teams.
   - The management must be always kept their employees informed about the latest green information that will make a valuable contribution to the success of the organization.
   - The management should pay salaries and incentives to their employee's accordingly with the terms of green job were done.

Green Quality of Working Life: In the green quality of working life dimension, this researcher suggests that the organization provides a positive working environment by ensuring the relationship between colleagues and the management is in good order, and always providing positive feedbacks and make sure that only constructive criticism is given so that employee performance in the public sector will be propelled forward. Moreover, justified salary is also imperative. Salary given must be equal to the work that has been done. This maintains the viability of an employee in obtaining a prestigious quality of working life. Furthermore, in securing a green quality of working life, a leader has to play a vital role to encourage employee to always improve their potential work performance. Always deliver a high enthusiasm and motivation and clearly define the vision and action to materialize the goals. When all of the above can be executed flawlessly, work satisfaction increases indirectly and instantaneously contributes to the achievement of accomplishing the Green Quality of Working Life in Malaysian public institution.

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