Chapter 13: Work Life: Quality and Related Issues

1. Introduction:
   Meaning
   Quality of Work Life (QWL) refers to the favorableness or un favorableness of a job environment for the people working in an organization. The period of scientific management which focused solely on specialization and efficiency has undergone a revolutionary change.
   The traditional management (like scientific management) gave inadequate attention to human values. In the present scenario, needs and aspirations of the employees are changing. Employers are now redesigning jobs for better QWL.
   Definition
   The QWL as strategy of Human Resource Management has assumed increasing interest and importance. Many other terms have come to be used interchangeably with QWL such as 'humanizations of work', 'quality of working life', industrial democracy' and 'participative work'.

2. Issues in QWL:
   Trade unions claim that they are responsible for the improvement in various facilities to workers whereas management takes credit for improved salaries, benefits and facilities. However P/HR manager has (identified) specific issues in QWL besides normal wages, salaries, fringe benefits etc. and take lead in providing them so as to maintain higher order QWL.
   Major QWL issues are:
   - Pay & Stability of Employment
   - Occupational Stress
   - Alternative Work Schedules
   - Recognition
   - Congenial Worker Supervisor Relation
   - Adequacy of Resources
   - Seniority & Merit in Promotions

3. What are the causes of Workplace Violence?
   Workplace violence takes many forms and has many causes. Angered former employees, customers who feel wronged, stressed out employees or a conflict between co-workers can elevate to the point of a violent altercation in the office. Personal life does spill over into the workplace and sometimes those personal issues present themselves at the office with dangerous consequences. Companies that recognize the potential for workplace violence are in the best position to prevent if.
   - Lack of Pre-employment Screening
   - Stress

- Lack of Employee Assistance Program
- Denial
- Disgruntled Customers and Former Employees

Consequences of Workplace Violence

Violence at the workplace leads to the following consequences:

- Major: Physical attacks, assaults, psychological trauma, anger related accidents, rape, arson and murder.
- Minor: Violent arguments, verbal batting, violations in the ethics and rules, sabotage, property damage, vandalism etc.

Measures to Minimize the Workplace Violence

- Management should take the following steps to reduce the violence:
- Counseling the more powerful employees
- Divert the powerful employees towards organizational goals or to the issues where their power can be used constructively
- Create a more friendly environment at the workplace
- formulate the teams with all kinds of employees
- Eliminate candidates with violence behavior at the time of selection and
- Impose severe punishments on violators

4. Sexual Harassment:

   Many employees are not aware of sexual harassment activities occurring in their workplace and often times they are surprised when they learn what even constitutes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can occur in many situations such as the examples listed below. The list is not to be considered all inclusive and is shown only to provide examples:
   - Posting emails or pictures of a sexually related nature
   - Repeated requests for dates that are turned down
   - Unwanted flirting
   - Any body contact such as grabbing an employee around the waist, patting a coworker's back or interfering with an employee's ability to get around the workplace
   - Playing sexually suggestive music
   - Unwanted jokes, gestures, offensive words on clothing

The Effects of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

- Emotional Well-being
- Physical Health
- Financial Challenges
- Global Consequences

5. <u>Alcoholism & Drug Abuse:</u>

The impact of alcoholism and drug dependence in the workplace often focuses on four major issues:

- Premature death/fatal accidents
- Injuries/accident rates
- Absenteeism/extra sick leave
- Loss of production