**Quality of Work Life and Change Management**

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**ABSTRACT**

The concept of Quality of Work life (QWL) means having a work-environment where an employee’s activities become more important. Results of high QWL are low absenteeism, high performance, and higher morale. The objective of this study is to apply the QWL as a new philosophical foundation in a steel company located in East Java, so that all the members in that organization will be ready and will take an active participation to change.

The construct of QWL used are from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Condition (EWON, 2002). The respondents are 24 people as the head of division and head of section. This study used action research design and applying the concept of change management from Lewin. Training in the unfreeze stage aim to establish a self-awareness to deal with change. The results obtained from Wilcoxon test indicate that the participants have the optimism to make changes. It is suggested that the involvement of top management is needed, because the program will not work without the support from management. The management need to consider the reward system to meet work and personal life balance and apply flexible working hours, providing flexible time-shifts for some employees.

**Keywords:** change management, EWON 2002, Lewin*,* Quality of Work Life

**INTRODUCTION**

Increasingly tighter competition among organizations is forcing companies to inevitably develop themselves and be ready for the free market era. The severity of competition in the business world makes management must prepare employees to face change. Fierce competition requires employees to work hard and productively to achieve the results expected by the organization. On the other hand, in the competitive era, it is a must that people get more happiness in the workplace, so the organization will be increasing in productivity.

According to Lovey & Nadkarni (2007), growing and developing organizations pay attention to 3 important things, namely customer needs, the state of the organization's economy/financial and the needs of employees. Most of the organizations only pay attention to customer needs and financial aspects (profits earned) but pay less attention to the needs of its employees. Every company wants employees to work productively in accordance with the demands of their work, so that the results in accordance with the standards expected. Therefore, organizations need strategies that can improve employee performance and can help organizational goals while meeting the needs of their employees.

The work environment affects the professional attitude and performance generated by employees. Quality of Work Life (QWL) is seen as an alternative approach to managing employees and can affect the course of the organization. The organization that runs QWL aims to have employees physically and mentally healthy and has a positive spirit in carrying out their daily duties and responsibilities, which will end in improving the company's performance and profits. QWL is fundamental to the organization to continuously attract and retain its employees. This concept is becoming increasingly important as the needs of the business environment and the current family structure (Akdere, 2006).

Employees with high QWL generally have a comfortable life, assuming their work is an exciting job and achieving a level of personal satisfaction from the work done. In other words, employees who are generally satisfied with their work are said to have a high QWL, and people who are not satisfied with their work are said to have a low QWL (Varghese & Jayan, 2013). Employees with high QWL will positively impact the company. No organization is successful only with technology, but the organization must also have qualified employees. The approach with QWL considers employees to be the greatest asset in an organization (Varghese & Jayan, 2013). Similarly, Venkatesh & Aarthy (2013) stresses that the QWL approach considers employees to be an asset to the organization and not as a cost. QWL will help the organization to improve employee welfare and it will also improve the welfare of the organization.

PT. X is one of the private companies engaged in manufacturing, especially in the field of building construction. Along with the high economic growth and rapid development of the construction sector, it also happens in the infrastructure and property development. PT.X has several branch offices in Gresik, Tuban, Solo, Makassar, Purwokerto, Yogyakarta, Pandaan, and Semarang. Increased development in several regions in Indonesia makes the employees of PT. X must work to follow the development of the company. Management PT. X sees every employee as an asset to his company. This study aims to apply the QWL concept in the company, through the implementation of various programs and the establishment of the system, in the hope that this intervention will be able to strengthen the structure of human resources as well as expected to strengthen the company's capital to compete in today's global era. It is assumed that this concept will be effective to solve several problems raised in that company, besides they also want to be ready for global competition. To apply this concept in an organization, change management is needed, so that all the members in that organization will be ready and will take an active participation to reach their dream.

The transition from one condition to another is a change. Change in an organization is not an easy thing and often leads to fluctuations and negative impacts. For the application of a relatively new concept in an organization to work properly, it is necessary to have the readiness of all members of the organization to face the change. Therefore, change management is required. Change management is the process of implementation to achieve goals for change by planning and introducing systematically, and considering possible rejection (Armstrong, 2009). Organizations cannot change if leaders are unaware of the need to change and are committed to encouraging them (Hill & McShane, 2008).

The program to be created in this study aims to prepare PT.X in the face of change. The purpose of making program changes is to enlarge the number of employee receipts to change. In the face of change, within the organization will arise resistance to changes from various components (individuals and groups) in it. Programs run will be useful for changes can be received positively by employees. In this case, the program is to deal with change and is a means to achieve the improvement of the quality of working life as well as the performance of the employees.

According to Lewin's change theory (in Cameron & Green, 2009 and Dessler, 2008), there are three steps to organizational change: unfreeze, move, and refreeze. Considering the time and energy available, the focus in this study is on the unfreeze stage, as a stage that discusses the readiness to change. This stage is also often called the stage that most experienced obstacles in making changes. At this stage, there is a strong reason and motivation to change. In other words, the purpose of this intervention is to prepare the employees of PT.X to change, to adopt the concept of QWL with new programs and systems.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

QWL as an intervention in human resource management had a marked impact on USA and Scandinavia around 1960-1970 (Gayathiri, R & Lalitha Ramakrishnan, 2013). The concept of QWL was first discussed in 1972 during Louis Davis and Albert Cherns (Wyatt and Wah, 2001, referred to Davis & Cherns, 1975). At that time there was a strong belief that work experience could also encourage the growth of positive attitudes and feelings of belonging from workers and to shaping a more humanist society. In recent years, QWL is increasingly being identified as a progressive indicator related to the function and sustainability of business organizations (Koonmee, Singhapakdi, Virakul & Lee, 2010). According to Cherns (1978, in Wyatt and Wah, 2001) the term QWL is a blend of structural and organizational perspectives and organizational behavior on the one hand and the perspective of interpersonal relationships, human relationships, and supervisory styles on the other. Also note the possibility that Mills in 1978 included the term QWL into the vocabulary of unions and management (in Wyatt and Wah, 2001, referring to Mills, 1978). Still, according to Wyatt and Wah (2001) the concept of QWL has been well received in North America, Europe and Japan as a managerial approach that gives greater respect and awareness to democratization and humanization in the field of work. With the QWL the labor productivity becomes more increased.

Beukema (1987) defined QWL as the degree to which their employees are engaged in their instruments of employment, in accordance with their options, interests and needs. Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger (1997) provide the definition of QWL as "the feelings that employees have towards their jobs, colleagues and organizations that ignite a chain leading to the organization 'growth and profitability (satisfying work environment)". Lau, Wong, Chan and Law (2001) defined QWL as the favorable working environment that supports and promotes satisfaction by providing employees with rewards, job security and career growth opportunities. "According to Serey (2006) QWL" related to meaningful and satisfying work. It includes a) an opportunity to exercise and situations that require independent and self-direction b) an activity thought to be worthwhile by the individuals involved c) an activity in which one understands the role of the individual plays in the achievement of some overall goals d) a sense of taking pride in what one is doing and in doing it well." Hackman and Oldhams (1980) described QWL as" the interaction between work environment and personal needs ". Interaction effects are positive when the work environment can meet the personal needs of workers, such as rewards, salaries, promotions, awards, and personal development received in accordance with the expected employee. If the opposite is true, then the interaction effect is negative.

QWL is a multi-dimensional construct, made up of several interrelated factors that are associated with job satisfaction, job involvement, motivation, productivity, health, safety, and well-being, job security, competence development and balance between work and non-work life as is conceptualized by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living Conditions (EWON, 2002, in Rethinam and Ismail, 2008). Thus, the selected constructs of QWL that are used in this article are derived from EWON, 2002. These factors are believed to be appropriate and reliable in the context of Asia generally and Malaysia specifically because some of the factors were used separately by researchers in Japan (Fujigaki , Asakura and Haratani, 1994), Singapore (Lau et al., 2001) and Malaysia (Rethinam, Maimunah, Musa and Bahaman, 2004). The dimensions of QWL are health and well-being, job security, job satisfaction, competence development and the balance between work with non-work life.

Implementation of the QWL concept as a new philosophical foundation in the organization requires the readiness of all members of the organization to be able to adopt such changes. Changes are not easy to do and not all individuals are willing to make changes. When making changes it means individuals must get out of their comfort zone and must be willing to change their usual activities. Planning and controlling changes are needed but in the implementation, there will be new problems. Typically, the problems that will arise come from those who are resistant to change. Resistance arises from individuals who are already comfortable with the present situation and are reluctant to change.

According to Schermerhorn (2008) some of the causes of individuals being resistant to change are (1) fear of uncertainty (do not understand what will happen later, (2) interfere with habits (confusion of abandoning old habits, (3) loss of confidence, ) loss of control, (5) short time, (6) heap of work that makes no commitment to change, (7) loss of face (embarrassment), (8) lack of purpose (see no clear reason for change). Resistance from members of the organization will hamper the process of change. Therefore, it is necessary for changing leaders to make changes. Change leaders are change agents who seek to change the behavior of individuals or social systems (Schermerhorn, 2008). Leaders make the changes and must also be responsible for change. In other words, not only merely make changes but also must be committed to what has been agreed upon at the beginning of the change. Organizations that make updates will see changes to their employees. The changes include changes in attitudes, skills, and behaviors.

According to Cameron & Green (2009), change consist of 4 basic dimensions, namely: individual change, team change, organization change, and leading change. Changes can not only be done, but must be arranged (Sloan in Armstrong, 2009). Typically, one change will affect some other changes. There are several theories about the process of change. One of them is to be used in this study, i.e., from Lewin (in Cameron & Green, 2009 and Dessler, 2008). According to Lewin there are three steps to make organizational changes, namely: unfreeze, move, and refreeze. Unfreeze is the stage to minimize the forces that seek to maintain the status quo, usually by presenting a provocative problem or event for people to be able to recognize changing needs and finding new solutions. Move is the stage of developing behavior, values, ​​and attitudes. The goal is to change the behavior of individuals. After going through two stages of change required the last stage of the refreeze stage. The purpose of this stage is that changes made to unfreeze, and move are not in vain, basically people will return to previous ways or habits if no new rules are binding. At this stage there will be a balance of organizations, procedures, and systems (such as compensation plans and performance processes) to support and sustain change. These three steps are processes for making changes within the organization.

The management task in the unfreeze stage is to provide an understanding that change is necessary and must be done and getting ready to move away from the comfort zone. Employees of PT. X within the comfort zone will reject the changes being proclaimed. Making changes in the organization can be very difficult, because that changed not only one person but all the individuals within the organization. Therefore, the researcher wants to know whether the given unfreeze program can give awareness to the employees to face change.

The unfreeze stage is the most important stage in the stage of change. This stage aims to prepare the changes and dilute the atmosphere that has become a habit especially that has a negative side to the performance of employees. At this stage, employees are given the understanding and awareness that change is needed and getting ready to move away from the current comfort zone. This stage is also referred to as the stage of self-preparation (individually or in groups) to deal with change. This unfreeze stage also aims to create a conducive situation for change. The more employees understand the need for change so employees will be motivated to make changes.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is intended to design a change management program to improve QWL. The action research as a qualitative research method will be used with support from quantitative data. Action research is a model that focuses on planned change, where data collection and diagnostics are conducted to guide future action planning. Action research emphasizes on data collection and diagnostics to determine action planning and implementation, and there is an evaluation of the outcomes of action (Cummings & Worley, 2009). The participants of this study are all employees of PT. X.

Data collection methods are divided into three stages, namely the pre-assessment phase, the assessment phase, and the intervention phase.

a. Pre-assessment data collection

Data collection during pre-assessment was done by distributing QWL questionnaires to 115 employees residing at headquarters. The questionnaire includes 5 dimensions, namely Health & Well-Being, Job Security, Job Satisfaction, Competency Development, and Work & Non-Work Life Balance. From the pre-assessment stage it was found that the low QWL aspect was (1) Health and well-being 33% (38 people), (2) Work and Non-Work Life Balance 36.5% (42 people) and (3) Job Satisfaction 38.2% (44 people). The researcher gives the results of this pre-assessment to the management of PT. X and with various management considerations PT. X saw that the most interesting aspect to be studied first is the aspect of Work and Non-Work Life Balance. This aspect is one of the important aspects of QWL that is balancing work life with personal life.

b. Data collection of assessment stage I

Socialization of the importance of organizational change as well as the concept of a balance between work life and personal life is carried out as a preliminary part of the imposition of change management (unfreeze stage) to its employees. Then the researchers conducted interviews to determine the responses of employees to the balance between work and personal life. Since the results obtained are less able to explain the problem, an assessment is conducted with Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Data analysis of the assessment stage aims to look at the dimensions and problems that need to be investigated more deeply in this study. Qualitative data obtained from the results of in-depth interviews is used to get a picture of the problem through Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

c. A collection of assessment data of phase II using qualitative methods based on FGD. Topics to be discussed is a balance between work life and personal life, a healthy and prosperous environment. The purpose is to gain a wide diversity of views and data from the spontaneity of participants. Participants selected by the HR party in the implementation of this FGD are employees of managerial level of PT. X who are in the head office i.e.: head section (6 person), head section (4 person), and head of team (6 person).

d. Data collection of the intervention stage is to provide training on change management and the work and non-work life balance dimensions of QWL. The pretest, posttest and follow up is given. Posters that contain problems which are often experienced by employees in everyday life are installed as the material so that employees are able to recognize that they are in a troubled state, requiring change and looking for new solutions. The stress experienced by employees are used to support change. In addition, along with poster posting, researchers also provided questionnaires placed in areas where there were no authority figures such as security post (location of the security post adjacent to the location of presences), cafeteria and reception room. The researcher did not distribute the questionnaires, but the questionnaire filling was done without coercion from any party to measure the awareness of employees of current situation. The more employees feel the problem needs to be solved the higher the motivation to make changes. For QWL training, an explanation of the meaning and dimension of QWL is given as well as the expected role of the employee in the change process. The data analysis of the intervention phase aims to see changes in participants' understanding of the interventions provided. Quantitative data were obtained from the pretest and posttest results to be analyzed using the Wilcoxon test and the ideal mean. While qualitative data obtained from the results of follow up and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques.

Observing that several people are resistant to change, researchers carry out the unfreeze stage with the design of QWL program training called: "Stepping Together PT.X". This stage is about the importance of changes in the organization to improve productivity and the need for implementation of the QWL program, especially work and non-work life balance. After the training it is expected that employees will support and actively participate in the change process. In addition, employees are expected to improve work and non-work life balance as well as develop themselves to support organizational development, to compete in the global era.

**RESULTS**

There are 2 points asthe results of SWOT analysis:

a. “Guyub” attitude as an organizational culture is negatively affects professionalism and performance of the employees and management.

b. The existence of employees who are resistant to change, so it is difficult to adjust to the system and the new company policy.

Based on this 2 points it is concluded that changes are needed in the organization.

From the evaluation of the reaction of the material aspects of session 1 and session II, there was a score of> 2.8 indicating that the participants were interested in the training materials presented. From the evaluation of the speakers which includes the way of delivering the material content and the mastering of the trainer to the material, it is found that the participants understood the training material (> 2.8) and the trainer could master the material and deliver it well.

Based on the chart (see Fig. 1 in appendix) 15 people from 16 participants have increased knowledge on the time before training and after being given training. Pretest and posttest contain about training materials. Only 1 person in this training did not experience an increase in knowledge.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the research conducted can be known that unfreeze stage can make employees aware to make changes, especially on the balance of work life and personal life. Weick & Homan (in Pieterse, Caniels, & Homan, 2012) argue that the way people understand change programs has important implications for the effectiveness of change programs. The more employees who are aware of the importance of work-life balance and personal life the easier to make changes and to minimize the resistance.

Jick and Peiperl (in Yue, 2008) say the less knowledge people has about the rationale of change and the implications of change and how to operate change, the greater the threat to manage change. The work and personal life balance program at PT.X is a planned change. Lewin (in Sarayreh, et al., 2013) mentions that the key to resolving social conflict (in change) is facilitating planned change through learning, enabling individuals to understand and restructure perceptions of the world around them.

The unfreeze stage undertaken in this research used posters, questionnaires, and training about the QWL, especially work and non-work life balance dimension. The training provides an explanation of the program so that the trainees understand the purpose of the program. The aims are supported by Gestalt's basic theory that change is only achieved by helping individuals to reflect and gain new insights into their situation (Smith in Burnes, 2004). Understanding of the material allows trainees to reflect on what is happening within them. This can support the change easier to implement. After knowing the purpose and objectives of the program, trainees are given an understanding of the employees’ role in the process of change so that employees understand what to do in the changes. Therefore, the unfreeze stage of this research is very influential in making changes as an indicator that the organization is concerned with the growth and development of the organization.

The more rapid development the more work demand so that the employees should be able to keep up with the increasing work steps. Bradley (2001) argues that the increasing demand for work will isolate employees from their families (in Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). It must be sought how to prevent the occurrence of negative impacts so that more perceived positive impact and performance will be raised by minimizing problems in work or family life. One of the facilities that can be provided by companies is to create programs that regulate work and personal life balance to meet the more qualified lives.

The threat of imbalances in work and personal life influence not only employees but also to organizations, governments, and society (Grzywacz and Marks, 2000; Swanson, Power and Simpson, 1998 in Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). Allen, et al. (2000) says a meta-analysis has confirmed that conflicts between work and life outside work are related to psychological well-being and other negative outcomes (in Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). The demands of managing higher responsibilities at work and home are also a potential source of stress because it creates an imbalance in the work environment. (Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). The existence of a balance between work and personal life will foster morale and make employees feel comfortable and have the desire of employees to remain in the organization. The balance of working life cannot be run unilaterally. Awareness of the company and employees is crucial to the success of the implementation of work life balance.

The knowledge aspect of the training materials has improved in all tests. This shows that participants can understand the training materials and it has a positive impact because the participants can understand the QWL program, especially the work and personal life balance, know the meaning of change in the organization and know their respective roles in the work and personal life balance program. Based on the results of follow-up by interview method it can be concluded that 12 of the 16 participants interviewed changed. Changes that occur include changes in communication with family and colleagues, changes in interaction with family, lifestyle changes and changes in terms of financial planning. This means that trainees can apply the training materials in their daily life.

Based on the interventions made, the participants realized that they had problems in work and personal life balance. This can be seen from the participants' interest in the program to be given to improve their life balance. The results of quantitative and qualitative training show the willingness of the participants to change and follow a better life-balance program.

The work-and-life-balance relationship with the organization is also mentioned by Grawitch, Gottschalk & Munz (in Parkers & Langford, 2008). They maintain a balance of working and personal life enhancing employee participation to contribute to higher productivity and lower turnover. The more employees feel that they are experiencing problems in work and personal life balance the easier will be the changes to be made. Work-life balance programs will be more quickly done when the employees of PT. X realize the importance of work and personal life balance for themselves. Employees recognize that this work and personal life balance program is a pro-employee program. Work and personal work-life balance programs are also programs that benefit the organization with increased employee performance.

Based on the table above it can be seen that the optimism aspect is different before and after training on the raw score and ideal mean test tentatively, but not significantly as appear on the Wilcoxon test. Thus, it can be concluded that the employees of PT.X who participated in the training have the optimism to make changes.

Apart from employees, the important thing to note is the involvement of management. This program will not work without the support, the movement, and the response from management. This unfreeze stage change is not only done by the employees but becomes a whole organizational change (leadership and employees). Changes made based on the organization's desire to meet the needs of the organization, not based on the wishes of certain parties (the desire of organizational owners or leaders of the organization. The following research is advised to proceed to the next move and refreeze stage. The QWL program provided can be implemented and provide a positive impact for employees and organizations. The management need to consider the reward system for employees to meet work and personal life balance. They can also apply flexible working hours, providing flexible time-shifts for some employees needed.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research and discussion it can be concluded that:

a. The unfreeze program can give awareness to the participants to make changes.

b. The employees are interested in the program to be provided specially to improve work and personal life balance.

c. There should also be a follow-up program as an intervention to achieve a balance between family and personal life.

d. All programs will be more effective and efficient when followed by all members of the organization, i.e., directors and management (as part of the leading change process) and employees, as well as to encourage all participants.

e. Training programs need to be continued with system improvement, including remuneration and reward system to meet the balance between work and personal life.

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**APPENDIX**

**Figure 1.** Pretest and Posttest Results Aspects of Training Materials

**Table 1.** Wilcoxon Test Results of Training Materials

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Ranks | | | | | |  |  | N | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks | | Posttest | Negative Ranks | 0a | .00 | .00 | | Pretest | Positive Ranks | 15b | 8.00 | 120.00 | | Ties | | 1c |  |  | | Total | | 16 |  |  |   a. Posttest < Pretest c. Posttest= Pretest  b. Posttest > Pretest |
| Test Statistics   |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | Posttest - Pretest | | Z | -3.409b | | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| 1. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test   b. Base on negative ranks. |
|  |
|  |
| **Table 2.** Results of Pre-Posttest Training Materials Based on Ideal Means   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | No | Subject | Pretest Score | Category | Post- Test Score | Category | Description | | 1 | NT | 20 | Low | 76 | High | Increase | | 2 | EM | 29 | Low | 30 | Low | Steady | | 3 | SA | 14 | Very Low | 82 | Very high | Increase | | 4 | SB | 20 | Low | 90 | Very high | Increase | | 5 | IN | 4 | Very low | 96 | Very high | Increase | | 6 | MH | 34 | Low | 80 | Very high | Increase | | 7 | ST | 0 | Very low | 0 | Very low | Steady | | 8 | AJ | 5 | Very low | 86 | Very high | Increase | | 9 | NU | 30 | Low | 70 | High | Increase | | 10 | DW | 40 | Moderate | 72 | High | Increase | | 11 | SBN | 0 | Very low | 50 | Moderate | Increase | | 12 | MB | 40 | Moderate | 80 | Very high | Increase | | 13 | MJ | 60 | High | 80 | Very high | Increase | | 14 | MS | 30 | Low | 80 | Very high | Increase | | 15 | TB | 40 | Moderate | 76 | High | Increase | | 16 | IM | 44 | Moderate | 48 | Moderate | Steady | |
|  |

**Table 3.** Category of Training Materials

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Score | Pretest Frequency | Pretest Percentage | Posttest Frequency | Posttest Percentage |
| Very high | ≥ 80 | 0 | - | 8 | 50 % |
| High | 60 - 79 | 1 | 6,25 % | 4 | 25 % |
| Moderate | 40 - 59 | 4 | 25 % | 2 | 12,5 % |
| Low | 20 - 39 | 6 | 37,5 % | 1 | 6,25 % |
| Very low | <19 | 5 | 31,25 % | 1 | 6,25 % |

**Table 4.** Conclusion of Quantitative Assessment

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aspect | Raw Score | Wilcoxon Test | Ideal Mean |
| Optimism | √ | - | √ |
| Training Materials | √ | √ | √ |