

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND JOB INVOLVEMENT: THE ROLE OF EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT: *The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the impact of quality of work life on job involvement within the Kuwaiti industrial environment. It also seeks to explore the impact of empowerment on this relationship. A total of 300 questionnaires were submitted to the Public Authority for Industry in Kuwait, of which 231 were completed. The results indicate that quality of work life has both direct and indirect impacts, mediated by empowerment, on job involvement. The findings suggest that firms should pay close attention to quality of work life to ensure a favourable environment within the organization for retaining employees. The study concludes by explaining the limitations involved and suggests future research directions to enhance the quality of the work life in Kuwaiti organizations.*

KEYWORDS: Quality of work life, Job Involvement, Empowerment, Kuwait.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life has emerged as a concept to cope with policies of change and organizational development where organizations operate in a highly complex and competitive environment. This has led to an emphasis on quality as a strategic option for organizations to achieve efficiency in performance. According to Akdere (2006), the issue of work life quality has become critical in the last two decades due to the increasing demands of today's business environment. Prior research into quality of work life has focussed largely on job-related outcomes or employee behavioural responses, such as organizational identification, job satisfaction, job involvement, job effort, job performance, intention to quit, organizational turnover or personal alienation (e.g., Biswas, 2010; Koys, 2001; Efraty *et al.*, 1991; Lewellyn and Wibker, 1990; Efraty and Sirgy, 1990).

There are a number of researchers who have studied the relationship between quality of work life and job involvement (e.g., Salameh *et al.*, 2015; Hussain *et al.*, 2014; Permarupan *et al.*, 2013; Mehdipour *et al.*, 2012; Almaghrabi, 2004). Based on previous research, it can be said that there is a difference in the way the relationship between the quality of work life and job involvement is treated. Most studies refer to job involvement as a dependent variable, though some researchers have studied it as an independent variable. A third team examined it as a mediator variable within the behavioural and organizational relations model in the work environment (Almaghrabi, 2004). This relationship will be tested in the Kuwaiti environment where, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are no previous studies that have considered this particular issue. The researchers chose to consider job involvement

as a dependent variable on the quality of work life based on the physical and mental aspects of the latter's elements, which can have a greater impact on work outcomes, including job involvement.

On the other hand, the success of applying quality of work life programmes in the work environment depends on the actual and real participation of employees within the managerial process, which can be achieved through empowerment. Some researchers have already investigated the relationship between quality of work life and empowerment (Haghgui, 2015; Sheikhpour and Sheikhpour, 2015; Jayakumar and Kalaiselvi, 2012; Tschopp *et al.*, 2009), the results of which have showed that there were differences with regards to the relationship between these two variables. Also, empowerment can improve job involvement amongst employees, where an individual who is given greater authority in decision making, responsibility, and the process of his work, will show increased job involvement. (Khan *et al.*, 2011). Some studies have contributed to clarifying the role of empowering employees in developing levels of job involvement through training them to deal with the challenges of working properly, providing them with information and knowledge, and giving them the opportunity to determine their own working style, as well as their involvement in the decision-making process, leading them to feel that empowerment is the way to self-realization; this is subsequently reflected in their increased involvement with their jobs (Gilker and Darzi, 2013; Rizwan *et al.*, 2011; Hamed, 2010).

In this context, empowerment was conceptualized as a multifaceted, motivational construct that was manifest in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). Given this conceptualization, empowerment is seen as a motivational tool in which power and control over internal work serve to stimulate individual employees, which eventually increases employee conviction about workplace effectiveness and leads to a high level of quality of work life, resulting in greater job involvement. On this basis, the relationship between empowerment and quality of work life on the one hand and job involvement on the other will be examined in this research.

The present research is designed to fill a number of current research gaps and to further validate the currently sparse evidence into the relationship between quality of work life and job involvement. This will be achieved by examining the impact of quality of work life on job involvement in the Kuwaiti business environment. Furthermore, the current study seeks to explore the impact of employee empowerment on this relationship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality of Work Life .

The term quality of work life was first introduced in 1972 during the International Labour Relations Conference (Hain and Einstein, 1990). Quality of work life is conceptualized by favourable conditions and workplace environments that support and enhance employee satisfaction by providing them with better reward systems, job security and growth opportunities (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001).

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According to Robbins (1989), quality of work life is “a process by which an organization responds to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work”. Sission and Storey (2000) defined quality of work life as the quality of the relationship between staff and the total work environment, and concern about the impact of work on the individual as well as on organizational effectiveness, and the idea of participation in solving organizational problems and decision making. Cummings and Worley (2005) believed that quality of work life is a reflection of the way of thinking about people, work and organizations that involves a concern for employees’ wellbeing and organization.

Quality of work life is not a clear concept. It is based on multidimensional structures. The physical environment in the workplace, the nature of job, the psychological conditions of employees, management of the organization and policies are the basic concepts of quality of work life (Martel and Dupuis, 2006). Organizations, by providing quality working life to their employees, offer an excellent approach to attracting and retaining staff. The idea is that an organization will be able to provide a suitable working environment for its employees (Noor and Abdullah, 2012). Employees who perceive their quality of work life in a positive manner and are satisfied with their work and organization show higher wellbeing because an individual’s quality of work life influences their health and psychological wellbeing. Quality of work life also heavily influences the non-working life of the individual and is also a major predictor of psychological and physical wellbeing, and also of life satisfaction (Srivastava, 2008; Martel and Dupuis, 2006; Sirgy *et al.*, 2001).

A quality of work life concept is found in three major works, namely those of Levine *et al.* (1984), Taylor (1978) and Walton (1973). Other researchers have tried to measure the quality of work life in a variety of settings using a variety of questionnaires such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, expatriation, job stress, organizational identification, job involvement, work role ambiguity, conflict, and overload as alternative measures of quality of work (Daud, 2010). Quality of work life programmes attempt to address almost every aspect of an employee’s working life, many of which are linked to human resources policies and strategies. Quality of work life is often seen from the perspective of the complex psychological needs of the individual to achieve the best experience and performance (Seyed *et al.*, 2013).

A number of researchers have attempted to identify the factors that determine the quality of work life at work. Gray and Smeltzer (1989) identified the following eight factors related to quality of work life: (1) adequacy in compensation; (2) safe and healthy working conditions; (3) immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities; (4) opportunity for continued growth and security; (5) social integration in the work organization; (6) constitutionalism; (7) balance of work and life; and (8) social relevance of work life. Sirgy *et al.* (2001) suggested that in order to achieve quality of work life, four levels of need must be considered: (1) need satisfaction from the work environment; (2) need satisfaction from job requirements; (3) need satisfaction from supervisory behaviour; and (4) need satisfaction from ancillary programmes. Gupta and Sharma (2011) believed that three factors can influence the quality of work life, which are fair and adequate remuneration, safe and healthy

working conditions, and social integration in the work of the organization that enables an individual to develop and use all of their capacities.

Marta *et al.* (2013) proposed seven dimensions of needs which are required to achieve quality of work life, which are: (1) health and safety needs (protection from ill health and injury within and outside work, and enhancement of good health); (2) economic and family needs (pay, job security, and other family needs); (3) social needs (collegiality at work and leisure time off work); (4) esteem needs (recognition and appreciation of work within and outside the organization); (5) actualization needs (realization of one's potential within the organization and as a professional); (6) knowledge needs (learning to enhance job and professional skills); and (7) aesthetic needs (creativity at work as well as personal creativity and general aesthetics).

Job Involvement

Job involvement is an important issue in the field of management and organizational behaviour, as it relates to a range of variables that are themselves related to employee behaviour. This concept has become a catalyst for employees and a key to personal development, satisfaction with the work environment and directing behaviour towards a given goal (Ekmecki, 2011). Job involvement is one of the most important dimensions through which to understand the behaviour of individuals within organizations. It also has been linked to job-related behaviour as well as being a subsequent predictor of job-related outcomes such as intention to leave an organization, professional commitment and ethical behaviour, psychological ownership of ownership and performance, lower role of conflict and role ambiguity and an employee's readiness to change (Permarupan, *et al.*, 2013; Freund, 2005; Clinebell and Shadwick, 2005; van Dyne and Pierce, 2004; Leong *et al.*, 2003). Job involvement can be considered a sign of the richness of the job and its design.

The importance of job involvement is that it enters the core of the functional relationship because it deals with what the individual does and how they behave in their roles and what makes them behave in other ways to achieve both the objectives of the organization and their personal goals. It is one of the most effective mechanisms by which to improve the performance of employees in the organization, and some see job involvement as a key factor to improving and increasing the motivation of employees to work, and also allowing the employee to achieve personal satisfaction and encourage them to improve and develop their skills and abilities to accomplish their best.

Many researchers have contributed to the development and construction of a clear and specific concept of job involvement, as well as to establish a solid basis for its measurement. This began with Lodahl and Kejner (1965) who tested the scale of job involvement, after which Kanungo (1982) set a new measure of job involvement as derived from the previous scale. He concluded that the concept of job involvement is clear and independent from other concepts such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and could be determined through two dimensions: the cognitive dimension of the attitudes towards the job, and the psychological dimension of psychological compatibility with the job, where job involvement represents the ability of this job to meet the needs of the individual. The most common and

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widely accepted definition was given by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). They defined job involvement as the degree of importance of one's work in one's total self-image. Kanungo (1982) defined job involvement as psychological identification with a job. Miller *et al.* (1993) defined job involvement as the degree that the person's performance affects their self-esteem. The term job involvement can be described as "the degree to which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in and concerned with one's present job" (Paullay *et al.*, 1994).

Quality of Work Life and Job Involvement

Through the provision of quality of work life, organizations are keen to take advantage of their employees' job involvement, where the job involvement by an employee is seen as an indicator of high performance and an organization's return on its related investments (Permarupan *et al.*, 2013).

A study by Kanungo (1982) found that an employee who is highly motivated with regards to their job shows better involvement with the organization than those who are not. Hebert and Chaney (2011) stated that the manager must take advantage to utilize the available knowledge and opportunities generated to maximize the ability of people and knowledge management through ensuring adequacy of resources and facilities. A study by Mehdipour *et al.* (2012) that addressed the relationship between quality of work life and job involvement of Iranian physical education teachers showed that in order to increase job involvement of physical education teachers, it was important that the Iranian educational authorities and executives endeavoured to ensure the efficient organization of school physical education courses in standard conditions and by maximizing the available facilities through proper research and efficient planning.

Permarupan *et al.* (2013) examined the relationship between quality of work life, employees' job involvement and effective commitment among the employees of public and private sector organizations. He found that opportunities at work and climate organization had a relatively greater impact on "job involvement" and "affective commitment" rather than "fair and appropriate salary", and "capacities at work". William and Davis (2002) believed that employment involvement is one of the most important approaches that can be used to develop and improve quality of work life. Almaghraby (2004), in his study, aimed to identify the nature of the quality of work life and its impacts on job involvement. He found that the dimensions of quality of work life are work environment conditions, job characteristics, wages and rewards, work ethic, supervisor's style, and participation in decision making. The factors of quality of work life have also been shown to affect job involvement. Igbaria *et al.* (1994) investigated the role of involvement of professionals and managers in terms of their ability to influence the quality of work life. In general, the results indicate that job involvement plays a varied and complex role in influencing the reactions of information system personnel to different experiences at work and, accordingly, their quality of work life. From the previous, the first hypothesis is:

H1: Quality of work life has a positive impact on job involvement.

Empowerment

Empowerment of employees refers to a set of management practices that focus on granting staff in the lower levels of the organizational structure the independence of decision making that affects the procedures related to their jobs. Empowering employees is designed to help them to be more capable and competent in performing their work and achieving the best results. This can happen through employees' participation in information and supported by an effective communication system that provides a rapid flow of such information through support and guidance, and all the resources needed to enhance their abilities and skills to support their sense of self-efficacy and responsibility towards their work (Barton and Barton, 2011).

Vecchio (2000) believed empowerment refers to a collection of motivational techniques that seek to increase the level of participation of employees in order to improve their performance. Empowerment also refers to increasing the employees' degree of participation in the organization's ownership, the respect and appreciation shown by the organization towards the ideas and proposals of its employees, and through participation in various kinds of committees (Jadalrab, 2008). Empowerment can be defined as one of the active initiatives taken by leaders in the organization towards its workers which gives them greater authority in the performance of their work, though with the need to ensure the workers take responsibility for the effective use of these authorities.

Empowerment often suggests a radical change to an organizational structure, the degree of centralization of authority, and the degree of formal processes within an organization, especially given that empowerment requires a flat organizational structure with the lower levels in middle management and supervisory management, allowing it to be flexible and adapt to rapid changes in environmental conditions and consumer demands; such a flat organizational structure leads to decentralization of authority and to the spread of decision making authority across the organization, and in particular across the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy.

Quality of Work Life and Empowerment

Concerning the relationship between quality of work life with empowerment, Jayakumar and Kalaiselvi, (2012) believed that one of the most common methods used to create quality of work life is employee involvement. This involvement consists of a variety of systematic methods that empower employees to participate in decisions that affect them and their relationships with the organization.

Haghui (2015) investigated the relationship between employee empowerment with quality of work life and job satisfaction. The results of this study showed that quality of work life cannot explain the variance in employee empowerment. Sheikhpour and Sheikhpour (2015) investigated the relationship between empowerment (as the independent variable) and quality of work life of employees (as the dependent variable). The results of this study showed that empowerment and its associated factors had a significant positive correlation with the quality of their working lives. Second, empowerment factors predicted 29% of the

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variance in employees' quality of work life. Tschopp *et al.* (2009) investigated variables generally associated with empowerment with regards to perceived beliefs concerning quality of work life domains for individuals with disabilities. The model examined the domains of importance, satisfaction, control and degree of interference of the disability that an individual feels towards their work. The results suggested that self-efficacy, advocacy and family coping skills can predict a significant amount of the variance in feelings towards individuals' perception of aspects concerning their working lives. On the other hand, job involvement can enhance the feeling of empowerment and freedom amongst employees (Hennessey and Amabile, 2010). From the previous, the second hypothesis will be:

H2: the impact of quality of work life on job involvement will be mediated by empowerment.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Procedure

The study community included all the employees working in the Public Authority for Industry, which totalled 1030 employees, although the questionnaire was ultimately distributed to 300 employees. The respondents were asked to complete and return the questionnaires. Out of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 231 usable questionnaires were realized with a response rate of 77%. The final responding sample size of 231 was found to be sufficient to satisfy the needs of measurement modelling.

Measures

Considering the objective and design of the study, we used standard instruments containing closed-ended questions to extract information. All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "strongly agree." In this study, *quality of work life* was measured using the scale developed by Sirgy *et al.* (2001) and modified by Nguyen and Nguyen (2012). This scale was comprised of three dimensions: survival needs, belonging needs, and knowledge needs. Each of these dimensions of quality of work life was measured by three items. *Job involvement* was assessed via a 10-item scale devised by Kanungo (1982). *Empowerment* was measured through 12 items and four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995).

RESULTS

Reliability Analysis

The scales of interest in the current study are those of the Quality of Work, and Job Involvement and Empowerment statements. The Cronbach alpha was calculated for each of the scales as a measure of internal validity. An item analysis was also performed; an item analysis refers to the recalculation of the reliability of the scale should the item be left out of the scale. If an item does not contribute positively to the internal reliability (the Cronbach alpha increases without the item), the item should be excluded from the scale, resulting in a more reliable measurement of the concept in question. The choice of when an increase in the value of the alpha is sufficient to warrant the exclusion of an item is entirely at the discretion of the researcher.

Table 1. Item analysis for the questionnaire subscales

Scale	Scale Number of items Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's Alpha
QW	9	0.866
JI	10	0.853
EM	12	0.872

Note: QW = Quality of work, JI = Job Involvement, EM = Empowerment

The first subscale, Quality of work, shows a very good Cronbach alpha of 0.866. In terms of Job Involvement, the reliability of 0.852 is also very good, whilst Empowerment also shows a high reliability of 0.872. In summary, almost all the scales have shown themselves to be reliable with Cronbach alpha values of above 0.80 (i.e., very good reliability) and remain unchanged.

Demographic Description of the Sample

In the first section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate some biographical information about themselves such as gender, age, educational level, and years of work experience.

Table 2. Description of the sample

Variable	Categories	n	Percent
Gender	Male	192	83.1%
	Female	39	16.9%
	Total	231	100%
Age	20 to 30 Years	24	10.4%
	31 to 40 Years	48	20.8%
	41 to 50 Years	129	55.8%
	Above 50 Years	30	13.0%
	Total	231	100%
Educational Level	High school or less	15	6.5%
	Diploma degree	15	6.5%
	University degree	114	49.4%
	Higher degree	87	37.7%
Years of work experience	Total	231	100%
	Less than 5 years	24	10.4%
	5 to 10 years	27	11.7%
	10 to 15 years	21	9.1%
	More than 15 years	159	68.8%
Total	231	100%	

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The sample was comprised of 83.1% males and 16.9% females. The distribution of the sample was entirely skewed towards males. In addition, the sample was homogenous to some extent in terms of age; the majority of the respondents were aged between 41 – 50 (55.8%). Most of the remaining respondents were between 31 – 40 (20.8%). The sample respondents were therefore relatively mature. With regards to education, close to a half the respondents had a university degree (49.4%, n = 114), followed by 37.7% (n = 87) who had a higher degree (Masters or Ph.D.). Finally, most of the respondents had more than 15 years of work experience (n = 159, 68.8%), while 11.7% (n = 27) have between 5 to 10 years of work experience.

Table 3. Descriptive information about the various scales

		Total Scores			Average Scores		
		QW	JI	EM	AVQW	AVJI	AVEM
N	Valid	231	231	231	231	231	231
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		30.17	31.57	43.47	3.35	3.16	3.626
Median		32.00	32.00	44.00	3.56	3.20	3.67
Std. Deviation		6.65	6.89	7.93	0.74	0.69	0.66
Skewness		-0.88	-0.36	-0.75	-0.88	-0.36	-0.75
Std. Error of Skewness		0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27
Minimum		9	10	12	1.0	1.0	1.0
Maximum		41	48	60	4.5	4.8	5.0

AVQW = Average of Quality of work, AVJI = Average of Job Involvement, AVEM = Average of Empowerment.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

Variables		QW	JI	EMP
QW	Pearson Correlation	1	0.557**	0.577**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000
	N	231	231	231
JI	Pearson Correlation	0.557**	1	0.637**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000
	N	231	231	231
EMP	Pearson Correlation	0.577**	0.637**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	231	231	231

** Correlation is significant at a level of 0.01 (two-tailed).

Note: QW = Quality of work; JI = Job Involvement; EMP = Empowerment

The data were analysed using an intercorrelation matrix to show the correlations between the dimensions of the study. The correlation matrix showed that significant positive correlations existed for a significance level set at 1% between Quality of work and Job Involvement ($R = 0.557, sig. < 0.01$), between Quality of work and Empowerment ($R = 0.577, sig. < 0.01$), and between Job Involvement and Empowerment $R = 0.637, sig. < 0.01$).

Research Hypothesis

A regression analysis was conducted to test the research hypotheses. The regression hypothesis would be supported if the standardized coefficients of the regression were not zero and were statistically significant. This would indicate that the dependent variable was influenced by the independent variables. Two hypotheses were formulated in order to investigate the impact of quality of work life on job involvement. These two hypotheses are:

H1: Quality of work life has a positive impact on Job Involvement.

H2: The impact of Quality of work life on Job Involvement will be mediated by empowerment.

Table 5. Standardized direct, indirect, and total effects

Variables	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Total Effect	
	Emp.	Job Inv.	Emp.	Job Inv.	Emp.	Job Inv.
Quality of work	0.577 (0.015)	0.285 (0.012)	0.000 (...)	0.273 (0.006)	0.577 (0.015)	0.558 (0.012)
Empowerment	0.000 (...)	0.472 (0.008)	0.000 (...)	0.000 (...)	0.000 (...)	0.472 (0.008)

Emp. = Empowerment, Job Inv. = Job Involvement

Note: Number between brackets represents the significant value.

Analysis of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS revealed that Quality of work is significantly and positively related to Empowerment ($\beta = 0.577, sig. < 0.05$). In addition, Quality of work is significantly and positively related to Job Involvement ($\beta = 0.285, sig. < 0.05$). Likewise, Empowerment is significantly and positively related to Job Involvement ($\beta = 0.472, sig. < 0.01$), as presented in the "Direct Effect" column in the above table. Furthermore, while there is no indirect effect of Quality of Work on Empowerment, and no indirect effect of Empowerment on Job Involvement (as suggested by the model), statistically there was a positive and significant indirect effect of Quality of Work on Job Involvement through Empowerment (Indirect Effect = $0.273, sig. < 0.01$).

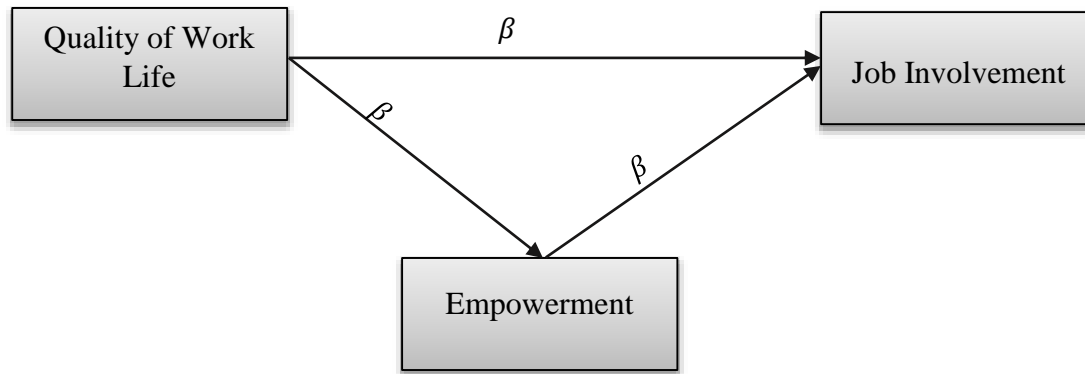


Figure 1: Research model

H1: Quality of work life has a positive impact on Job Involvement.

Since the regression analysis for the data indicates that Quality of work was significantly and positively related to Job Involvement ($\beta = 0.285, sig. < 0.05$), we have evidence to support hypothesis (1).

H2: The impact of Quality of work life on Job Involvement will be mediated by empowerment.

Since the regression analysis for the data indicates that there was a positive and significant indirect effect of Quality of Work on Job Involvement through Empowerment (Indirect Effect = 0.273, $sig. < 0.01$), we have strong evidence to support hypothesis (2).

A mediation analysis was conducted by estimating Empowerment from Quality of work (QW) as well as Job Involvement (JI). Supporting hypothesis 1, Quality of work was positively related to Job Involvement ($\beta = 0.285, sig. < 0.05$). Supporting hypothesis 2, Empowerment positively predicted Job Involvement while controlling for Quality of work ($b = 0.47, sig. < 0.01$). There was evidence of an indirect effect of Quality of Work on Job Involvement through Empowerment.

Effect of Mediation

Fairchild et al. (2009) derived a measure of effect size for the indirect effect in simple mediation analysis that represents an attempt to quantify the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable (Y) attributable to the indirect effect of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable through the mediator (M). Their measure, which they labelled R_{med}^2 , can be calculated as:

$$R_{med}^2 = r_{MY}^2 - (R_{Y.MX}^2 - r_{XY}^2)$$

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Where r_{MY}^2 and r_{XY}^2 are the squared correlations between M and Y, respectively, and $R_{Y.MX}^2$ is the squared correlation estimating Y from both X and M. Using the overall R^2 statistic of 0.459, and the multiple correlation coefficients R ($R_{XY} = 0.311$, $R_{MY} = 0.405$) where X represents the independent variables in the model (Quality of work), Y represents the dependent variable (Job Involvement), and M represents the mediator (Empowerment). So the R^2_{med} measure for the relationship is given by:

$$0.405 - (0.459 - 0.311) = 0.405 - 0.148 = 0.257.$$

The overall R^2_{med} value of 0.257 indicates that 25.7% of the variance in Job Involvement is attributable to the indirect effect of Quality of work through Empowerment. If we consider that approximately 46% of the total variance in Job Involvement is explained ($R^2 = 0.459$), we can say that 56% ($0.257/0.459$) of the explained variance in the model was due to the mediated effect.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to examine the direct relationship between quality of work life and Job Involvement, as well as the indirect relationship between quality of work life and job involvement through empowerment. The findings of the present study have provided direct support for the research hypotheses. The analysis of the data showed a significantly positive relationship between the quality of work life and job involvement. Moreover, the empowerment has a mediation impact on the relationship between quality of work life and job involvement. The findings of the present study demonstrated that the levels of the quality of work life and job involvement were average.

The results of the research were in line with the findings of Permarupan *et al.* (2013), Mehdipour *et al.* (2012), Almaghraby (2004), and William and Davis (2002), who believed that quality of work life is an important means through which to increase job involvement. These results were also consistent with Haghgui (2015), Sheikhpour and Sheikhpour (2015), and Tschopp *et al.* (2009) who believed that quality of work is strongly linked to empowerment.

A significant contribution made by this study was in identifying a new perspective for quality of work life in the Kuwaiti context, where quality of work life programmes that consider investing in people are the most important variable in an organization. In other words, meeting the employees' needs leads to an effective organization and increased employee involvement in their jobs and, indeed, the organization. The second contribution is the improvements that can be made by the Public Authority for Industry in designing quality of work conditions, which can serve as role models for other government agencies, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each organization.

The results of this research differ from other research results. Previous research on quality of work life has largely focused on job outcomes or the behavioural responses of employees;

however, researchers have rarely investigated the importance of empowerment as a mediator to enhance job involvement through quality of work life. Analysis of data showed that when the empowerment was introduced as a mediator variable, 56% of the explained variance in the model was due to the mediated effect. In other words, empowering employees will increase their involvement in their jobs. This study provides valuable implications for attracting and retaining good human resources. The study revealed the importance of quality of work life as a factor that promotes, both directly and indirectly, increased job involvement. Hence, there is a particular need to consider quality of work life in order to have obtain a favourable environment within the organization to help retaining employees. Also, a practical conclusion that could be drawn from this study indicated that an organization cannot design and adapt quality of work life in an effective manner without the support and dedication of the employees themselves, so the introduction of a quality of work life programme into an organization also requires the introduction of empowerment.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has a number of limitations. First, we investigated only one mediator, i.e., empowerment. Several other job factors which can act as mediators between quality of work life and job performance should be tested in further detail in future research. Also, this research does not address the influence of demographic variables, such as age and years of experience. Future research should explore the existence of any links between quality of work life and demographic variables. In addition, the model only examined the role of quality of work life in job involvement at the Public authority for Industry. Testing the model with other business, such as service organizations, will further enhance our understanding of the relationship between quality of work life and job involvement. Finally, comparative studies to identify the nature of the prevalence of quality of work life in a number of organizations such as between public and private sector organizations, or between service organizations and industrial organizations, should be examined.

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