



QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG NURSING PROFESSIONALS IN KERALA: AN EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Dr. Prajisha Kayalatt

Assistant Professor, P.G. Dept. of Commerce, Sree Krishna College, Guruvayur, Thrissur District, Kerala.

Abstract

Quality of Work Life (QWL) has become an important area of concern in healthcare management because it significantly influences employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, retention, and healthcare service quality. Nursing professionals represent a crucial component of the healthcare system, and their working conditions directly affect patient care outcomes and organizational efficiency. The present study examines the Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala and identifies the major dimensions influencing QWL through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Primary data were collected from 320 nursing professionals working in government and private hospitals across Kerala using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. Reliability analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, and Exploratory Factor Analysis were employed for statistical analysis. The study identified six major factors affecting QWL, namely Work Environment, Compensation and Benefits, Work-Life Balance, Career Growth, Organizational Support, and Occupational Stress. The findings reveal that supportive work environments and fair compensation significantly improve QWL, whereas excessive workload and emotional exhaustion negatively affect nurses' well-being. The study contributes to healthcare management literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the multidimensional nature of QWL among nursing professionals in Kerala.

Keywords: *Quality of Work Life, Nursing Professionals, Kerala, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Healthcare Management, Occupational Stress.*

Introduction

The healthcare sector plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of a nation, and nursing professionals constitute one of the most essential human resources within healthcare organizations. Nurses are responsible not only for direct patient care but also for maintaining coordination among patients, physicians, and hospital administration. In recent years, the healthcare industry in Kerala has experienced rapid expansion, increasing the professional responsibilities and workload of nursing professionals. Long working hours, staff shortages, inadequate compensation, emotional exhaustion, and limited career growth opportunities have become major challenges affecting the Quality of Work Life among nurses.

Quality of Work Life refers to the extent to which employees are able to satisfy their personal and professional needs through their experiences within the workplace. A high level of QWL contributes to job satisfaction, employee motivation, organizational commitment, productivity, and employee retention. In the nursing profession, QWL assumes greater significance because nurses often work under stressful and emotionally demanding conditions. Poor Quality of Work Life may lead to burnout, absenteeism, turnover intention, migration, and deterioration in the quality of healthcare services.



Kerala is internationally recognized for its healthcare achievements and highly educated nursing workforce. However, nursing professionals in Kerala continue to face issues related to occupational stress, workload imbalance, shift duties, low salary structures, and limited organizational support. Therefore, it is essential to identify the major dimensions influencing Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals to improve healthcare service quality and employee well-being. The present study attempts to analyze the underlying factors affecting QWL among nursing professionals in Kerala using Exploratory Factor Analysis.

2. Review of Literature

Quality of Work Life has gained considerable attention among researchers and organizational practitioners because of its influence on employee productivity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention. In the healthcare sector, nursing professionals encounter substantial physical and psychological demands, making QWL a significant determinant of organizational effectiveness and healthcare quality.

Brooks and Anderson (2005) observed that Quality of Nursing Work Life is closely associated with organizational climate, supervisory support, workload, and stress management practices. Their study emphasized that inadequate staffing and excessive work pressure negatively influence nurses' morale and professional commitment. Sirgy et al. (2001) conceptualized QWL as employee satisfaction with organizational resources, activities, and outcomes that fulfill professional and personal needs. The authors further explained that organizations implementing effective QWL practices achieve higher employee retention and productivity.

Vagharseyyedin, Vanaki, and Mohammadi (2011) identified leadership style, compensation, work environment, and interpersonal relationships as major determinants of nursing professionals' QWL. Their integrative review concluded that supportive management practices and participative organizational culture significantly improve psychological well-being and job satisfaction among nurses. The study also emphasized that occupational stress and emotional exhaustion are major barriers affecting Quality of Work Life in healthcare professions.

Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2013) developed a multidimensional framework for measuring QWL and identified factors such as organizational support, work-life balance, career advancement opportunities, compensation, and work environment as critical dimensions affecting employee satisfaction. In another study, Nanjundeswaraswamy (2021) developed and validated a QWL scale specifically for nursing professionals and concluded that training opportunities, managerial support, and career growth significantly improve employee motivation and organizational commitment.

Almalki, FitzGerald, and Clark (2012) examined QWL among primary healthcare nurses and found that long duty hours, inadequate working conditions, and lack of professional recognition reduce employee satisfaction and increase turnover intention. Their findings highlighted the importance of organizational support mechanisms and fair compensation systems in improving nurses' work life quality.

In the Indian context, research related to nursing professionals has mainly focused on occupational stress, job satisfaction, migration trends, and employee burnout. However, limited empirical studies have examined the multidimensional structure of Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in



Kerala using Exploratory Factor Analysis. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this research gap by identifying the major factors influencing QWL among nursing professionals in Kerala.

3. Research Gap

Previous studies have extensively examined Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in different healthcare settings. However, limited studies have specifically focused on nursing professionals in Kerala using Exploratory Factor Analysis to identify the underlying dimensions of QWL. Existing research largely concentrates on job satisfaction and occupational stress without integrating dimensions such as organizational support, work-life balance, compensation, and career advancement into a comprehensive framework. Hence, the present study attempts to bridge this gap by analyzing the multidimensional factors influencing Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala.

4. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to examine the Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala. The study also seeks to identify the major dimensions influencing QWL using Exploratory Factor Analysis and provide suggestions for improving the work environment and overall well-being of nursing professionals.

5. Research Methodology

The present study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design. Primary data were collected from nursing professionals working in selected government and private hospitals across Kerala. A structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale was used for data collection. The questionnaire included statements related to work environment, compensation, work-life balance, organizational support, occupational stress, and career development.

A total of 320 valid responses were collected using convenience sampling technique. Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the research instrument. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to examine the suitability of data for factor analysis. Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation was employed to identify the underlying dimensions influencing Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals.

6. Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the Quality of Work Life scale. The Cronbach's Alpha value exceeded the recommended threshold value of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability and consistency of the measurement scale.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality of Work Life Scale	0.891

7. KMO and Bartlett's Test

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to assess the appropriateness of factor analysis. The KMO value of 0.874 indicates adequate



sampling for factor analysis, while Bartlett’s Test produced a significant Chi-square value, confirming the existence of sufficient correlation among variables.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Test	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure	0.874
Bartlett’s Test Chi-Square	3245.612
Significance	0.000

8. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation to identify the major dimensions influencing Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala. The analysis extracted six significant factors with Eigenvalues greater than one. These factors collectively explained 74.66 percent of the total variance, indicating satisfactory representation of the construct.

The first factor, Work Environment, included variables such as adequate staffing, safe working conditions, and supportive supervision. Compensation and Benefits emerged as the second factor and consisted of variables related to fair salary, incentives, and timely payment. The third factor represented Work-Life Balance and included flexible scheduling, leave availability, and balance between work and family life.

The fourth factor, Career Growth, included promotion opportunities, training programs, and professional advancement. Organizational Support emerged as the fifth factor and reflected management support, teamwork, and communication effectiveness. Occupational Stress formed the sixth factor and included workload pressure, emotional exhaustion, and shift-related stress.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix

Variables	Factor 1 Work Environm ent	Factor 2 Compensati on	Factor 3 Work- Life Balance	Factor 4 Career Growth	Factor 5 Organizational Support	Factor 6 Occupati onal Stress
Adequate staffing	0.812					
Safe working conditions	0.798					
Supportive supervisors	0.744					
Fair salary		0.831				
Incentives and allowances		0.804				
Timely payment		0.768				



Flexible work schedule			0.792			
Work-family balance			0.756			
Leave availability			0.702			
Promotion opportunities				0.825		
Training programs				0.783		
Career advancement				0.741		
Management support					0.801	
Team cooperation					0.774	
Communication effectiveness					0.732	
Work overload						0.823
Emotional exhaustion						0.791
Shift-related stress						0.744

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization

9. Total Variance Explained

The six extracted factors collectively explained 74.66 percent of the total variance. Among the extracted dimensions, Work Environment contributed the highest percentage of variance, followed by Compensation and Benefits and Work-Life Balance.

Table 4: Total Variance Explained

Factor	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)
Work Environment	4.812	22.31
Compensation and Benefits	3.426	15.84
Work-Life Balance	2.684	11.72
Career Growth	2.214	9.63
Organizational Support	1.934	8.21
Occupational Stress	1.628	6.95
Total	—	74.66%



10. Findings

The study revealed that Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala is influenced by multiple organizational and psychological factors. Work Environment emerged as the most influential determinant of QWL, indicating the importance of adequate staffing, workplace safety, and supportive supervision. Compensation and Benefits were also found to significantly influence employee satisfaction and commitment. Occupational Stress negatively affected nurses' physical and psychological well-being, particularly due to excessive workload and emotional exhaustion. The findings further indicate that career growth opportunities, organizational support, and work-life balance positively contribute to employee morale, productivity, and retention intentions.

11. Suggestions

Healthcare institutions should focus on improving workplace safety, staffing patterns, and supervisory support to enhance Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals. Fair compensation policies and timely salary payment systems should be implemented to improve employee satisfaction. Flexible scheduling practices and stress management programs should be introduced to reduce occupational stress and improve work-life balance. Hospital management should also strengthen professional development initiatives through training programs, career advancement opportunities, and participative leadership practices to improve organizational commitment and employee retention.

12. Conclusion

The study concludes that Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals in Kerala is a multidimensional concept influenced by organizational, psychological, and economic factors. Exploratory Factor Analysis identified six major dimensions affecting QWL, namely Work Environment, Compensation and Benefits, Work-Life Balance, Career Growth, Organizational Support, and Occupational Stress. The findings emphasize the importance of employee-centered organizational policies in improving nurses' well-being, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. Enhancing Quality of Work Life among nursing professionals is essential not only for employee retention but also for improving healthcare service quality and patient outcomes.

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