

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

Manjushri N.^{1*}, Dr. Shivacharan P.R.²

ABSTRACT

The concept of work motivation and quality of work life has received a great deal of attention due to its advantages for an organisation and an individual. The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between work motivation and quality of work life and to check whether work motivation predicts quality of work life among nuns working in the educational sector. The study sample included 150 nuns from Karnataka. Purposive sampling was used to select them across age groups. The instruments used were the work motivation questionnaire developed by Agarwal and the Quality of Work Life Scale developed by Santosh Dhar, Upinder Dhar and Rishu Roy. The statistical analysis used was Pearson's correlation coefficient and regression analysis. The results of the study indicate that work motivation and quality of work life have a significant and positive relationship between them. The results further suggested that work motivation significantly and positively predicted quality of work life.

Keywords: *Nuns, Quality of Work Life and Work motivation*

Work motivation and quality of work life have become critical areas of focus in today's dynamic and competitive organisational environment. Understanding how these constructs are related is crucial for organisations to foster a supportive and productive work culture. Work motivation includes external as well as internal factors that drive employees to take action that helps in reaching organisational goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A high quality of work life improves employee morale, reduces turnover and enhances organisational performance. The concept of quality of work life includes components like job satisfaction, work-life balance, a safe working environment and scope for personal growth (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2013). Thus, high work motivation and quality of work life play a pivotal role in influencing employee engagement, productivity and overall job satisfaction. High motivation and quality of work life result in commitment, creativity and resilience in the workplace.

Work Motivation

Work motivation is an important psychological construct that can have an impact on the behaviour and performance of employees and organisational effectiveness. It encompasses

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Karnatak University, Dharwad, Karnataka

²Retd. Professor and Research Guide, Department of Psychology, Karnatak University, Dharwad, Karnataka

*Corresponding Author

Received: June 26, 2025; Revision Received: July 08, 2025; Accepted: July 12, 2025

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

both internal and external factors that initiate work-related action. It also influences the form, direction, duration and intensity of work-related behaviour (Pinder, 2014). High work motivation among employees results in work engagement, persistence, creativity in the face of hardships and pursuance of organisational goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Understanding what motivates employees to work and excel has become a focus of attention in recent decades in the field of organisational behaviour. Theories of work motivation, like Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs (1943), Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 1985), provide different viewpoints on the needs, incentives and intrinsic satisfaction that motivates employees' work-related behaviour. Among the various factors of motivation intrinsic factor that leads to the performance of work for the sake of the inherent satisfaction it brings is important for employee engagement and wellbeing (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

As the work environments have become dynamic and competitive, fostering motivation is more important than ever. Organisations where employees are highly motivated tend to have lower attrition, higher productivity and greater job satisfaction (Latham & Pinder, 2005). As such, exploring the factors that enhance or hinder motivation is essential for creating supportive work climates and achieving long-term success.

Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life is a multidimensional concept that includes general wellbeing of employees in the workplace, job satisfaction, personal and professional life balance, work conditions, scope for professional and personal growth. It shows how employees perceive their roles in the workplace and the degree to which their needs and demands are met (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2013). Thus, a high quality of work life increases job morale, performance and decreases employee turnover. The concept of quality of work life developed in 1970s due to increases in employees' absenteeism, burnout and job dissatisfaction. It includes not only financial benefits but also social and psychological components of work (Walton, 1975). Walton proposed eight major components of quality of work life including adequate and fair pay, safe and secured working conditions, career growth prospects and social integration in the workplace. Higher quality of work life enhances job satisfaction, increases productivity, leads to innovation and organisational commitment (Sirgy et al.2001).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Work motivation and quality of work life are significant factors that influence employee job attitudes, performance and general well-being. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the relationship between these elements in the organisation as it increases employee engagement and productivity. Improving work motivation and quality of work life can create a favourable working environment that is worthy for people as well as the organisation. The review of literature shows that work motivation and quality of work life are positively connected and influence organizational outcomes by reducing turnover, creating positive organisational culture and enhancing job satisfaction and performance of employees. Research studies show that there is a link between work motivation, quality of work life and organisational outcome like attrition rate, performance and engagement of employees. High work motivation and improved quality of work life results in enhanced job performance, innovation and organisational citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1988). High work motivation and quality of work life reduces attrition rate as it increases employee commitment to the

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

organisation resulting in lower turnover costs and organisational stability (Meyer & Allen, 1997). A study by Lee et al. (2014) suggested that work motivation is predicted by quality of work life. It was also found to be associated with organisational culture and employee outcomes. High quality of work life increases work motivation, employee engagement and organisational performance (Rethinam & Ismail, 2008)

Rationale of the Study

The rationale behind the study is the increasing recognition of the importance of understanding the specific factors influencing nuns' work motivation and quality of work life in the field of education. Nuns often approach their work with a strong sense of purpose and spiritual dedication because they are religious, which can be very different from the motivations of other employees. Despite the huge role of nuns in the educational sector, very little research has been done on how their spiritual values and intrinsic motivation affect their work motivation and quality of work life. This research gap makes it necessary to explore the relationship between these two variables. This study helps in understanding how work motivation affects quality of work life of nuns and provides insights into how the educational institutions can make the work environment supportive and fulfilling for religious employees. It can be applied to improve quality of work life of other religious professionals working in different fields.

Research Questions

- What is the relation that work motivation has with the quality of work life of nuns?
- Can work motivation predict the quality of work life of nuns?

Hypotheses

- **H1:** There will be a significant relationship between work motivation and quality of work life among nuns.
- **H2:** Nuns' work motivation significantly predicts their quality of work life.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample for the study consisted of 150 nuns working in the educational sector from different parts of Karnataka. Nuns whose ages ranged from 25 years to 60 years were chosen using purposive sampling. After obtaining permission from the heads of the convents, data was collected by fixing the schedule and explaining the nature and importance of the present study. The data was collected individually from nuns by the researcher.

Measures

- **Work Motivation:** Work motivation was assessed using Work motivation questionnaire developed by K.G. Agarwal. It has 26 items and 6 factors, i.e., Dependence, Organisational Orientation, Work Group Relation, Psychological Work Incentives, Material Incentives and Job Situation, with five responses for each option, i.e., strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree, with scores of five, four, three, two and one respectively. Higher scores show higher work motivation and vice versa. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was found to be 0.994.
- **Quality of Work Life:** Quality of Work Life was measured using the Quality of Work Life Scale (QWLS) developed by Santosh Dhar, Upinder Dhar and Rishu Roy.

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

This scale consists of 45 items. It is divided into four dimensions, namely proactive, work-life balance, human relations and learning organization. The reliability coefficient by the split-half method was found to be 0.89.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relationship between work motivation and quality of work life among nuns. The SPSS was employed for statistical analysis and the Pearson correlation test was used for data analysis.

The results, as indicated in Table 1, show a significant positive correlation between work motivation and quality of work life, suggesting that nuns reporting higher work motivation tend to have higher quality of work life.

The findings, as seen in Table 1, also indicate a significant positive association between various factors of work motivation and quality of work life. This indicates that a higher level work motivation is positively related to quality of work life factors like proactive, work-life balance and human relations whereas it has a weak positive relationship with learning organisation.

Some factors of work motivation, such as dependence(wmf1), organisational orientation(wmf2), workgroup relation(wmf3) and psychological work incentives(wmf4) have a significant positive impact on quality of work life factors like proactive(qwlf1), work-life balance(qwlf2) and human relations(qwlf3) and weak positive relationship with learning organization (qwlf4) whereas material incentives(wmf5) has a weak positive relationship with all the factors of quality of work life. Job Situation(wmf6) has a moderate relationship with proactive(qwlf1), work-life balance(qwlf2) and human relations(qwlf3) and a very weak relationship with learning organization (qwlf4).

It is interesting to note that Dependence, Organisation Orientation, Work Group Relation, Psychological Incentives are particularly strong correlates of QWL and its dimensions, emphasizing that non-material motivational drivers (like psychological support and organizational alignment) are more predictive of QWL than material incentives (wmf5) implying that human resource management practices should focus on psychological needs of an employee rather than focusing merely on material incentives and job situations. Monetary benefits affect the performance and health of employees however, the effect is lower than that of other factors (Liu & Liu, 2022). A review study by Abdelhay et al. (2023), opined that psychological incentive has more positive impact than monetary incentives on the performance of employees in an organisation. Thus, psychological incentives have a major role to play in the success and growth of an organisation.

Material Incentives (wmf5) showed the weakest correlations consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which states that extrinsic rewards alone do not sustain long-term job satisfaction. He opined that hygiene factors like pay don't promote job satisfaction instead, it only reduces dissatisfaction. Various dimensions of QWL like work-life balance, human relations are significantly associated with motivation (Walton, 1975).

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

Table 1 shows the Correlation among Work Motivation (WM), Work Motivation Factors (WMF), Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Quality of Work Life Factors (QWLF)

Variables	WM	wmf1	wmf2	wmf3	wmf4	wmf5	wmf6	qwlf1	qwlf2	qwlf3	qwlf4	QWL
WM	1	.901**	.910**	.929**	.921**	.535**	.721**	.753**	.706**	.611**	.247**	.730**
wmf1		1	.835**	.810**	.763**	.292**	.464**	.683**	.627**	.555**	.180**	.652**
wmf2			1	.826**	.746**	.265**	.540**	.726**	.689**	.581**	.275**	.710**
wmf3				1	.864**	.443**	.625**	.729**	.684**	.593**	.276**	.710**
wmf4					1	.616**	.713**	.659**	.609**	.534**	.186**	.632**
wmf5						1	.685**	.276**	.269**	.222**	.070	.269**
wmf6							1	.548**	.528**	.467**	.196**	.541**
qwlf1								1	.935**	.812**	.429**	.979**
qwlf2									1	.813**	.444**	.977**
qwlf3										1	.345**	.853**
qwlf4											1	.524**
QWL												1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 Regression Analysis Summary for work motivation Predicting quality of work life

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Job Involvement	1.74	0.09	.73	18.41	<.001

Note. R = .730, R² = .532, Adjusted R² = .531, F (1,298) = 339.272, p < .001.

Dependent variable: quality of work life.

Table 2 shows the results when work motivation is regressed against quality of work life scores of nuns. It has been found that work motivation significantly predicted quality of work life, which is shown by F(1,298) = 339.272, p < .001, suggesting that higher work motivation is associated with better quality of work life. The standardized coefficient (β = .73) suggests a strong positive relationship between the variables. For every one-unit increase in work motivation, quality of work life increases by approximately 1.74 units. Moreover, the R² = .532 depicts that the model explains 53.2% of the variance in quality of work life is explained by work motivation. The adjusted R² of .531 model's strength is confirmed by adjusted R², with minimal overfitting. The t-value of 18.41 with a significance level of p < .001, confirms that this predictor is highly significant and the relationship between the variables is not due to random chance.

The results of the study suggest that employees with high work motivation tend to have a better quality of work life. This indicates that when employees are motivated, they tend to perceive higher meaning and increased job satisfaction in the workplace. The beta value indicates the importance of increasing work motivation through human resource management practices and initiatives. Therefore, organizations should consider developing strategies that enhance employees' motivation in the workplace, as this may directly contribute to quality of work life. The current study emphasises the importance of work

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

motivation because it enhances quality of work life which is important for the growth of employees and organisation.

Implication

It helps human resource management (HRM) professionals in framing holistic policies by integrating motivation enhancing practices like non-monetary incentives, rewards, recognition growth opportunities, etc. into HRM policies as it can have a positive spillover effect on employees' perception about their quality of work life. It sheds light on the specific dimensions of work motivation and quality of work life that can have positive impact on employees which in turn helps in developing targeted interventions. For example, providing recognition and rewards, supporting career growth, ensuring a work life balance, can improve quality of work life and work motivation.

One of the important implications of this study is it helps managers, HR professionals, higher authorities in an organization, etc. in understanding the importance of work motivation as one of the important factors as it is connected to quality of work life. Besides review of the literature also show that work motivation and quality of work life is associated with job satisfaction, job performance, commitment, attrition etc. Therefore, human resource management practices should focus on enhancing work motivation and improving quality of work life of the employees. Hence, the present study is relevant to HR practitioners, managers, policymakers and other higher authorities in an organization to actualize their organizational goals.

This study would prove beneficial to industries and organisations as it gives a deeper understanding that by focusing on psychological incentives apart from other incentives, work motivation and quality of work life of employees can be increased. Hence, it would help in planning, policies and human resource management. It can guide the higher authorities about the best practices related to incentives, work-life balance, human relations, etc.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The present study has some limitations despite having a well-organized research protocol and a large sample size. The study may not be applicable to other religious and non-religious employees working in different areas as the spirituality and work culture of nuns may differ from them. The sample was drawn from schools and colleges in Karnataka. Therefore, generalisations based in the findings of the study can be made if the area of the sample were enlarged.

Response bias of the sample can't be ruled out due to societal desirability bias. Influence of spiritual values, beliefs and work culture of nuns also can't be ruled out. These limitations can limit the researcher's ability to draw conclusions and generalise the findings to the population in general. The sample can be expanded by including diverse populations and professions. It can be made a comparative study by including religious brothers and fathers. The impact of work motivation and quality of work life of nuns on the student's academic performance, learning process, etc., can be analysed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results indicates a significant and positive association between work motivation and quality of work life. This correlation and regression analysis strongly

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

confirms that work motivation is key to high-quality work life, while material incentives are less influential. These results indicate that all six factors contribute positively to work motivation, with the strongest influence from work group relation and psychological incentives. Therefore, human resource management practices must focus on employees' needs and growth, which in turn can result in high work motivation and improve quality of work life, thereby decreasing attrition rate and absenteeism and improving employees' productivity and performance.

REFERENCES

- Abdelhay, S., Haider, S., Abdulrahim, H. & Marie, A. (2023). Employees Performance as Affected by Monetary and Psychological Incentives (The Field of Study the Commercial Banks In UAE) A Comprehensive Review Study. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(3), 1–26.
- Gagne, M., & Deci, E. L. (2005). *Self-determination theory and work motivation*. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(4), 331–362. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.322>
- Herzberg, F. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Latham, G. P., & Pinder, C. C. (2005). Work motivation theory and research at the dawn of the twenty-first century. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 56, 485–516. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.142105>
- Lee, Y., Singhapakdi, A., & Sirgy, M. J. (2014). The Effects of Ethics Institutionalization on Marketing Managers' Role Stress and Ethical Perception. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 114(4), 593–603.
- Liu, W., & Liu, Y. (2022). The Impact of Incentives on Job Performance, Business Cycle, and Population Health in Emerging Economies. *Frontiers in public health*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.778101>.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). *A theory of human motivation*. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application*. Sage Publications
- Nanjundeswaraswamy, T. S., & Swamy, D. R. (2013). *Quality of work life: Scale development and validation*. *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 6(2), 281–291.
- Nanjundeswaraswamy, T. S., & Swamy, D. R. (2013). Review of literature on quality of work life. *International Journal for Quality Research*, 7(2), 201–214. <http://www.ijqr.net/journal/v7-n2/5.pdf>
- Organ, D. W. (1988). *Organizational citizenship behavior: The good soldier syndrome*. Lexington Books.
- Pinder, C. C. (2014). *Work motivation in organizational behavior* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press.
- Rethinam, G. S., & Ismail, M. (2008). Constructs of quality of work life: A perspective of information and technology professionals. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 58–70.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Sirgy, M. J., Efraty, D., Siegel, P., & Lee, D. J. (2001). *A new measure of quality of work life (QWL) based on need satisfaction and spillover theories*. *Social Indicators Research*, 55(3), 241–302. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010986923468>

An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns

Walton, R. E. (1975). *Criteria for quality of working life*. In L. E. Davis & A. B. Cherns (Eds.), *The quality of working life*, Free Press, 1, 91–10.

Acknowledgment

I'm grateful to my professor, Dr. Prathibha M.V., for her constant support and guidance. I would like to thank Mr. Yuvaraj for his assistance in data collection. I sincerely thank all the participants of the study for their time and effort. Lastly, I would like to thank my husband, Mr. Vinod, without whose support this research paper would not have been possible.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

Financial support and Ownership

There is no financial conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Manjushri, N. & Shivacharan, P.R. (2025). An Empirical Study on the Relationship between Work Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Nuns. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(3), 159-166. DIP:18.01.016.20251303, DOI:10.25215/1303.016