CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE
(Across Developed Nations and India)

3.1 Introduction

The total life space of human beings can be classified into three: family life, working life and social life. These three divisions of human life are interrelated and interconnected. Failure of any one or two affect of quality of the other/others badly. So, the total quality of life of the people depends on the quality of family life, work life and social life. In order to improve the total quality of life of the people, a balance between family life, work life and social life is essential.

The economic development of a nation lies in the improvement of the quality of life of its people. All economic activities are directly or indirectly aimed at achieving better quality of life. People spend a major part of their time in some economic activities viz. agriculture, industry, mining, fishing, etc. The efficiency of each activity depends on the quality of work life of the people.

Of all the factors of production, man is by far the most important. In fact the success of every business enterprise depends on its human element. Materials and machines are inter factors, but man with his ability to feel, to think, to conceive and to plan is the most valuable and at the same time the most difficult to inspire, control and motivate. Human beings are regarded as the dynamic factor of production. It is said that “behaviour of human beings differs widely; It is very difficult to predict their behaviour, especially in organizations where they work in groups. Their behaviour is
neither consistent nor predictable. Thus the managers should recognize that individuals and not the organization create excellence”. Management of a business is responsible to coordinate human and material resources for achieving organizational objectives. It is very easy to handle material resources. But without efficient use of human resources, management can never accomplish objectives of the undertaking. Even in those industries where automatic machines have been introduced, labour is still regarded as a dominant factor for increasing the profitability. “No industry can be rendered efficient so long as the basic fact remains unrecognized that it is principally human. It is not a mass of machine and technical processes but a body of men. It is not a complex of matter, but a complex of humanity. It fulfills its functions, not by virtue of some impersonal force, but by human energy. Its body is not an intricate maze of mechanical device but a magnified nervous system”.

The quality of the work life has an important bearing on the total quality of the people. A high quality of work life leads to a better quality of life of the people vice versa. Thus quality of work life has been considered as a means and at the same time and end in itself. It is an end because the total quality of life can be achieved only through the quality of work life. As a means the experience gained through work life helps workers to acquire excellence, high amount of civic competence and better skills which are necessary for the total development of man power. A worker’s life cannot be divided into two watertight compartments, one inside the factory, and the other outside it. The two are closely bound together, so that the troubles and joys of

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off job life cannot be put aside when reporting for work in the morning, nor can factory matters be dropped when returning home after work. Culture, customs and norms, images and attributes conferred by society on particular jobs, professions and occupations and the workers home life all play a strong motivational role.

Low productivity and growing discontentment among the employees at work are the two problems that most of the developing nation’s face today. The work has become unattached to the worker. It has never become a part and parcel of his basic nature and consequently he does not do justice to his work. The only panacea to the problem is improving the morale of the work force.

Morale refers to a feeling of enthusiasm, zeal, confidence in individual or groups that they will be able to cope with the tasks assigned to them. A person’s enthusiasm for his jobs reflects his attitude to work, environment and to his employer and his willingness to strive for the goals set for him by the organization in which he is employed. Morale affects output, the quality of a product, costs, co-operation, enthusiasm, discipline, initiative and other ingredients of success. It affects an employee’s or a group’s willingness to work and co-operate in the best interest of the individuals or groups and organizations for which they work. One of the most interesting approaches to improve the morale of the workers is improving the quality of work life.

3.2 Definitions of Quality of Work Life

Even though the concept was being given potential importance right from early 1950s, it was not very clear and was ambiguous. Quality of Work Life is interpreted and viewed in different ways. The term involves a sympathetic response
among many. Though many people tried to define it, in specific terms, a few among them are presented below.

Quality of Work Life (QWL) has been defined as “The quality of relationship between the employees and the total working environment”. QWL is concerned with the overall climate of work and the impact on work and people as well as on organization’s effectiveness.

In 1983, Nadler and Lawler perceived that after the phase of 1979 – 82 when Quality of Work Life means everything, it would lose its impact and mean nothing. But, instead of losing importance, Quality of Work Life is gaining momentum day by day and as following stages: First definition during 1969-1972 considered QWL as Variable; Second definition during 1969-1975 considered QWL as Approach; Third definition during 1972-1975 considered QWL as Methods; Fourth definition during 1975-1980 considered QWL as Movement; Fifth definition during 1969-1982 considered QWL as Everything\(^\text{136}\).

De (1976)\(^\text{137}\) has pointed out, “Quality of Work Life is an indicator of how free the society is from exploitation, injustice, inequality, oppression and restrictions on the continuity of the growth of a man leading to his development to the fullest. By providing good Quality of Work Life, one can eliminate the exploitation, injustice, inequality oppression and restrictions which tamper the continuous growth of human resource which in turn leads to its overall development”.


Hackman and Suttle (1977)\textsuperscript{138} proposed that the quality of work life served happiness and satisfaction of every performer in the organization, whether in levels of labourers, supervisors, management or company or agency owners. The good quality of working life not only made personnel to have job satisfaction; it also resulted in other prosperities such as social, economic, environmental conditions and products. Most importantly, the quality of working life could lead to job satisfaction and attachment to the organization. Also, it helped to reduce rates of absenteeism, turnover, morale and accidents whereas the organization proficiency in respect with, encouragement and job satisfaction as well as product quality and amount were higher.

Rosow (1977)\textsuperscript{139} explains the importance of work more in detail and relates it to success and failure of a man in his society. According to him, work is the core of life, considering the deeper meaning of work to be individual and to life’s values. Work means being a good provider, it means autonomy, it pays off in success and it establishes self-respect or self-worth. Within this framework, the people who openly confess active job-dissatisfaction, is verily admitting failure as a man, a failure in fulfilling his moral role in society.”

The American Society for Training and Development appointed a task force on the QWL in 1979. The task force defined quality of work life as, “a process of work organizations which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed toward meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of


organization and improved quality life at work for employees (Skrovan, 1980). According to this definition, quality of work life is a process of work organization designed to enhance the effectiveness of an organization and improve the quality of work life of its employees.

Richard Walton (1979) who has taken up extensive research report that Quality of Work Life can be considered as the major contributor to this concept. In fact, measuring of Quality of Work Life has become easy and practicable with the eight factors/elements that Walton has proposed. According to Walton, “Quality of Work Life is the work culture that serves as the corner stone”. He says that the work culture of an organization should be recognized and improved to improve Quality of Work Life of that organization.

Robert H. Guest (1979), a noted behavioural scientist talks about feelings of an employee about his work while defining Quality of Work Life. He further points out the effect of Quality of Work Life on person’s life. According to him, “Quality of Work Life is a generic phrase that covers a person’s feeling about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relations and its intrinsic meaning in person’s life,” and “It is a process by which an organization attempts to unlock the creative potential of its people by involving them in decisions, affecting their work lives”.

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According to Blue Stone (1980)\textsuperscript{143}, “the Quality of work life means bringing to the work place maximum democratic life-style and balancing the needs of production and needs of the employees and self-fulfillments”. So, the most accepted common denominator of quality of work life experience is the joint worker management participation.

Cohen and Rosenthal (1980)\textsuperscript{144} have focused attention on the employees’ satisfaction. They describe quality of work life as, “an internally designed effort to bring about increased labour management co-operation to jointly solve the problems of improving organizational performance and employee satisfaction”.

Daniel (1982)\textsuperscript{145} of the American Society of Training and Development of Quality of Work Life indications stated that his committee had given a definition on the quality of work life as a process for work organization which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shopping the organization’s environment, methods and outcomes. This value-based process is aimed toward meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of the organization and improved quality of life at work for employees.

In the words of Mansell and Rankin (1983)\textsuperscript{146}, “Quality of working life is the concrete expression of a particular set of beliefs and values about people, about organizations and ultimately about society”.

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\textsuperscript{145} Daniel, J.S., (1982), “Quality of work life: Perspective for Business and the Public Sector”, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, pp.XIV.
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Robert F. Craver (1983)\(^{147}\) a Senior Executive of American Telephone and Telegraphic Company (AT & T) says “Quality of Work Life is more than an attempt to pacify the growing demands of impatient employees. For the Management, Quality of Work Life offers new challenges, opportunities, growth and satisfaction”.

Delamotte and Takezawa (1984)\(^{148}\) pointed out the idea that quality of work life originated work and the idea that the quality of life means the development of the worker’s life to have a better living condition, to work in a good working condition, to receive fair benefits and safe equal rights. According to these writers, the quality of work life means good results from work which benefit the workers as a result of the improvement of the organization and its work nature, the special consideration given to the workers work life, work satisfaction and decision-making sharing.

Goodman (1985)\(^{149}\) observes that, “in recent years the term quality of work life has been used to refer to employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction with overall condition of work”.

Huse and Cummings (1985)\(^{150}\) defined the quality of work life as the consistency between individuals’ fulfillment and job satisfaction with organizational proficiency. In other words, the quality of work life was the organizational proficiency as a consequence of workers’ well-being in working, resulting from the perception of working experience that made employees feel satisfied in that job. Huse and Cummings further explained that the quality of work life affected the organization in 3 ways:


firstly, it increased organizational productivity; secondly, it increased work spirit, encouragement and motivation of workers and lastly, it helped improve the potential of workers.

Kast and Rosenzweig (1985)\textsuperscript{151} stated that the quality of work life referred to the perception about individuals’ performance that they were involved in sharing opinions, solving problems and making decision within the organization.

Cascio (1986)\textsuperscript{152} specifies the meaning of quality of work life in two characteristics: the former means working environment and other practices within the organization such as job enrichment, democratic supervision, employee involvement and safe working conditions. The latter is related to safety, good relationships between employees and employers, growth of career path and development of the working environment.

Robinson and Richard Alston (1988)\textsuperscript{153} assert that the key determination of the quality of work life is whether an individual feels off and a contributor to the industrial environment in which he or she earns his/her living. They further observed that “the quality of work life is related to the case with which people can undertake tasks they require to undertake and thus gives the performance necessary to the economic vitality of the business”.


Werther and Davis (1989),\(^{154}\) have given the meaning of the quality of work life as a good command of supervising, good condition of working, many good benefits, providing good income, and job-provoking interest, challenge and rewards from that job. Werther and Davis believed that the quality of work life and the increasing of productivity of the employee go hand-in-hand.

Kerce and Kewley (1993)\(^{155}\) stated that the quality of work life referred to groups, procedures or technologies which allowed the working environment to provide more productivity or employees to have increased job satisfaction. The outcome focused on employees rather than the management. The quality of work life also covered the involvement in problem solutions, revision of working systems, making jobs interesting, using new methods in the reward system and improving the working environment. Therefore, the quality of life of employees in the organization comprised overall job satisfaction, facet job satisfaction (or task-specific satisfaction), job characteristics and attachment to work.

According to Ranganayakulu (2004)\(^{156}\), the term quality of work life means, “the favorableness or unfavourableness of a job environment for an organization’s employee’, and the term quality of working life also means, “programmes representing a systems approach to job design and job enrichment which will make job more interesting and challenging. Programmes are closely associated with the socio-technical systems approach”.

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From the definitions given above, it can be concluded that the quality of work life means the feeling or attitude of people's perceptions of self-working experiences that their jobs are meaningful and valuable, or that they are satisfied in working by receiving the adequate response to the physical, mental, social, and economical wants; thus, they will live their lives happily.

Whatever may be the interpretation, Quality of Work Life is most debated and debatable topic to both employer and employees. One of the reasons for the growing importance of Quality of Work Life could be the realization on the part of employees about their rights and growing unionism. Workers are no more illiterate. They do not completely depend upon the mercy of management for their existence. Most of the lower level workers also have primary education. Thanks to the efforts of the government in this regard. They are more united now than ever. Each and every worker tends to join some union or the other for their own protection and well being. Unions put in, all their efforts to educate its members to realize their rights and also to what they can expect from management in return of what they contribute.

It is not only monetary benefits, though monetary benefit still occupy the first place in the list of elements like physical working conditions, job reconstructing and job-redesign, career-development, promotional opportunities, etc., are also gaining importance rapidly. As such, the workers expect the management to improve all these facilities which thereby, improve quality of work life.

When organizations provide good Quality of Work Life, employees concentrate more on their individual and group-development. The Management can get their attention with their high motivation and morale which paves way for rapid and smooth Human Resource Development.
3.3 QWL Relationship to Key Organizational Variables

Quality of Work Life programmes when assessed, reveal their effects on the different HRM variables of an organization. Some attempt has been made to evaluate the outcome of such programmes.

“Quality of Work Life” and employee performance often go hand-in-hand. For one thing, most conditions that contribute to performance (like equitable salaries, financial incentives and effective employee selection) will also contribute to the QWL. In fact, every personnel-related action affects the QWL in some way. This is illustrated in Table 3.1.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Management Activity</th>
<th>Effect on the Quality of Work Life</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Job Analysis</td>
<td>Finding out what human requirements are necessary so that people with the necessary skills and aptitudes can be placed into jobs where they can perform best and be satisfied.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>Placing the right person on the right job should provide that person with a more satisfying, rewarding (and motivating) experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Job Evaluation</td>
<td>Having adequate, equitable wages is a major consideration of most people in defining the quality of their work life.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Job Enrichment</td>
<td>By tapping “higher-order” needs to encourage the employees to grow and use all his or her abilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Safety and Health</td>
<td>A safe, healthy work environment is an obvious element contributing to the QWL.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Grievance Procedure</td>
<td>Helps protect employee rights and dignity and therefore contributes to the QWL.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Equal Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>Protects rights of minority workers and thereby contributes to their QWL.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The Reward System</td>
<td>Adequate rewards; wages that are equitable externally and internally and individuality- of incentive systems and benefits, for instance.</td>
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3.4 Human Relations Movement

The “Human relations” movement became popular in the 1940s, when much attention began to be paid to the workers’ needs and in realizing the importance of human beings in total productivity. This approach was a significant departure from the “Taylorian Scientific Management” approach.

Human relations movement was mainly concentrated with inter – personal and group – relationships among workers and advocated participatory and democratic style of supervision to achieve work effectiveness. Maslow (1954), Hertzberg (1959) and McGregor (1960), were all in this important movements and members of Human Relations School who contributed towards this view.

Quality of Work Life has its roots in the theories of Maslow, Hertzberg and McGregor. The needs for fulfillment as that of Abraham Maslow’s motivational theory of need hierarchy are comparable with those of the factors of Quality of Work Life. Basic needs like monetary benefits came first; good working conditions followed. Later comes, career planning, growth and development of human capabilities to satisfy.

Maslow’s esteem needs are comparable with opportunity to use and develop human capabilities. Lastly, challenging work is advocated by Walton to satisfy self challenging work in self actualization need in, need – hierarchy. Quality of Work Life concerns itself with satisfying both hygiene factors and motivators as identified by Hertzberg to improve the work life of employees. The assumptions of McGregor can be divided into two sets. i.e., Theory X and Y. Dealing with the Theory X’s assumptions about human nature, he comments that Management by direction and
control would not succeed as it is a questionable method for motivating people whose psychological and safety needs are reasonably satisfied and whose higher – level needs are becoming predominant.

Theory Y represents the democratic approach and gives to the employees’ scope for creativity and responsibility. Theory Y assumes that people are not by nature lazy and unreliable. Quality of Work Life assumes that all employees are basically active and reliable because of Theory Y. Thus, it is evident that the Quality of Work Life has had its origin in these theories of motivation.

3.5 Socio – Technical System

The basic feature of Socio – Technical System is the design of the organization that must be compatible with its objectives in order to adapt to change and be capable of using the creative capacities of the individual. A system should be provided to the people for an opportunity to participate in the design of the jobs. They are required to perform as per Cherns (1979)\(^\text{157}\). The objectives should be specific; specification of tasks, allocation of tasks to job, job roles and specification of methods of obtaining them should be minimum. The employees, given specific objectives, should be able to plan and design their own activities. They should be able to recheck and inspect their own work. This enables them to learn from their own mistakes. The role of supervisors should be confined to boundary activities like ensuring resources to the employee, coordinating with other departments and forecasting likely–changes and informing them to the employees, etc.,

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The organizational design should ensure high Quality of Work Life. The six psychological requirements of working people which were advocated by Emery and Thorsurd (1969)\textsuperscript{158} should be taken care of while designing the organization of these factors.

A whole organization is re-designed to serve the needs of people as well as production. It is called a social technical work system. This requires changes in social-technical work system. This requires changes of a major magnitude, particularly in manufacturing that has been designed along specialized lines. The entire production process may require re-engineering in order to free it from the assemble line. Similarly, the layouts may require changes to permit team work.

Calico mills in Ahmedabad have imported automatic looms, with the manifest objective of rising production. But, instead of rising production the new technology created stress and strain in the system, thereby raising the problems for management and workers.

Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London and A.K. Rice, Chairman for Applied Social Research at the above Institute, came to India and carried out re-organization of the tasks and occupational roles in the Calico mills in such a manner that it resulted in integrated small work group. The new socio-technical system gave the workers security and the protection of small group membership which they had lost on being asked to work alone on automatic loom.

The scope of Quality of Work Life movement which originally included only job redesign efforts based on the socio-technical system approach has gradually widened very much so as to include a wide variety of intervention.

The important among these are, Job enrichment, Stress management, Job satisfaction, Promotion and Career Planning, Quality circles, Suggestions Schemes, Employee participation, Empowerment, Autonomous work team, Flexible Organisation Structure, Socio-Technical Work System

3.6 Development of Quality of Work Life Programmes in India and Experiences of USA, Europe, Japan, Australia

In this era, quality of human inputs is the greatest asset to any organization. Maintaining the quality of such human inputs rises from maintaining the quality of work life perfectly. Rise in the quality of work life would help employees’ well being and contribute to the well being of the whole organization. This research is an attempt to study the quality of work life of steel plant employees in Tamil Nadu. Legislation enacted in early 20th century to protect employees from job-injury and to eliminate hazardous working conditions, followed by the unionization movement in the 1930 and 1940s were the initial steps. Emphasis was given to job security, due to process at the work place and economic gains for the workers.

The 1950s and the 1960s saw the development of different theories by psychologists proposing a “positive relationship between morale and productivity”, and the possibility that improved human relations would lead to the enhancement of both. Attempts at reform to acquire equal employment opportunity and job enrichment schemes also were introduced. Finally, in the 1970s the ideal of QWL was
conceived which, according to Walton, is broader than these earlier developments and is something that must include ‘ the values that were at the heart of these earlier reform movements’ and ‘human needs and aspirations’. The theories of motivation and leadership provided a sound base for the concept of QWL. If the lower-order needs are satisfied, people seek satisfaction for the higher-order needs

The term quality of work life appeared in research journal only in 1970’s. It is not only monetary aspects that a modern employee concerns himself with but also conditions of employment, interpersonal conflicts, role conflicts, role conflicts, job pressure, lack of freedom of work and absence of challenging work etc. As the style of management has changed for paternalistic and democratic, as the expectations of employees with an impending need to achieve more and more productivity and efficiency, employees look forward to the conductive and congenial working conditions and favorable terms and employment. As such productivity and efficiency of an organization largely depend upon the quality of work life provided by the organization.

Sinha 159 observes that the hard realities like acute poverty, high unemployment, huge foreign debt, high disparity between the poor and the rich sections of society, etc., make some people doubt the relevance of the concept. He further adds, in India, a man is seldom judged by what work he does. More often, the criteria are; how he is related with others, e.g., family and friends, how willing he is to make sacrifices for his sons. Sinha suggests that the most important indicator of quality of work life in India is the extent of fulfillment of the basic needs of man followed by the reduction of the enormous economic disparity between the haves and

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have-nots. This ultimately leads to more commitment to job and resultant increase in productivity which we desperate need in order to meet the basic requirement of our society.

Ahmed, an expert in this field, has observed that the Indian workers prefer to find some positive actions from Management side so far as implementation of the ideas generated by them is concerned and that can certainly be done, if Management means business. Minutes of meetings are not really the things about which the workers are interested. There is every reason to believe that in the Indian Industrial Sector (including the public sector also) is definitely possible to react fast to the worker’s ideas on work improvements and related matters. Quality of work Life programmes do not seem to take off unless unions are strong. In this connection, Ahmed has observed that most of the workers unions in India seem to have very little positive power. He further felt that the Government should clarify its attitudes vis-à-vis Quality of Work Life programme. In his opinion, as long as the government is not an interfering one, things will move smoothly but it will really require a determined (workers/employees) Union management team committed to go through the entire Quality of Work Life process. Recently Governments have made some efforts to involve in maintenance of Quality of Work Life through their legislations, even while some legislation creates more problems than offering solutions.

It seems that Ahmed prefers to depend more on managerial employees for initiating and improving Quality of work Life programmes in our industrial organizations rather than on the unions or the government. In our country, recently many changes have been introduced in the government policies like privatization.

The people in India generally are unadaptoive to anything which is new; initial apathy is evident in adopting anything which is new no matter how it improves the ability of the organization. The Management tends to stick on to the traditional methods of getting work done from the employees. As such, they did not take any measures to improve Quality of Work Life for a long time.

The employees, the workers, in India are also not educated in general. They do not have much logical power. There is also a tendency as said earlier, to stick on to the old rather than adopt something new. Some of the unions felt that the measures for improving Quality of Work Life by the management is nothing but getting more work done by the workers with no longer costs.

Improving Quality of Work Life also involves considerable amount to be spent by the management. The employers were initially hesitating to spend extra money. This has given negative attitude to employers. Now, both Management and workers are realizing the importance of Quality of Work Life. In fact, Quality of Work Life has become a buzzword in the industries these days and even laymen talk about it. Quality of Work Life is referred to as humanizing the working life and emphasizing the human factor.

The USA can be taken as pioneer in developing thoughts, ideas and identifying various dimensions of Quality of Work Life. Richard Walton, an American Professor, played a major role in developing the concept of Quality of Work Life. The eight factors he proposed to measure Quality of Work Life has made the task easy worldwide. These factors have been mostly used in measuring quality of Work Life.
The experience of the famous General Motors is to be presented while discussing Quality of Work Life in USA. General Motors used to face labour problems like high ration of absenteeism and labour turnover and also high cost of operations. The employee-employer relations were marked with fear and mistrust. On the whole, environment was not healthy and the production rapidly declined. The management was worried and desired a solution. Finally, they decided to launch Quality of Work Life programme involving 3800 workers and supervisors. This programme emerged from an agreement between the United ‘Auto Workers’ Union and General Motors in 1973.

The actual programme was started in 1977 with the objectives of developing the concept of Quality of Work Life.

- determining plans and functions of both Management and Union
- acquiring problem-solving skills.

The story of General Motors itself talks about future Quality of Work Life in USA. The major organizations like Fork and Chrysler have taken up Quality of Work Life improvement programmes subsequently.

This programme which was initially started at Tarry Town Plan gave excellent results like improved productivity, improved quality and also improved labour-management relations. This success made General Motors to practice the same programme throughout its plants which produced outstanding results. Today, the world’s largest manufacturing organizations follow General Motors practices on quality of work life.
Another experience is that American telephone and telegraph company (AT&T) made an agreement with communications workers of America in early 1980s with a massive involvement of about half a million workers. Some of the interesting points which came out in a subsequent survey were: Union leaders felt that Quality of Work Life improvement projects require them to gain new skills and knowledge; Union leaders also felt that intra-union rivalry may delay the process; Both Management and Unions felt that products such as this require team-word, trust and co-ordination; They also felt that Quality of Work Life improvement programmes are meant to strengthen their organization; Over 80 per cent of employees volunteered to participate in the programme.

A few federal agencies like National Centre for Productivity and Quality of Working Life as well as some other centres are working towards the spreading and developing the concept of Quality of Work Life.

Japan has effectively introduced various management concepts and techniques, mostly developed in the west. But Japan has also successfully operationalised some basic human values in the managerial world, honesty, adherence to discipline, sincerity, loyalty towards the organizations. The efforts made to improve upon the Quality of Work Life in Japanese industrial sphere have come to be successful due to timely and continuous applications of technological innovations like: Aggressive capital formation and investment policies; Financial systems provided by the major banking institutions through market research product development; Careful cultivation of both domestic and foreign markets; Effective and flexible management structure for decision making; Highly trained, motivated and
flexible labour force; Continuous retirement of production techniques quality improvements and effective resource utilization.

Moreover, the Japanese approach to Quality of Work Life improvement has two implications i.e. flexible employment of the workforce and acceptance by the employees of technological changes. Because of job security in the large firms and the managerial philosophy, that an employee is trained for the company rather than for the job, the possibility of developing a narrow occupational-orientation is less. Now, in Japan, job-integration and self-management in the area of work organization are playing a vital role.

Qualities of Work Life programmes have won the increasing support from Management, Unions and government agencies. These programmes emphasize the development of climate that is concerned about the impact of work on people as well as organizations’ effectiveness and emphasize participation in problem-solving and decision-making, leading to the development of the economy.

**West Germany** has been increasingly concerned itself with the problems of working conditions by initiating concentrated measures and programmes. This is because of the developments in the country in the early seventies. The concentration was a problem of industrial workers, particularly those from basic and metal processing industries. After 1976, the attention was on future orientation of the programmes and the priority was in the contents of such programmes.

In the **United Kingdom** important programmes and early initiatives were taken during the First World War. The very basis of Quality of Work Life emerged in the United Kingdom because of the initiatives of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Changing economic environment due to the impact of world war, changing
technology and changing political environment due to increased Government
intervention brought in changes in industrial scene of the country, which initiated
improved co-operation and trust between Management and Workers, which paved the
way for practices of Quality of Work Life in the United Kingdom. The Work
Resource Unit has claimed that it had surveyed some schemes/arrangements in work-
places relating to job rotation, Job-enlargement, job-enrichment and autonomous
work groups. These schemes have been tried out in different types of industries like
chemical, food beverage, engineering, electrical, paper and printing, etc.

As an important step, major restructuring of job tasks was made in order to
motivate the employees to work as a team. More decision-making power was
delegated to the workers vis-à-vis their jobs as well as the overall running of the plant
generally. That resulted in increased commitment and morale slackness and
absenteeism declined by 50 per cent and plant-testing time was reduced by 75 per cent
and processing costs were saved to a significant extent.

In Australia, Emery and Emery using Socio-technical design ideas developed
workshop-design where intercompany group leaving could take place. This was
called the search conference method. Several companies in Australia also undertook
experiment and redesigned their systems.

Italy is the scene of high attention paid towards Quality of Work Life in early
1970s. Then decline in attention began during later years of 1970s as they perceived
Quality of Work Life as a “peripheral problem”. In recent years, the Government of
Italy is again taking all steps to increase Quality of Work Life consciousness among
organizations with set up of organizations like Olivetti, Fiat, Proctor and Gamble,
IBM, Philips and practising Quality of Work Life improvement programmes.
In Europe, participation in organizational decisions by workers, either, directly or through representatives, is frequently required by law. But the extent of worker influence still varies, several examples of worker participation programmes will be discussed here, but they serve only to illustrate some of the many forms this cooperation can take. There, probably are as many firms of cooperative decision-making as there are decisions. At present, industries all over the world are conscious of their social responsibilities and have undertaken improved social security scheme, systematic manpower planning, training programmes, etc., to improve the image of their organization in the society.

India is not lagging far behind, but in the private sectors many things are still desirable. It may sound paradoxical but we have to point out here that this factor shaped by the upbringing of an average Indian. The society in India, especially the family is dominated by bureaucratic thinking.

The Indian workers and their Unions are now on the defensive. They are now more interested in the question of how to retain their jobs than in the question of how to improve their Quality of Life in the work place. It is therefore not difficult to understand why the question of improving Quality of Work Life has lost its importance in our country. The Quality of Work Life Movement which draws “attention to workers” need for meaningful and satisfying work and for participation in decisions that affect their work situation. And work is a major formation experience which can either promote or limit a man’s growth in ways which affect the whole man and which therefore shape his life outside the job as well as within it.

Now-a-days, there is no balance between the family and work life due to job pressure and conflicting interests and over-socialization that lead to too much of
interest about the co-workers for satisfaction of their ego, creating problems in the minds of neighbours’. The work-norms imposed on workers created too much of burden and control by their bosses. And the rules are for workers or employees. They have to follow and the employer has right to lay-off the worker due to marketing and technological factors.

In India, recently many changes have been introduced in the Government policies like privatization. The Government organizations are mismanaged incurring heavy loss on public money either due to corruption by bureaucrats’ or intervention of politicians and Trade Union leaders and their affiliated political parties with the motive of winning elections. The scope for transfer of technology has increased and inflow of investments from non-resident Indians allowed. The privatization creates many avenues for many unemployed people by reducing severity of the problem. Hence, it is absolutely necessary to improve the work environment leading to an improvement in the Quality of Work Life of our country.

The restricting of jobs and work in the organizations impact Quality of Work Life. However, Indian companies are guided by an important assumption that under developed countries have largely not been able to solve the question of social and economic justice and therefore the focus is not shifted to workers inner life, as that there exists high degree of inequality in these societies.

The workers are to be allowed to participate in decision-making at the job level, otherwise, civic competence and skills of their workers may be affected in job involvement. The other components of work life are differences in the wage payments or high income inequality causes hostility and resentment. The fruits of development are to be distributed among the workers. So, the re-designing jobs and organizations
on socio-technical principles are to be adopted. The socio-technical approach to job design is concerned with the interface of the harmony between personnel, social and technological functioning.

The Quality of Work Life becomes relevant in developing countries like India, because, in a developing country the Quality of Work Life can become both ends and means. It is an end in itself; it is a highly significant component in the Quality of Life, the goal of development. It is a means because the experience of participation in the decision-making at the work place and of progressive learning-help. Workers acquire the civic competencies and skills on which a country developing in the social democratic made must rely.

The specific issues relating to Quality of Work Life are pay and stability of employment, occupational stress, organizational health programmes, alternative work schedules, participative management and control of work, recognition, congenial worker-supervisor relations, grievance procedure, adequacy of resources, seniority and merit in promotion, employment on permanent basis. The managers in-charge of human resource have to build and maintain Quality of Work Life by providing a wide range of fringe benefits and full security which will improve productivity, reduce absenteeism and alienation of employees.

### 3.7 Quality of Work Life in Indian Steel Industry

Quality of work Life has various dimensions which include improvement in work conditions leading to a better Quality of Life, fair compensation, job security, etc. The conceptual categories that together make up the quality of work are:

1) Nature of Job, 2) Compensation of Employees, 3) Working Conditions,

The general perception is that improvement in Quality of Work Life costs much to the organization. But it is not so, as improvement over the existing salary, working conditions and benefits will not cost much, because the rate of increase in productivity would be higher than the cost of Quality of Work Life. Thus increase in Quality of Work Life results in increase in productivity. Improved Quality of Work Life leads to improved performance means not only physical output but also the behavior of the workers in helping his colleagues in solving job related problems, team spirit and accepting temporary unfavorable work conditions without complaints.

The Quality of Work Life intends to develop enhance and utilize human resource effectively, to improve quality of products, services, productivity and reduce cost of production per unit of output and to satisfy the workers psychological needs for self-esteem, participation and recognition, etc.,

Improving the Quality of Work Life is a process by which an organization attempts to unlock the creative potential of its people by involving them in decisions affecting their work life.

The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and JSW Steel Limited are the biggest steel producers in our country. The workers are facing some problems like poor working conditions, environmental pollution, low salaries, competition, particularly after the liberalization programme in the New Economic Policy 1991.
In this context, it is necessary to satisfy the employees in steel units to achieve new standards through providing them good quality of work life. Further, modernization of these firms attempted to enhance production and improve the quality products to withstand global competition. This in-turn may result in job pressure on the employees. The present study may help the steel industries and decision makers to identify the intensity and magnitude of the problems and thereby enable them to design suitable plan for improving the performance and productivity in the Indian steel industries by taking suitable Quality of Work Life programmes.