After conducting a survey by administering questionnaire to different respondents, the following findings have been traced on the basis of the opinions of the respondents.

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. **Human resource planning (HRP):** Human resource planning is determining the required kind and number of employees and determines the action plan for all the functions of personnel management. 73 percent of the respondents opined that South Central Railway maintains a proper human resource planning for the smooth functioning of its activities and to meet the challenges in future.

2. **Recruitment and selection:** 71 percent of the respondents have opined that the recruitment policy is fair and selection procedure is transparent as recruitment and selection of a candidate is based on the examinations and the interviews conducted by the railway board. The policy in respect of all cadres will ensure transparency and reduces legal complications against the selection.

3. **Placement:** Most of the respondents have opined that placement of the candidates on the jobs is not proper as the employees are being rotated on different jobs. Due to different vacancies in the organisation, it is must for the employees to adjust themselves with the other works which they have not assigned for.

4. **Training:** 83 percent of the respondents have opined that Training programme in South Central Railway serve the purpose. Group A, group B employees are satisfied with the training programme as it helps in enhancing their skills and knowledge on the job they have assigned for, but few group C, and group D employees are not completely satisfied and expect more training.

5. **Compensation:** 78 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR makes justice in compensation and it is according to the policies of Wage and Salary administration.

6. **Safety measures:** 78 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the safety measures taken by the organisation. An approach to safety includes safety policy, safety training and communication, awareness campaigns, safety advertisements, safe environment, safety committee, accident investigation and research, evaluation of safety effort, uniform to the shop floor workers etc.
7. 78 percent of the respondents have opined that the organisation taking care of employees working at the shop floor.

8. Basic amenities: 82 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the basic amenities provided by SCR. Group A and group B employees are happy with the basic amenities and different welfare measures provided to them where as lower employees are not fully satisfied with the welfare amenities provided due to various technical causes.

9. Social responsibility: 85 percent of the respondents have opined that the organisation function as a social responsible unit. Employees have stated South Central Railway provides emphasis on social responsibility, it extends its special care to senior citizens, reservation for women passengers, pure drinking water in all the stations, cleanliness in stations, toilets and bio-toilets, hygienic food, wheelchairs for differently disabled, escalators, environment protection, etc. They have also expressed that SCR follows reservation policy strictly while recruiting for different positions.

10. Conflicts management: 63 percent of the respondents have opined that conflicts among the workers are solved successfully, rest of the employees have opined that the conflicts not solved are solved in-time, they have also opined that employee union plays a major role in protecting the employees.

11. Unions: Majority of the employees have opined that unions also actively participate in solving the conflicts and disputes to a greater extent and hence unions promote and protect the interest of its members through collective actions such as collective bargaining, resolving the grievances relating to working conditions, pay and benefits, disciplinary actions, etc. hence unions are meant for the welfare of the workers.

12. Work life balance: 68 percent of the respondents are able to balance between their home and working lives i.e., their personal and professional life (work life balance) as they are provided with all the facilities to a greater extent where as lower level employees are not able to balance between their home and working lives due to low salary, less benefits etc.
13. 71 percent of the respondents have agreed that compensation fulfill basic and social needs. Employees belonging to group A and group B are satisfied with the compensation which includes pay, dearness allowances, rewards, incentives and bonus and also the different perks and monetary benefits provided. Group C employees are not satisfied with the compensation, they opined that the wages paid to them is no way commensurate with the work they do everyday. As such they are forced to borrow loans and advances from the banks and private money lenders at higher rate of interest to meet the daily requirements. Hence they feel it is difficult to fulfill basic and social needs of self and their dependents.

14. 71.3 percent of the respondents have opined that they get extra allowances for over time work, thus they work overtime whenever needed.

15. Work environment: 82.3 percent of the respondents opined that SCR provides safe and healthy working environment. It conducts training on safety and health related issues, awareness campaigns. It also conducts training for employees at floor level with special care.

16. Safety training: 86.5 percent of the respondents opined that safety training at South Central Railway is compulsory and reduces the risk of accidents. Safety training aims to prevent work-related injuries and accidents, smooth functioning of the railways, awareness campaigns, and safety advertisements to the employees and also to the public.

17. 80 percent of the respondents opined that SCR also ensures that the machineries and equipments cause no harm and minimizes the risk of hazards and illness. They also agreed that they are working in a safer environment; they are not exposed to hazardous areas, and dangerous works.

18. 81.3 percent of the respondents have agreed that they are free from hazards and illness as SCR takes care of employees’ safety at all the level hence employees are satisfied with the safety management in South Central Railway. The main purpose of effective safety programme in an organisation is to prevent work-related injuries and accidents, no physical hazards such as equipment hazards, and fire hazards etc.
19. Employees in major stations are happy with different facilities, like ventilation, cleanliness, drinking water, sitting arrangements, equipments, tools, material, building, house keeping etc provided to them, where as employees in smaller stations are not happy with most of the technical causes or improper facilities under they are working.

20. Relaxation: 78 percent of the respondents opined that they get time for relaxation in between the work when there is no much work to do, thus it creates a sense of comfort to the employees on their jobs.

21. Women employees today constitute a major share of the workforce; they handle both soft and hard jobs. The principle of equal pay for equal work has more or less become the rule now in most of the industries. 73 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR ensures protection for women and children. Women employee gets equal pay for equal work, safety work environment, and maternity leaves as per the government policy etc., and thus most of the women employees are satisfied with their work in the organisation.

22. Half of the respondents are not happy with the health care facilities provided because there are hospitals/dispensaries only in bigger stations and city areas but employees placed at smaller and very smaller stations do not have health care facilities, they don’t even have proper first aid facility; hence they are forced to go to private hospitals.

23. Housing is the primary need for workers’ family in civilized life. As for as accommodation or housing facilities is concerned 73.8 percent of the respondents opined that the housing/accommodation is very good for group A and group B employees with all facilities like water, cleanliness, sanitation, greenery, spacious space, electricity, location etc, thus they have good standard of living in cities where as for the lower level employees most of these facilities are lacking and most of them are staying in old quarters without proper facilities.

24. It is also found that the group D employees are transferred to other places/states without any accommodation; hence they are staying away from their families and facing difficulty for the food and stay.
25. Educational facilities: A scheme of workers’ education promotes literacy among workers. SCR provides education facilities for most of the employees and their children through railway schools, colleges are set up by the railways or government. Employees satisfied with the quality of education provided by railways.

26. SCR has good sports facility only in some major stations. E.g., Vijayawada has a big stadium and the employees here are motivated to be a part of different sports. It is found that SCR conducts games and sports at zonal level, state level and national level to boost the capability of employees in sports with various prizes and awards. There are many employees who have participated and won prestigious awards in state level, national level and international level the field of games and sports.

27. 72 percent of the respondents opined that the canteen facility provided is satisfactory and they are at subsidized rate in major stations. Railway canteens maintain cleanliness and hygiene food in canteens where as in very smaller stations\village level stations canteens are not properly maintained or canteen facility is absent.

28. Half of the respondents opined that SCR does not give much scope for further learning and skill utilization.

29. Most of the respondents are not satisfied with the career-planning programme, hence there is no scope for growth and development of advancement in their career.

30. 64.8 percent of the respondents opined that the SCR does not ensure career growth of the employees.

31. Autonomy: 73 percent of the respondents opined that autonomy is given for them on their jobs, so they feel comfortable to work in the organisation by designing their own way to work if necessary which is more efficient and more productive.

32. Job Satisfaction: 87.8 percent of the respondents are satisfied with their jobs in SCR and they feel proud of being an employee of SCR. They expressed their happiness over the working environment, different amenities provided to them,
fair salary/wages, fair treatment, and equal opportunities and their relation with their co-workers.

33. **Job Security**: Most of the employees are satisfied with the security of employment provided by SCR except employees working on contractual basis and wage earners as they are not the permanent employees of SCR.

34. 63.3 percent of the respondents are disagreeing with the statement that SCR motivates employees to achieve higher targets and challenging jobs.

35. 52.8 percent of the respondents are dissatisfied with the statement that SCR develops socio-technical system to ensure growth.

36. Feedback and corrective actions are two important factors to help the employee for self-improvement. It is found that half of the respondents have opined that SCR does not provide feedback and take corrective actions regularly.

37. 81.8 percent of the respondents opined that SCR does not give any scope for succession possibilities in the organisation.

38. 54.8 percent of the respondents opined that they are rewarded and identified for their work in the organisation.

39. SCR motivates the employees with talents in their interested fields, for example games and sports; SCR encourages employees interested in games and sports and help them to actively participate in sports on behalf of the organisation, and such employees are recognized, awarded and rewarded by the railways.

40. **Social Integration**: SCR ensures social integration in the workplace as employees work in collaborative and supportive manner which shows good interpersonal relationship among workers working in different levels.

41. Employees have opined that inter personal relationship between superiors and subordinates is congenial as such the dispute is reduced. There is a provision where employees’ grievances are addressed by the managers concerned.

42. 82.3 percent of the respondents have opined that openness and participative management is restricted only to top management, to some extent the management may allow employee unions in participation but it may or may not consider the views of the employees for making decisions.
43. Egalitarianism: Rights and opportunities are important for all for the growth and development. It is found that 72 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR supports egalitarianism i.e., equal rights and opportunities to all.

44. 89.3 percent of the respondents have strongly agreed that SCR is governed by the rule of law. Its operations, activities are according to the rules and regulations of the government and law.

45. Organisation is a group of employees with different religion or social class, caste, creed, gender working together with mutual understanding and mutual support. 72.5 percent of the respondents have strongly agreed that all employees are treated in the same way as others, irrespective of the sex, race, religion or social class, which shows that there is no discrimination.

46. 63.3 percent of the respondents have opined that they have equitable treatment in all matters of the importance on the job which satisfy each and every employee in SCR.

47. Ethos and values: Majority of the employees strongly agreed that SCR has its own ethos and values, its operations and activities are ethical in nature.

48. Flexi work schedules or flexitime: It increases individual autonomy in work scheduling. It is found that SCR does not give any scope for flexi work schedules at any levels.

49. Frequent travels hamper the personal life of an employee. 70 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR ensures no frequent travels to employees.

50. 59 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR encourages recreational and cultural activities only in major stations. It is found that in some small stations there are no recreational and cultural activities and employees themselves conduct cultural activities to some extent; hence these employees are not satisfied with cultural and recreational activities of SCR.

51. Social Relevance: 69 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR has great concern for the society thus act as social responsible unit by providing its best service to the society ethically, without harming the society and the environment thus railways are regarded as ‘life line of a country’.
52. 66.3 percent of the respondents have opined that SCR enhance the self esteem and well being of its employees

**Demographic profile**

53. 73 percent of the respondents are male and 27 percent of the respondents are female.

54. 48 percent of the respondents belong to age group of below 25 years, 29 percent of the respondents belong to age group of 25-40 years and 23 percent of the respondents belong to age group of above 40 years.

55. 43 percent of the respondents are graduates, 37 percent of the respondents have studied upto PUC and less than PUC, and 19 percent of the respondents are post graduates.

56. 45 percent of the respondents have experience of below 10 years, 45 percent of the respondents have experience between 10-20 years and 10 percent of the respondents are having experience above 20 years.

57. 44 percent of the respondents belong to D group, 39 percent of the respondents belong to C group, 14 percent of the respondents belong to B group and 2 percent of the respondents belong to a group.

58. 48 percent of the respondents earn salary below 10,000, 31 percent of the respondents earn salary between 10,000-30,000 and 20 percent of the respondents earn above 30,000.

59. 69 percent of the respondents are married and 31 percent are unmarried.
**SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the above findings the researcher has offered the following suggestions which help to improve the quality of work life of employees in South Central Railway (SCR).

1. Human resource planning must be used as a basis to fill the vacant positions in SCR, it will help in procuring the right employees for right job and at the right time to cope with the challenges.

2. It is suggested that SCR should fill the vacant positions and placement of the employees on the jobs must be taken care of because some respondents have opined that placement of the employees on the jobs is not proper as there are many vacancies in various departments, which is forcing the employees to adjust themselves with other jobs.

3. SCR should clearly explain the duties and responsibilities of each employee in the organisation. For this purpose a human resource consultant must be engaged who in turn will look at the existing job description and redesign it without giving scope for ambiguity.

4. Employees must be trained on the technological advancements so that employees can work happily on their jobs without any stress relating to technological advancements.

5. SCR should arrange training programme on ethical issues and also customer/passenger care periodically to sensitize employees about the relevance of ethics, ethos and values.

6. Adequate and fair compensation would act as a strong motivating factor to enhance productivity of employees thus making right payments at the right time would be more fruitful.

7. According to Maslow’s theory of hierarchical needs of motivation, the compensation paid should take care of different needs of the hierarchy. Compensation covers basic needs and physiological needs. It is the duty of SCR to fulfill the social needs by extending the required compensation to meet the expenses of the employees.
8. Some of the respondents are not happy with the wage/salary paid to them. They opined that the wages paid to them is no way commensurate with the work they do everyday. Hence such issues must be resolved to protect the interest of the workers.

9. It is suggested that salary should be revised periodically and due consideration may be given to cost of living, health care and other personal problems.

10. Safety measures at the work place must be given first priority to ensure employees are safe on their jobs. Safety measures for the employees and also passenger must taken care of at all the stations and ensure accident free work environment.

11. Some of the employees are not satisfied with the basic amenities and labour welfare measures provided by SCR. Labour welfare measures will improve the morale and increases the feeling of security that will in turn affect the personnel effectiveness in an organisation. So the organisation should take measures to improve the labour welfare measures.

12. Conflicts among the employees must be resolved in time to prevent the smooth working of the organisation.

13. Most of the group C and group D employees are not able to balance between their personal and working lives (work life balance) hence it is suggested that SCR should make proper provisions to help employees to balance their personal and working lives through employee counseling, providing different benefits, amenities, facilities, rewarding them for their work, motivating them to achieve task etc., which enhance their living conditions and quality of work life.

14. Some of the group C and group D employees are not satisfied with the job environment and working conditions. Job environment and working conditions play a very important role in motivating the employees, so SCR must take some more steps to improve the job environment and working conditions.

15. SCR in its endeavor to promote productivity should extend exgratia to all employees without any discrimination.
16. There is need for extending social security and welfare measures in SCR due to employee demands, trade union demands, and employers’ preference and also to improve the human relations.

17. It is suggested that SCR must provide wellness programmes to help employees build lifestyles that will help them to achieve their full physical and mental potential.

18. Industrial hygiene must be taken into account to promote and maintain highest degree of physical, mental and social-well being of the employees.

19. Motivating employees with some award and reward is very essential to get the work done hence it is suggested that SCR should reward the employees with some awards, monetary benefits, fringe benefits to make them feel happy and contended and improve their financial and family conditions which in turn improves the quality of work life of employees.

20. Most of the respondents are not happy with the first aid, and health care/hospital facilities, SCR should encourage more and more health care/hospital in all the major and minor stations, so that employees can consult railway hospitals rather than private hospitals.

21. SCR should conduct health check ups and stress management programmes periodically, which would eliminate the distress.

22. Housing/accommodation is a basic need of every individual. SCR should focus on providing housing/accommodation to all the employees. SCR should build and renovate the railway quarters with all the basic requirements like drinking water, electricity, ventilation, toilets etc.

23. It is suggested that educational opportunity must be given to the employees who are interested in pursuing higher studies. Quality education must be provided to their children and their dependents. More railway schools, colleges and universities should be encouraged and opened.

24. Canteens facility must also be provided in the small stations with hygiene and cleanliness maintained and at subsidized rates.

25. Recreational facilities and cultural activities must be encouraged to all the employees to find out the hidden talent of employees and motivate them in their
interested fields. Picnics, get-together must also be organized which makes them feel more loyal to the organisation.

26. SCR should also encourage and conduct sports and games like cricket, foot ball, hockey etc.

27. There should be scope for further learning at all departments in the organisation because some of the respondents have opined that SCR does not give scope for further learning.

28. Some of the employees are not satisfied with the career-planning programme. SCR to retain its employees it must satisfy their innovate aspirations for growth, development and advancement in their career.

29. SCR must ensure career growth of employees by providing socio-technical systems, counseling, training and career development programmes to develop knowledge, new skills, and abilities to improve quality of work life of all the employees.

30. In an endeavor to step up quality of work life the SCR has to inject job security, so that it can attract right people at the right time to the right job which in turn contributes the quality of work life.

31. Ergonomics/human engineering helps the organisation to design the work place and the equipment/machines to be used focusing the comfort of the employees which reduce fatigue, monotony and boredom which are caused by lengthy and repetitive work.

32. Middle level, lower level employees, and their unions must also be allowed to take part in total work process and consider their views whenever needed to make them feel worth and empowered.

33. Flexi work schedules must also be considered to certain extent as flexi work schedules or flexitime increases individual autonomy in work scheduling.

34. The demands of the workers must be taken into account and proper provisions must be made to meet their demands.

35. SCR may adopt sound human resources practices to avoid exploitation of workers. So that employees will work with a sense of belongingness at the work place.
36. SCR has to promote the policy of transfer without any political intervention of any kind.

CONCLUSION

Quality of work life (QWL) is the ultimate objective of any organisation to be more productive and efficient. Core elements of Quality of work life are of working conditions, employee job satisfaction, quality circles, employees’ behavioral aspects, flexible work schedules, autonomous or self managed work teams, workers participation in management, growth and development etc.

Every organisation to sustain in the industry has to satisfy some of the basic needs and demands of its employees. Satisfied and motivated employees are the source of achieving the organisational goals and objectives. In order to use the maximum potential of the human resource, the organisation has to provide them with the best quality of their working life. Quality of Working Life is just not a concept that deals with one area but it has been observed as incorporating a hierarchy of concepts that not only include work-based factors such as job satisfaction, satisfaction with pay and relationships with work colleagues, but also factors that broadly focuses on life satisfaction and general feelings of well-being. The issue of QWL has become critical due to the increasing demands of today’s business environment and of the family structure. This gave rise to an increased interest in QWL not only in business but also for many professions and fields. Determining QWL always involves the interplay between and among the worker, job content, and job context.

Quality of work life programme must be implemented in companies not only to enhance productivity but also to increase employee identification and a sense of belonging and pride in their work. To survive in the competitive era many companies are using various QWL programs like flexible work schedules, flexible time, autonomous or self managed work teams, quality circles, workers participation in management etc. to be more productive in their operation and giving the best service. One can determine the success of any organisation based on the satisfaction level of employees employed, their performance and productivity and also by knowing how successful the company in implementing QWL programs is. Improving QWL can contribute directly to reducing
turnover and absenteeism thus leading to increase in productivity under some conditions, and help to create a well trained, loyal workforce that is willing and able to adapt to change.

The researcher has realized the importance of quality of work life hence undertaken the study on quality of work life in South Central Railway (SCR). The employee respondents in SCR exhibited a high level of quality of work life, except for specific dimensions, namely; succession possibilities, scope for further learning, upward mobility of employees etc. The views expressed by the respondents could help the researcher to identify South Central Railway in general, besides ascertaining the factors affecting QWL, employees work related aspects, and Quality of work life of employees in South Central Railway.

**SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the present study the following recommendations can be made for further research.

1. The similar study can be conducted in other zones of Indian Railways.
2. The similar study can be conducted on other aspects of Human Resource Management.
3. The similar study can be conducted on satisfaction level of passengers towards working of railways.
4. The similar study can be conducted on Quality of work life between public sector transportation and private sector transportation.