CHAPTER - III

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND TEXTILE INDUSTRY
IN TIRUPUR DISTRICT

3.1. Introduction

The changes taking place in the operating environment are enormous. We have been transformed to a great extent from an agricultural society, which we primarily were, to becoming an information savvy society with nuclear power. Technology has taken hold of the lives of all industrialized nations, electronic commerce has taken over business, and India is no exception. India has not only attained self-sufficiency in food but, we even export it to other countries by the use of technology that works for us. One cannot help but notice several changes currently occurring at the workplace. Chief among these is a diverse workforce, global organizations, changing customer and employee expectations, organizational ethics.¹

During the 1970s, much of the interest in work satisfaction and performance focused on the quality of working life. In his 1971 Labor Day address, President Nixon said, “In our quest for a better environment, we must always remember that the most important part of the quality of life is the quality of work, and the new need for job satisfaction is the key to the quality of work” (O’Toole, 1974, p. 712). This concern was heightened by changing attitudes toward work and a challenging of traditional work roles and career patterns, and by an influx of young people into the work force.²

Quality of work life is gaining increasing interest and importance in both industrialized as well as developing countries of the world. In India, its scope seems to be broader than the labor legislation enacted to protect the workers. It is more than a sheer work organization movement which focuses on job security and economic growth to the employees.³

3.1.1 Definition of Quality of Work Life (QWL)

The Quality of Working Life represents a consensus regarding the adequacy of such factors in an actual work situation.
A more formal definition says that Quality of Work Life is “the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in an organization” (Walton, 1974).

QWL is widely used to refer to “a philosophy of management that enhances the dignity of all workers, introduces changes in an organization’s culture and improves the physical and emotional well-being of employees (e.g., providing opportunities for growth and development”). Indicators of quality of work life include accident rates, sick leave usage, employee turnover, and number of grievances field.

3.1.2 Need for Quality of Work Life (QWL)

Work is an integral part of a person’s everyday life and it is a person’s livelihood or career or business. An average person spends around twelve hours daily in the work place. One third of a person’s entire life is spent in the workplace and it influences the overall quality of the person’s entire life. It should yield job satisfaction, give peace of mind, a fulfillment of having done a task as it is expected, without any flaw and having spent the time fruitfully, constructively and purposefully. Even if it is a small step towards a person’s lifetime goal, at the end of the day it gives satisfaction and eagerness to look forward to the next day.

Indian organizations are going for innovative practices to keep their employees happy. Even a business solution providing company promotes ROWE (Results Only Work Environment) culture within the organization. Some organizations have initiatives to provide timely assistance to the employees in a crisis situation rising out of financial or personal problems.

Quality of Work Life is specifically related to the level of happiness a person derives for his career. Each person has different needs when it comes to their careers, the quality level of their work life is determined by whether those needs are being met. While some people might be content with a simple minimum wage job as long as it helps pay the bills, others would find such a job to be too tedious or involve too much physical labour and would find such a position to be highly unsatisfactory. Thus, requirements for having a high" Quality of Work Life" vary from person to person. Regardless of their standards, those with a high Quality of Work Life generally make enough to live comfortably, find
their work to be interesting or engaging and achieve a level of personal satisfaction or fulfillment from the jobs that they do. In other words, employees who are generally happy with their work are said to have a high Quality of Work Life, and those who are unhappy or unfulfilled by their work are said to have a low Quality of Work Life.\(^8\)

Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, some people find themselves with a low Quality of Work Life. They may be forced to take a job they do not enjoy because of personal or financial circumstances such as a lack of options or education or qualifications. For those with a low Quality of Work Life who are unable or unwilling to change jobs, it is important to cope effectively with the situation. Unhappy employees can attempt to improve their Quality of Work Life by choosing to focus on the positive components of their jobs. A shift in mindset to focus on the benefits, even if those benefits are minimal, can improve the Quality of Work Life. Unhappy employees can also explore opportunities to speak to coworkers and management to remove factors that reduce the Quality of their Work Life, if possible depending on the job situation.

Better Quality of Work Life leads to increased employee morale. It minimizes attrition and checks labour turnover and absenteeism. There will be better communication and understanding among all employees leading to cordial relations. It enhances the brand image for the company as that, in turn, encourages entry of new talent into the company\(^9\).

### 3.1.3 Criteria of measuring QWL

The improvements in work conditions are leading to better Quality of Life, while others feel a fair compensation and job security should be emphasized. Walton (1975) proposes eight conceptual categories that together make up the Quality of Work Life. These are presented below.

- **Adequate and fair compensation**
  
  This refers to a just and fair balance between effort and reward. It includes such things as a fair job evaluation, training to perform the job reasonably, ability of the organization to pay, demand and supply of talent and skills and profit sharing. In summary, it should respond to whether the compensation helps in “maintaining a socially desirable standard of life” (adequate) and whether compensation “bears an
appropriate relationship to the pay received for other work” (fair). It may be useful to point out here that in India such labour legislations as payment of Wages Act, 1936 and Minimum Wages Act, 1948 ensure adequate and fair compensation to the employees.

- **Safe and healthy working conditions**
  In order to improve QWL, the work environment should be free from hazards or other factors detrimental to health and safety of the employees. Walton (1975) specifically refers to reasonable hours of work, zero risk, physical conditions of work and age restrictions on both lower and upper side. Once again, concern for safety in the work place in India is enshrined in the Factories Act, 1948 which lays down minimum standards of protection from machine and other hazards (noise, pollution, fume, gases) at the place of work.

- **Immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities**
  The work today has become repetitive and fragmented. The average worker often responds mechanically to the demands of machine without much control on them. QWL can be improved if the job allows sufficient autonomy and control, uses a wider range of skills and abilities, provides immediate feedback to workers to take corrective action, is seen as a total activity and provides opportunity to plan and implement by himself.

- **Opportunity for continued growth and security**
  Opportunities for promotions are limited in case of all categories of employees either due to educational barriers or due to limited openings at the higher level. QWL provides future opportunity for continued growth and security by expanding one’s capabilities, knowledge and qualifications.

- **Social integration in the work organization**
  One of the objectives of QWL is to generate satisfying identity with the organization and develop a feeling of self-esteem. The variables that inculcate these are absence of hierarchical status, opportunity for upward mobility, openness and trust, a sense of community feeling on the job, and freedom from prejudice based on
sex, caste, race, creed and religion. Once again Article 16 of the Indian Constitution guarantees equal opportunity of employment irrespective of race, creed, caste, religion and sex.

- **Constitutionalisation in the work organization**
  Enhanced QWL should also ensure zero violation of the constitutional guarantee by executive organizational decisions. Such guarantees as right to personal privacy free speech, equitable treatment and governance by the “Rule of Law” are necessary to improve QWL.

- **Work and the total life space**
  The demands of the work, like late hours, frequent travel, and quick transfers are psychologically and socially very costly to the employee and his family. Such phenomena occurring on a regular basis necessarily depress the QWL.

- **The social relevance of work life**
  The organization’s lack of concern for social causes, like waste disposal, low quality product, over aggressive marketing and employment practices make workers depreciate the value of their work and career which, in turn effects their self esteem. The social responsibility of the organization is an important determinant of QWL.

The eight criteria indicated above constitute the broad realm of Quality of Work Life. It is possible that all of them may not be relevant to all group of employees but irrespective of the criteria the underlying assumption which define the QWL is the individuals own experience of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. According to Takezawa (1976) “what constitute a ‘high’ Quality of Work Life may vary in relation to both the workers aspirations and the objective reality of the work and society. It is ultimately defined by the worker himself10.

The basic concept underlying the QWL is what has come to be known as “humanization of work”. It involves basically the development of an environment of work that stimulates the creative abilities of the workers, generates cooperation and interest in self-growth.
3.1.4 Principles of humanization of work

Herrick and Maccoby (1975) have identified four basic principles which summaries the humanization of work. These principles are briefly discussed below.

- **The principle of security**
  Humanization of work implies freedom from anxiety, fear and the loss of future employment. The working conditions should be safe and there should be no fear of economic want. These preconditions will guarantee utmost development of skills and ideas.

- **The principle of equity**
  Hostility is generated if there are substantial differences between efforts and rewards. The equity principle requires that there is a just way of evaluating the conditions of an employee. Another aspect of equity refers to paying for knowledge and skill to carry out the task and not for the task alone. If work has to be humanized, equity would also require sharing in the profits of the organization according to the individual or group contribution.

- **The principle of individuation**
  Individuation refers to the work environment in which employees are encouraged to develop themselves to their utmost competence, a system of work that facilitated blossoming of individual potential. A basic precondition for this is the availability of freedom and autonomy in deciding person’s own pace of activity and design of operations.

- **The principle of democracy**
  Akin to the principle of individuation, this also implies greater authority and responsibility vested into the work force. Interesting controls, close supervision and a general institutionalization inhibit humanization of work. Meaningful participation in decision-making also guarantees the “right of citizenship”.

  Quality of Work Life is a complex and multi-faced concept implying a concern for the member of an organization irrespective of the level they belong to. It includes job factors like wage and hours of work and also the nature of work itself⁴¹."
3.1.5 Measurement of QWL

There are few recognized measures of quality of working life and of those that exist, few have evidence of validity and reliability, that is, there is a very limited literature based on peer reviewed evaluations of available assessments. A recent statistical analysis of new measure are the Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL), The Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS) scale, The General well-being (GWB) scale, The WRQoL Stress at Work sub-scale (SAW), The Control at Work (CAW), The WRQoL Home-Work Interface scale (HWI) and The Working Conditions scale of the WRQoL. They are as follows

- **The Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL)**
  
  It indicates that this assessment device should prove to be a useful instrument, although further evaluation would be useful. The WRQoL measure uses six core factors to explain most of the variation in an individual’s quality of working life: Job and career satisfaction, working conditions, general well-being, home-work interface, stress at work and control at work.

- **The Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS) scale**
  
  The scale of the Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL) is said to reflect an employee’s feelings about, or evaluation of, their satisfaction or contentment with their job and career and the training they receive to do it. Within the WRQoL measure, JCS is reflected by questions asking how satisfied people feel about their work. It has been proposed that this positive job satisfaction factor is influenced by various issues including clarity of goals and role ambiguity, appraisal, recognition and reward, personal development, career benefits and enhancement and training needs.

- **The General well-being (GWB) scale**
  
  The scale of the Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL) aims to assess the extent to which an individual feels good or content in themselves, in a way which may be independent of their work situation. It is suggested that general well-being influences and is influenced by work. Mental health problems, predominantly depression and anxiety disorders, are common, and may have a major impact on the general well-being of the population. The WRQoL GWB factor assesses issues of mood, depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, general quality of life, optimism and happiness.
➤ The WRQoL Stress at Work sub-scale (SAW)

It reflects the extent to which an individual perceives they have excessive pressures and feel stressed at work. The WRQoL SAW factor is assessed through items dealing with demand and perception of stress and actual demand overload. Whilst it is possible to be pressured at work and not be stressed at work, in general, high stress is associated with high pressure.

➤ The Control at Work (CAW)

This subscale of the WRQoL scale addresses how much employees feel they can control their work through the freedom to express their opinions and being involved in decisions at work. Perceived control at work as measured by the Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL) is recognized as a central concept in the understanding of relationships between stressful experiences, behaviour and health. Control at work, within the theoretical model underpinning the WRQoL, is influenced by issues of communication at work, decision making and decision control.

➤ The WRQoL Home-Work Interface scale (HWI)

It measures the extent to which an employer is perceived to support the family and home life of employees. This factor explores the interrelationship between home and work life domains. Issues that appear to influence employee HWI include adequate facilities at work, flexible working hours and the understanding of managers.

➤ The Working Conditions scale of the WRQoL

It assesses the extent to which the employee is satisfied with the fundamental resources, working conditions and security necessary to do their job effectively. Physical working conditions influence employee health and safety and thus employee Quality of Working Life. This scale also taps into satisfaction with the resources provided to help people do their jobs.\textsuperscript{12}

3.1.6 Factors influencing the Quality of Work Life

There are many factors which can contribute to Quality of Work Life. It covers all aspects of worker’s life with special reference to his interaction with his work and his working environment. These factors influencing the quality of work life of employees as follows
Attitude

The person who is entrusted with a particular job needs to have sufficient knowledge, required skill and expertise, enough experience, enthusiasm, energy level, willingness to learn new things, dynamism, sense of belongingness in the organization, involvement in the job, inter personnel relations, adaptability to changes in the situation, openness for innovative ideas, competitiveness, zeal, ability to work under pressure, leadership qualities and team-spirit.

Environment

The job may involve dealing with customers who have varied tolerance level, preferences, behavioral pattern, level of understanding; or it may involve working with dangerous machines like drilling pipes, cranes, lathe machines, welding and soldering machines, or even with animals where maximum safety precautions have to be observed which needs lot of concentration, alertness, presence of mind, quick with involuntary actions, synchronization of eyes, hands and body, sometimes high level of patience, tactfulness, empathy, compassion and control over emotions.

Opportunities

Some jobs offer opportunities for learning, research, discovery, self-development, enhancement of skills, room for innovation, public recognition, exploration, celebrity-status and loads of fame. Others are monotonous, repetitive, dull, routine, no room for improvement and in every sense boring. Naturally the former ones are interesting and very much rewarding also.

Nature of job

A driller in the oil drilling unit, a diver, a fire-fighter, traffic policeman, train engine driver, construction labourers, welder, miner, lathe mechanic have to do dangerous jobs and have to be more alert in order to avoid any loss of limb, or loss of life which is irreparable; whereas a pilot, doctor, judge, journalist have to be more prudent and tactful in handling the situation; a CEO, a professor, a teacher have more responsibility and accountability but safe working environment; a cashier
or a security guard cannot afford to be careless in his job as it involves loss of money, property and wealth; a politician or a public figure cannot afford to be careless, for his reputation and goodwill is at stake. Some jobs need soft skills, leadership qualities, intelligence, decision making abilities, abilities to train and extract work from others; other jobs need forethought, vision and yet other jobs need motor skills, perfection and extreme carefulness.

➢ People

Everyone has to deal with three set of people in the work place. Those are namely boss, co-workers in the same level and subordinates. Apart from this, some professions need interaction with people like patients, media persons, public, customers, thieves, robbers, physically disabled people, mentally challenged, children, foreign delegates, gangsters, politicians, public figures and celebrities. These situations demand high level of prudence, cool temper, tactfulness, humor, kindness, diplomacy and sensitiveness.

➢ Stress level

All these above mentioned factors are inter-related and inter-dependant. Stress level need not be directly proportional to the compensation. Stress is of different types – mental stress/physical stress and psychological or emotional stress. A managing director of an organization will have mental stress, a labourer will have physical stress, and a psychiatrist will have emotional stress. Mental stress and emotional stress cause more damage than physical stress.

➢ Career prospects

Every job should offer career development. That is an important factor which decides the Quality of Work Life. Status improvement, more recognition from the management and appreciations are the motivating factors for anyone to take keen interest in the job. The work atmosphere should be conducive to achieve organizational goals as well as individual development. It is a win-win situation for both the parties; an employee should be rewarded appropriately for his good work, extra efforts, sincerity and at the same time a lethargic and careless employee should
be penalized suitably; this will motivate the former to work with more zeal and deter the latter from being so, and strive for better performance.

- **Challenges**

  The job should offer some challenges at least to make it interesting; That enables an employee to upgrade his knowledge and skill and capabilities; whereas the monotony of the job makes a person dull, non-enthusiastic, dissatisfied, frustrating, complacent, initiative – less and uninteresting. Challenge is the fire that keeps the innovation and thrill alive. A well-accomplished challenging job yields greater satisfaction than a monetary perk; it boosts the self-confidence also.

- **Growth and development**

  If an organization does not give chance for growth and personal development, it is very difficult to retain the talented personnel and also to find new talent with experience and skill.\(^1\)

  QWL in an organization is high when the benefits accrue to the individuals and to the organization. QWL form the perspectives of job design and the patterns of work scheduling. Obviously, if people differ in their needs, personality characteristics and expectations at the work place, there can hardly be “one best way “of designing jobs that would offer a high QWL to all employees. This is where the fit between the individual and job becomes important. First an examination of the different kinds of jobs that can be designed and then examination of the job-person fit is essential.\(^2\)

3.1.7 **Quality of Work Life and productivity**

“Quality of Work Life” encompasses aspects of good experiences and advantages for employees, the organization and the society at large. Among the various indices of the Quality of Work Life are such factors as job involvement, job satisfaction, sense of competence, job performance, productivity, organizational vitality, clean air with minimal pollution and product safety.

Job involvement indicates the extent of people’s identification with, or ego investment in, the job. The more central the job to the individual’s life, the more he or she
gets involved in it and therefore spends more time and energy at work. Job involved people
are interested in turning high quality of work and are motivated to put forth their best
efforts on the job. Research has shown that challenging jobs that require skill variety
influence employees to get involved in their jobs (Sekaran 1989). Correlates of job
involvement are such personality characteristics as achievement and high work ethic
values (Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977; Sekaran, 1977).

Job satisfaction indicates the positive affective responses of employees to their job
environment. More specifically, job satisfaction indicates employees’ satisfaction with (1)
the nature of the work they do (2) the quality of supervision they receive (3) the co-workers
(4) pay and (5) opportunities for promotion. Job satisfaction is correlated to job
characteristics (skill variety, autonomy) and job involvement. That is, when people are
involved in their jobs, they are also satisfied with them and when they experience more job
satisfaction, they are also satisfied with them and when they experience more job
satisfaction (Sekaran, 1985), they could emanate from role ambiguity, role conflict, and role
overload or role difficulty.

Sense of competence denotes the feeling of confidence in one’s own competence.
By engaging in work that calls for a variety of skills, abilities and talents, individuals gain
mastery over their work environment. As workers engage themselves more and more in
work activities, they acquire a greater sense of competence and experience higher levels of
job involvement, because the more competence they feel, the more motivated they are to
interact with the job, and hence become more involved in it. The greater the involvement,
the greater is their sense of competence. Thus, job involvement and a sense of competence
mutually reinforce each other. When both, sense of competence and involvement, are high,
employees’ level of satisfaction increases naturally as well (Sekaran, 1986). The following
exhibit depicts the relationships between job characteristics, motivation, sense of
competence and job satisfaction.
Job performance would also continue to improve as people’s level of involvement, competence and satisfaction increase. In essence, all the four factors are significantly correlated. Though it may be controversial as to whether performance causes satisfaction or satisfaction leads to better performance, one can safely state that when job involvement, sense of competence and job satisfaction are all present, as a natural corollary, job performance is likely to be high.

Productivity ensues when there is a fit among the predispositions of workers and the type of jobs they are assigned. Since job involvement, motivation, sense of competence and job satisfaction ensues due to congruence between the worker and the job, a high level of job performance manifests itself and increases the quality and quantity of output. When the same number of workers turns a larger quantum of output in the same period of time, productivity increases for the organization as well. When high quality, safe products and services are the outcomes, society itself benefits.
Good job designing results in a high quality of work life for individuals, the organization and the society. It therefore becomes important that managers pay attention to job design. If the skills, abilities, experience, training and personality dimensions such as tolerance for ambiguity, need patterns and work ethic values match the types of jobs that individuals are placed in, a good quality of life will ensure. Whereas enriched jobs may appeal to the more achievement-oriented individuals, repetitive jobs might appeal to individuals who have low level skills and training but have a high work ethic orientation. So, it may not always be beneficial to enrich all kinds of jobs. Moreover, certain types of routine, repetitive jobs that do not lend themselves to enrichment have perforce to be performed in organizations.

While robotics may be a way to get around manning dull jobs, some individuals might actually prefer to do routine jobs and earn whatever money they fetch. Thus it is wise to take a contingency of the job and the contextual factors. In a country such as India where labour is plentiful in supply, job design adds a particularly challenging dimension to the manager’s job.\textsuperscript{15}

3.1.8 Quality of Work Life programmes

Quality of Work Life Programmes generally focus on the environment within the organization and include basic physical concerns such as heating and air conditioning, lighting and safety precautions; additional physical amenities such as food and beverage facilities, recreation, and aesthetics; and psychological and motivational factors such as flexible work hours, freedom to suggest changes or improvements, challenging work, and varying degrees of autonomy.\textsuperscript{16}

QWL program is to change and improve the work climate so that the interface of people, technology, and the organization makes for a more favorable work experience and desired outcomes.\textsuperscript{17}

QWL is ensuring when members of an organization are able to satisfy their important personal needs through their experiences in the organization.\textsuperscript{18}

Indian Organizations are setting up policies for maintaining a QWL. They are going in for innovative methods to keep their employees happy and satisfied, as it makes office a better place to work and also positively impacts productivity.
Human Resource Departments are involved with efforts to improve productivity through changes in employee relations. QWL means having good supervision, good working conditions, good pay and benefits and an interesting, challenging and rewarding job. High QWL is sought through an employee relations philosophy that encourages the use of QWL efforts, which are systematic attempts by an organization to give workers greater opportunities to affect their jobs and their contributions to the organization's overall effectiveness. That is, a proactive human resource department finds ways to empower employees so that they draw on their "brains and wits," usually by getting the employees more involved in the decision-making process.

Exhibit-3.2
QWL and productivity


Vigorous domestic and International competition drives organizations to be more productive. Proactive managers and human resource departments respond to this challenge by finding new ways to improve productivity. Some strategies rely heavily upon new capital investment and technology.19
Quality of Work Life programs typically includes a combination of different organizational development technique and no two programs are ever quite the same. However, all QWL programs share the organizational development focus on improving the quality and effectiveness of employee interactions, on the assumption that improved organizational outcomes such as increased productivity will no doubt follow.

QWL programs are examples of broader scope organizational development programs. QWL programs are best characterized as system wide attempts to simultaneously enhance organizational effectiveness (usually defined in terms of productivity) and employee well-being through a commitment to participative organizational decision making.

QWL programs aim to enhance the work experience of the individual worker. They typically have a strong flavor of worker rights and industrial democracy, and many QWL programs have been designed as cooperative ventures between unions and firm management. The typical objectives of a QWL program would include fair compensation, a conductive work environment, development of individual capacities, social integration of the work force, protection of the dignity and rights of each individual worker, and social relevance of the organization and its activities for the organization’s work force.

All QWL programs may additionally include a team-building or survey-guided development component. QWL intervention is improving such organizational processes as communication, coordination, motivation and personal development.”20

QWL focuses on the problem of creating a human working environment where employees work cooperatively and achieve results collectively. QWL, as it is understood today, includes four essential elements:

- The programme seeks to promote human dignity and growth
- Employees work collaboratively
- They determine work changes participatively
- The programmes assume compatibility of people and organizational goals.21
3.2. Textile Industry in Tirupur District

The history of textile is almost as old as that of human civilization and as time moves on, the history of textile has further enriched itself. In the 6th and 7th century BC, the oldest recorded indication of using fibre comes with the invention of flax and wool fabric at the excavation of Swiss lake inhabitants. In India the culture of silk was introduced in 400AD. While spinning or cotton traces are back to 3000 BC. The discovery of machines and their widespread application in processing natural fibres was a direct outcome of the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries. The discoveries of various synthetic fibres like nylon created a wider market for textile products and gradually led to the invention of new and improved sources of natural fibre. The development of transportation and communication facilities facilitated the path of transaction of localized skills and textiles among various countries.22

A textile is a flexible material consisting of a network of natural or artificial fibres often referred to as thread or yarn. Yarn is produced by spinning raw wool fibres, linen, cotton, or the material on a spinning wheel to produce long strands known as yarn. Textiles are formed by weaving, knitting, crocheting, knotting, or pressing fibres together.23

Textile industry is one of the main pillars holding the Indian Economy. It constitutes about 14 percent of industrial production, 20 percent of total export earnings, 4 percent of GDP and provides direct employment to an estimated 35 million people. In spite of these, India’s entire share in the world textiles trade is still maintained at around 3 percent.24

Tirupur is the "knitwear capital" of India. It has spurred up the textile industry in India for the past three decades. Its economic boom boosts the morale of Indian industrialists.” It contributes to a huge amount of foreign exchange in India. As of 2005, when Tirupur was a part of Coimbatore district, Coimbatore was the highest revenue earning district in Tamil Nadu, but when Tirupur grew more, the city increased its status as a District, thus separating it from Coimbatore. Tirupur was constituted as Municipality during the year 1947. It was upgraded as Special Grade Municipality during 1983 and upgrades as Corporation from 2008.25

The first export of knitted garments was made to US and Ghana by Mohan Knits through a Bombay Merchant Exporter in 1972. However, it could not be sustained. In the
later years, the entrepreneurial spirit and heavy competition for the domestic market forced the manufacturers to look beyond national boundaries. Thus, in 1980s a few units made sustained efforts to exports and succeeded. In 1987 the exports revenue of Tirupur was Rs.75 crores. Since then, it has not looked back and the exports during the year 2004 touched a figure of more than Rs. 5000 crores contributing almost 80 percent of country’s exports in this sector. Some 90 percent of India’s total knitwear exports originate from here. The Indian Export Import Policy of 2002-2007 includes a special tribute to Tirupur and calls it a “Town of Export Excellence.”

The first banyan factory in Tirupur was started in 1925. With the advent of electricity in 1931 more knitting and weaving factories came into existence. Initially, all the knitting machines were imported from Germany, Japan and New York. By 1942, there were 34 hosiery factories in all. By 1968 this increased to 250 and today sophisticated machines are being imported from Germany, Japan, Italy, U.S.A., Korea, Taiwan and many other countries. Though there are more than 6000 units operating within the limits of Tirupur, almost 50 percent of them are unregistered units and they take up only job works. As documented by the Tirupur Exporters Association, the composition of the knitwear industry in Tirupur today is as follows

- Knitting and/or stitching units: 4500
- Dyeing and/or bleaching units: 750
- Printing units: 300
- Embroidery units: 100
- Other (Compacting, Raising, Calendaring): 200

Tirupur also has large people working for textile industrial units who hire people mostly from various southern districts of Tamil Nadu viz., Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Dindigul, Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar, Thoothukudi and Nagercoil. Also there are plenty of workers from Northern districts of Tamilnadu viz., Vellore, Thiruvannamalai, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Thiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Chennai. They are usually unskilled labours but still get a decent pay compared to other places in South India. Large numbers of people are also from other South Indian states like Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Since there is always a demand for workers in Tirupur, there are no unemployment problems.
Nowadays there are also people coming from the Indian states of Orissa and Bihar to work in the garment processing factories in and around Tirupur.²⁹

Some of the world's largest retailers including C&A, Switcher SA, Walmart, Primark, Oviesse, Switcher, Polo Ralph Lauren, Diesel, ARMY, Tommy Hilfiger, M&S, FILA, Respect, H&M, HTHP, Whale, Reebok import many textile items and clothing from Tirupur. Recently in 2010, PGC Industries (export wing as Prem Durai Exports) acquired controlling interest in Switcher Holding SA (Switzerland) which is the top T-Shirt brand of Switzerland.³⁰

### 3.2.1 Role of Associations in Tirupur Textile Industry

#### 3.2.1.1 Textiles Committee

The Parliament in its 1⁴ᵗʰ year of the Republic enacted the Textiles Committee Act, 1963. The Committee is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Its main objective is to ensure the quality of textiles and textile machinery both for internal consumption and export purposes. As corollary objectives, the Textiles Committee has been entrusted with the following functions, under Section 4 of the Act:

- To undertake, assist and encourage, scientific, technological and economic research.
- To establish standard specifications for textiles, textile machinery and the packing materials.
- To establish laboratories for the testing of textiles and textile machinery.
- To provide training in the techniques of quality control.
- To provide for the inspection and examination of textiles and textile machinery.
- To promote export of textiles.
- To collect statistics and
- To advise the Central Government on all matters relating to textiles and textile machinery.
The Textiles Committee is managed by a committee comprising of 29 members as laid down under Section 3(3) of the Act and Rule 3 of the Textiles Committee Rules, 1965. It comprises of a Chairman (a member from the Industry), a Vice-chairman (Textile Commissioner from the Govt. ex-officio), and a Member Secretary, who is the Chief Executive of the organization. There are 12 ex-officio members representing various Textile Federations, Export Promotion Councils and 14 other members representing almost all interests of the textile sector. The committee has powers to constitute Standing Committees and Ad hoc Committees.  

3.2.1.2 Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC)

Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), a nodal agency under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, has been entrusted with the task of working towards projecting India’s image and introducing Indian Apparel Exporters to the International market. All exporters of apparel in India are members of the AEPC, helping its over 40,000 registered members of both woven and knitted items develop long-term relationship with leading fashion houses overseas and offers them wide range of export promotion services.  

3.2.1.3 List of supportive associations

- Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC)
- Banian Cloth Manufacturers Association
- Computer Embroidery Association
- Coimbatore District Powerloom cloth Dealer Association
- Indian Hosiery Yarn Mill Association
- South India Hosiery Manufacturers Association
- Tirupur Bleachers Association
- Tirupur Collar Stitching Section Association
- Tirupur Cotton Merchants Association
- Tirupur Dyers Association
- Tirupur Exporters Association
- Tirupur Export Knitwear Industrial Complex Association
- Tirupur Export Knitwear Manufacturers Association
➢ Tirupur Hosiery Yarn Merchants Association
➢ Tirupur Kaja Button Owners Association
➢ Tirupur Power Table Owners Association
➢ Tirupur Powerloom Association
➢ Tirupur Screen Printing Association
➢ Tirupur Steam Calendering Association

3.2.1.4 South India Hosiery Manufacturers Association (SIHMA)

SIHMA is one of the oldest association established in 1951 with 60 export members and 1200 domestic members assisting the manufactures to get financial assistance from the banks and financial institutions. On the procedural front, assistance is also provided in getting the registration certificate to small-scale units, RBI Code, export import licence. It also files legal suits in courts and represents on behalf of their members. SIHMA offers various HRD training programmes in the following areas:

➢ Women entrepreneurship training through SISI.
➢ CAD course for exporters.
➢ Skill upgradation courses for merchandisers in pattern making and quality control.
➢ Facilitating ISOP certification through BDI providers

3.2.1.5 Tirupur Exporters Association (TEA)

TEA was established in the year 1990. It is an Association exclusively for the cotton knitwear having production facilities in Tirupur. TEA has a membership of 532 life members and 154 associate members. The members have resolved to develop their organization focusing on:

➢ Multilateral growth of knitwear industry and export
➢ Development of infrastructural needs for Tirupur
➢ Implementation of scheme for the benefit of the society and for the public
➢ Promotion of constructive cooperation with workers with fair division of reward
➢ General upliftment of quality of life of Tirupur
Even though Tirupur is very prosperous, the infrastructure is very minimal. Tirupur grew very quickly due to the high demand for manufacturing popular clothing brands mostly in the United States and Europe. The lack of infrastructure facilities comparatively for the foreign exchange which the city brings is a big negative point to be noticed. The Tirupur Exporters and Manufacturers Association (TEAMA) and other associations are taking actions directly to get some sort of facilities done. The association formed by the Exporters of Tirupur (TEA) called TEAMA is one of the most successful associations in India trying hard and been successful in helping the trade in Tirupur. 38

3.2.2 Technology Up gradation Fund (TUF)

Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) is one of the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Textiles and has helped the industry to garner investments of Rs. 2.43 thousand crore. The scheme was launched in 1999 and has been instrumental in helping India achieve new heights in the development of the textile sector and particularly in the spinning segment.

The Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of February, 2013, had announced continuation of TUFS in the 12th Plan with a major focus on modernization of the powerloom sector. Higher subsidies for weaving / powerloom sector have accordingly been planned in the continued TUFS. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs today gave its approval for continuing the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) during the 12th Plan period with a major focus on powerlooms in accordance with the Budget announcement for the financial year 2013-14. The total budget outlay for continuation of the scheme will be about Rs.11, 900 crores, out of which Rs. 2,400 crores have been allocated for the financial year 2013-14. 39

3.2.3 Major problems of Textile Industry in Tirupur

3.2.3.1 Scarcity and spur in cotton price

At the end of the year 2009 the city suffered as the cotton prices increased. Big billionaire's in India started to do a new business of stocking cotton in big quantity, which can make a demand for the cotton in the local market and when the demand reaches its peak the billionaire's sell the cotton for higher prices. This began to trouble the domestic markets where the garments cannot be sold for higher prices. Many domestic companies suffered
heavy losses and many people lost their jobs. The export companies also suffered from this problem. The cotton price increased by 50%.  

Tirupur Exporters and Manufacturers Association (TEAMA) conducted a huge strike, with more than 3000 people participating in it, on 10 June 2010, insisting the Central Government to ban export of raw cotton and cotton yarn which was backed by all major industry associations in Tirupur. TEAMA also called for 2 days closure of all shops and establishments across Textile towns of Tamil Nadu. Major Associations in Textile towns of Erode, Kumarapalayam, Karur, Salem, Palladam and Rajapalayam participated in this 2 day closure and insisted the Govt. to immediately intervene and curb the export of Cotton and Cotton yarn. 

3.2.3.2 Poor effluent treatment in dyeing units

Tirupur suffered a lot from dyeing problems. Since dyeing is an important activity of the industry strikes in the dyeing units lead to the decrease in production of the garment items. In pursuance of the orders of Madras High Court, water and power supply to 18 CETPs with 754 dyeing and bleaching units and 68 IETPs was disconnected as they did not fulfill zero liquid discharge conditions for effluent treatment. 

Tirupur Exporters And Manufacturers Association (TEAMA) had represented to the High Court of Madras, insisting that the CETPs to be run by the State Government and the Central Pollution Board jointly, so that the Pollution issue can be resolved ensuring the smooth run of industry and also agriculture. The High Court has directed the State Government, Central Ministry of Environment and Forests, CPCB and 4 others to consider the plea of the Association. This is one and only judgment awarded in favor of the plea, where in the Misc. petition of all the other associations and Labour unions were turned down by the High Court. Tirupur Exporters Association has represented to Government that export revenues of ₹11 billion were lost and about 100,000 labours lost their job, due to closure of Dyeing units in Tirupur. 

In the year 2011, the political party which came to power took steps to improve the infrastructure and help the dyeing units. It was stated that the units must clean the effluents up to 2500 TDS (15% of the impurity) before disposing it to the river. The Government
announced a total sum of Rs 200 crores for CETPs as a non interest borrowing. These measures of the Government have only partially solved the problems in dyeing unit.\(^{48}\)

3.2.4. Employees Quality of Work Life (QWL) in Textile Industry

In this competitive era, the Textile industry finds difficult to produce world class quality, on par with the developed nations. It is now rare for a person to stay with a single company throughout their entire working life because employees are often willing to leave a company for better opportunities. Companies need to find better ways not only to hire qualified people, but also to retain them.

Quality of Work Life is gaining attention especially in the wake of very competitive business environment. Quality of Work Life is nothing but the Quality of life that an employee experiences at his or her work place. Due to changes in technology and to meet various demands of the employees and to withstand the place in the Global market, the company has to focus on employees satisfaction on major areas like job security, job satisfaction, medical facilities, canteen facilities, rewards, ESI.\(^{49}\)

In addition to that, Textile industries has undergone rapid changes towards globalization and liberalization and have been facing problems due to Global Competition, dyeing units, shortage of cotton and power scarcity. These pose a threat to the textile industry. In addition to these threats, extended working hours, compulsory overtime, committed deliveries by the firms, shorter manufacturing cycles and other related issues detoriate the Quality of Work life in Tirupur textile firms posing a big threat to its productivity and human resource management. Employees stress at their job lead to job dissatisfaction which ultimately end up with high rate of labor turnover and absenteeism.

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