SYNOPSIS

TITLE OF THE STUDY

The study is entitled as “QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG THE LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN KERALA”.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The topic selected for the research contains mainly two parts namely Quality of Work Life and Occupational Stress. The study is mainly intends to measure the depth of job satisfaction level of the Library Professionals on one side and the amount of stress and burnout one may experience on the other side. In the changing environment of modern technological advancement the traditional concept of the library profession is subjected to rapid changes. The advent of computer, internet technology etc. shaken the existing concept of the profession. The user’s demands are also changed according to the new development in the world wide. Consequently, the librarians are known as Information Professionals who collect and disseminate information to the users to cater their needs.

In a volatile and insecure environment workers are forced to cope up with more frequent changes in their tasks as well as a blending succession of frequent transfer, retrenchment, product changes, reorganizations, and changes in the organisation of work etc., enforce new roles and relationships which will have a direct impact on jobs and staff.

Unlike other professionals, the Library Professionals lack the deserving identity in their own organisation as well as in the society as a prominent figure who collect and disseminate information to the users which add to the woes of the profession. The advancement in computer and internet technologies also made the problem a little more complex.

In this age of global economic recession the job security of the professionals are also at peril like in any other profession. The speed of the busy life; cultural, economic and political changes in the society; ever changing roles and role ambiguity of the individuals etc. are causing to precipitate a strange disease to human beings – the stress.
Stress has become common and very frequent when and wherever there is human involvement. It has also become one of the most serious occupational health hazards of the time. Stress at work and the stressful transactions are characterized in all organisational settings. The factors that lead to stress at the workplace are categorized mainly into four by Summers, et al. (1994) (viz.), Personal characteristics, Organisational characteristics – structural, Organisational characteristics - procedural and Role characteristics.

A person who enjoys the work and derives satisfaction alone can perform in the best perfect manner. The fulfillment of personal needs and goals leads to satisfaction well being and happiness. But how far and how long the individual can be satisfied in the profession, which is full of work related stress and strain. For this reason, one needs to be sensitive to factors related to performance, recognition, work content, responsibility, promotion and pay, organisational policies, working conditions etc.

The Quality of Work depends on the Quality of Work Life. It has been clear that one can accomplish his mission and provide the level of service the public demands only if we recruit and retain the best and the brightest and provide them with a work environment that supports them in getting their jobs done. The phrase “Quality of Work Life” (QWL) has come in use recently to evoke a broad range of working conditions and the related aspirations and expectations of the employees. The QWL can be described as the subjectively perceived satisfaction in one’s different aspects of work life as reported by the individual. It is an index of what people find interesting and satisfying at their work. Quality of Work Life is a concern not only to improve life at work, but also life outside work. Hence it encompasses a vide variety of programmes and techniques that have been developed to endeavor to reconcile the twin goals of an individual and the organisation, i.e. Quality of Life and Organisational Growth. The Quality of Work Life has, therefore become key area of consideration now a days.

The adverse effects the stress situation vitiates the running of an organisation. It creates unpleasant situations in the employer employee relationships as well as staff clientele relations may deteriorate, inaccuracies may develop in the work and so on. The serious effects of job stress could include employee absenteeism and burnouts, which may increase the work load of the fellow workers. The stress management has got
enough significance in improving the quality of work life. The present study attempts to measure and identify the amount of job satisfaction the professionals derive and the stressors that accelerate the stress and burnout in the profession. The investigation is mainly carried out on a population of library professionals with at least having graduation in L.I.S or more as educational qualification.

Gender, Age, Marital status, Number of children, Educational background, Job title category, Professional experience, Primary functional area, Salary range, Involvement in IT applications. Number of supervisors, Work schedule, Type of library, Size of library, Type of management are chosen as the independent variables for the study.

The study is designed to evaluate the factors which contribute to the job satisfaction of the Library Professionals and investigates the factors which cause to the stress and burnout in the profession and to suggest remedies. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to Library Professionals in Kerala, comprising of colleges, universities and other organisations. The questionnaires contained three parts: 1) General Data Sheet 2) Questions relating to QWL and 3) Questions relating to OS. The questions were framed on a Likert type of scoring, i.e. A (Agree), SA (Strongly Agree), NAD (Neither Agree Nor Disagree), D (Disagree) and SD (Strongly Disagree).

OBJECTIVES
The study has been designed to attain the following objectives.

1. To find out the extent and levels of ‘Quality of Work Life’ and ‘Occupational Stress’ among the Library Professionals in Kerala.

2. To compare the ‘Quality of Work Life’ among the Library Professionals in Kerala (taken in pairs) categorised on the basis of select independent variables.

3. To compare the level of ‘Occupational Stress’ among the Library Professionals in Kerala (taken in pairs) categorised on the basis of select independent variables.
4. To estimate the relationship between the ‘Quality of Work Life’ of Library Professionals in Kerala and each of the select independent variables.

5. To estimate the relationship between the ‘Occupational Stress’ of Library Professionals in Kerala and each of the select independent variables.

6. To study the extent of association between ‘Quality of Work Life’ and ‘Occupational Stress’ among the Library Professionals in Kerala.

**HYPOTHESES**

The major hypotheses formulated for the study are given below:

1) The percentage of Library Professionals in Kerala having high level of ‘Quality of Work Life’ will be significant.

2) The percentage of Library Professionals in Kerala having high level of ‘Occupational Stress’ will be significant.

3) There will be significant difference in the mean ‘Quality of Work Life’ scores of the sub samples (taken in pairs) when Library Professionals categorised on the basis of each of the select independent variables are compared.

4) There will be significant difference in the mean ‘Occupational Stress’ scores of the sub samples (taken in pairs) when Library Professionals categorised on the basis of each of the select independent variables are compared.

5) The relationship between ‘Quality of Work Life’ of Library Professionals in Kerala and each of the select independent variables will be significant.

6) The relationship between ‘Occupational Stress’ of Library Professionals in Kerala and each of the select independent variables will be significant.
7) The relationship between ‘Quality of Work Life’ and ‘Occupational Stress’ of Library Professionals in Kerala will be significant.

The procedure adopted for the investigation has been described under the following subsections:

**TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION AND MEASUREMENT**

The following two tools were specifically constructed and standardised by the investigator for the purpose of the study.

i) Quality of Work Life Scale for Library Professionals (QWLSLP)

ii) Occupational Stress Inventory for Library Professionals (OSILP)

Besides, data on independent variables were collected using a General Data Sheet.

**SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY**

The study was carried out on a representative sample of 300 Library Professionals in Kerala. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was employed for the selection of the sample. Due representation was given to the factors like age, sex, job category, qualification and experience, type of the library etc. of Library Professionals.

**FINDINGS**

The major findings of the study are given below:

1) The Quality of Work Life among library professionals in Kerala are not very high.

2) The library professionals in Kerala do not experience stress in their occupation.

3) On investigating group difference in mean QWL scores it found that significant difference exist between supervisory librarians and non-supervisory librarians. While no significant difference is noticed among the groups of librarians categorised on the basis of characteristics such as (i) Gender (ii) Age (iii) Marital status (iv) Number of children (v) Educational background (vi) Professional experience (vii) Primary functional area (viii) Salary range (ix) Involvement in IT applications (x) Number of supervisors (xi) Work schedule (xii) Type of library (xiii) Size of library (xiv) Type of management.

4) Significant association was found to exist between QWL and three independent variables such as size of library in terms of number of books, professional experience and Job title category out of seventeen characteristics.
5) Significant association was found to exist between OS and three independent variables such as size of library in terms of number of staff, age, and involvement in IT application, out of seventeen sub characteristics.

6) Relation between QWL and OS was studied using chi-square test and Pearson’s coefficient of correlation and found that the variables are significantly related.