

Job Autonomy and Self-Efficacy: Drivers of Quality of Work Life for Healthcare Professionals

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between job autonomy, self-efficacy, and quality of work life (QWL) among healthcare professionals. A survey of 115 healthcare professionals was conducted to examine the impact of job autonomy and self-efficacy on QWL. The results show that both job autonomy and self-efficacy are significant predictors of QWL, with self-efficacy emerging as a stronger predictor. The findings suggest that healthcare organizations can improve QWL by providing employees with greater autonomy in their work and fostering their self-efficacy through training and development opportunities. This study contributes to the existing literature on QWL in healthcare and provides insights for organizational interventions aimed at enhancing the well-being and job satisfaction of healthcare professionals.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life, Self-efficacy, Job autonomy, Healthcare professionals

1. INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work Life (QWL) is a multidimensional concept that emphasizes balancing employees' personal and professional well-being through supportive work environments. Theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristics Model highlight that meeting both basic needs (fair wages, job security) and higher-order needs (esteem, autonomy, empowerment) fosters satisfaction, motivation, and productivity. In healthcare, QWL is particularly important due to high stress, long hours, and emotional demands on professionals. Job autonomy, which refers to independence in decision-making and task management, enhances accountability, creativity, and motivation. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura, represents confidence in one's ability to perform tasks successfully; it strengthens resilience, innovation, and persistence, which are essential in healthcare environments.

This study investigates the interplay between quality of work life (QWL), job autonomy, and self-efficacy among healthcare professionals. The problem is highly relevant as healthcare professionals often face burnout, and enhancing these factors can improve retention, engagement, and care quality. The study's importance lies in guiding the hospital to design supportive policies that boost employee motivation, reduce turnover, and improve patient outcomes.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ahmad, Z. M., & Ahmed (2025) assessed the quality of work life (QWL) among nurses in specialized medical centers in Mosul city. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 450 nurses in 12 government health centers using a developed scale and simple random sampling. The study found that nurses generally reported good QWL (mean = 3.373, SD = 0.507), although work status, compensation, and work stress were rated as moderate. The researchers concluded that while overall QWL was good, certain aspects need improvement to enhance nurses' psychological, social, and economic well-being and service quality. Improving these aspects can positively impact nurses' work life and service quality.

Abu Safieh et al., (2025) examined job-related stress, quality of work life (QWL), and quality of nursing care among critical care nurses in Jordan. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 480 registered nurses in critical care units

using standardized scales. Nurses reported moderate QWL (mean = 4.01, SD = 0.60) and occasional to frequent job-related stress (mean = 2.96, SD = 0.65), but very good quality of nursing care (mean = 3.70, SD = 0.61). The study highlights the need for strategies to control job stress and enhance QWL to achieve high-quality nursing care.

Khoshnaw and Alavi (2020) conducted the study based on the interrelation between job autonomy and job performance. The study aimed to synthesize previous findings to understand how job autonomy impacts performance outcomes across different settings. The methodology involved a systematic review of existing studies, focusing on patterns and theoretical insights. Data analysis was qualitative, emphasizing the recurring themes and gaps in the research. The findings highlighted that greater job autonomy often leads to improved job performance due to enhanced motivation and decision-making capacity.

Raeissi et al., (2019) conducted the study based on the quality of work life (QWL) and associated factors among nurses in public hospitals in Iran. The study aimed to identify key elements influencing QWL to improve workplace satisfaction and performance. A cross-sectional design was used, with data collected through structured questionnaires administered to nurses. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics and logistic regression, were conducted to identify relationships between QWL and demographic or work-related factors. The findings highlighted significant associations between poor QWL and factors like excessive workload and lack of support. This research emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to enhance nurses' work environments.

Nayak, Sahoo, and Mohanty (2018) examined the relationship between workplace empowerment, quality of work life, and employee commitment in the Indian healthcare sector. Their research used a quantitative approach, employing surveys to collect data from healthcare employees. Data analysis included statistical techniques such as correlation and regression analysis to identify significant relationships between variables.

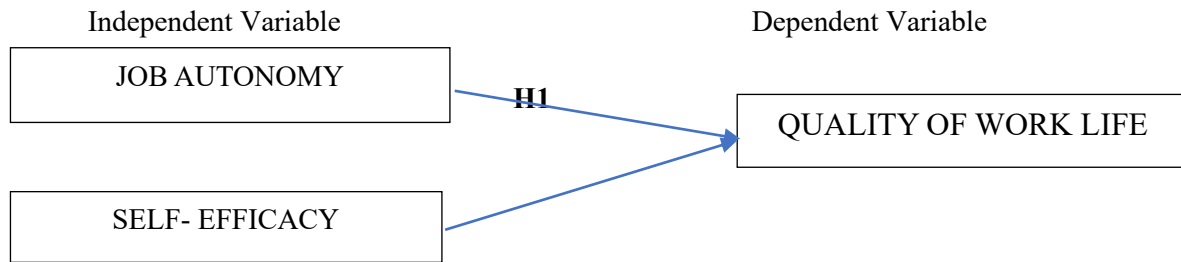
Hemanathan, R et al., (2017) examined the quality of work life among nurses in a tertiary care hospital, focusing on factors influencing their job satisfaction and overall well-being. The research aimed to identify key aspects of the work environment that impact nurses' quality of life and to recommend improvements. Data was collected through surveys using standardized instruments to measure various dimensions of work life. The study employed descriptive statistics to analyse the data and identify patterns in responses. Additionally, correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between work life quality and job satisfaction. The findings highlighted areas for intervention to enhance nurses' work experiences and well-being.

Shoji et al., (2016) conducted a meta-analysis to investigate the associations between job burnout and self-efficacy. The study aimed to synthesize findings from multiple studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship. Data was drawn from various research papers on burnout and self-efficacy, with effect sizes aggregated statistically. The analysis revealed a significant negative relationship, indicating that higher levels of burnout correspond to lower self-efficacy. This meta-analysis provides valuable insights into the detrimental impact of burnout on employee confidence and performance, emphasizing the need for interventions to manage workplace stress.

Almalki et al., (2012) investigated the relationship between the quality of work life and turnover intention among primary healthcare nurses in Saudi Arabia. The study aimed to identify factors influencing nurses' decisions to leave their jobs. Data was collected through structured surveys administered to nurses in primary healthcare facilities. Descriptive and correlation analyses were used to analyse the relationship between work life quality and turnover intention. The findings indicated a significant negative relationship, with higher quality of work life associated with lower turnover intention. The research highlights the critical need to improve work life quality to retain healthcare professionals.

3. Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Framework



The framework diagram represents how job autonomy and self -efficacy influences the quality of work life. Job autonomy refers to the degree to which employees have the freedom, independence and discretion to plan, schedule, and perform their work tasks. High levels of job autonomy enable employees to feel more in control of their responsibilities, fostering creativity, motivation and job satisfaction. Self- efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to successfully accomplish specific tasks or goals. Employees with high self – efficacy are more confident in their capacity to overcome challenges, leading to improved performance and resilience at work.

Understanding the relationship between job autonomy, self-efficacy and quality of work life can improve the organizations design better workplace policies and practices. When employees experience autonomy in their roles and have strong efficacy, they are more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction, engagement and overall, well-being, which contribute to an enhanced quality of work life.

3.2 Hypotheses of the study

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between job autonomy and the quality of work life among healthcare professionals.

H2: There is significant relationship between self-efficacy and the quality of work life among healthcare professionals.

3.3 Measures

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, including demographic details such as age, gender, and professional degree of the participants. The questionnaire design for this study was carefully structured to measure the degree of job autonomy and self - efficacy which has its impact on quality of work life among healthcare professionals .The independent variable in this study is Job Autonomy and Self – Efficacy while the dependent variable is Quality Of Work Life .

To ensure the reliability and validity, the items was adapted from James Breugh’s (1999) Work Autonomy Scales. The Regulatory Emotional Self-Efficacy (RESE) scale by Caprara et al. (2008) was used to assesses an individual's perceived ability to manage and express emotions. 14 item scale was adapted from Zaman, S., & Ansari, A. H. (2024) for measuring QWL. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

3.2. Sample and Analysis

Convenience sampling was adopted as it enabled quick access to respondents within the academic setting. A total of 115 valid responses were collected, representing diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, working experience, and the nature of emplotment. The demographic details of the respondents are presented in the following table for clarity and further analysis.

Table 1 – Demographic Details

Demographic characteristics of Respondents (N = 115)

| Characteristics | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 80 | 69.6 |
| Male | 35 | 30.4 |
| Age | | |
| 20-29 | 78 | 67.8 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|------|
| 30-39 | 27 | 23.5 |
| 40-49 | 06 | 5.2 |
| Above 50 | 4 | 3.5 |
| Employee experience in the hospital | | |
| 0-5 Years | 103 | 89.6 |
| 5 -10 Years | 06 | 5.2 |
| 10-15 Years | 06 | 5.2 |
| Nature of employment | | |
| Casual | 42 | 36.5 |
| Permanent | 65 | 56.5 |
| Part-time | 08 | 7.0 |

4. Results

4.1 Reliability

The reliability of a measurement instrument is evaluated based on its internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher indicating satisfactory internal consistency. The scale reliability in this study is high, as it has a Cronbach's value of 0.84 for job autonomy, 0.83 for self-efficacy and 0.913 for quality of quality of work life.

4.2 Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 1 proposes that there exist a significant positive relationship between job autonomy and the quality of work life among healthcare professionals.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that there exist There is significant relationship between self-efficacy and the quality of work life among healthcare professionals.

Tables given below indicate the causal relationship between the variables to support the hypothesis. The R^2 value associated with this influential relationship was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.210$, estimate =0.216, 0.485, $p < 0.001$) concluding that both variables have has 21% influence on quality of work life of healthcare professionals.

4.2. A. Table Exhibiting the Regression between Quality of Work Life and Job Autonomy and Self- Efficacy – Descriptive Statistics

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|----------------------|---------|----------------|-----|
| Quality of Work Life | 34.3130 | 6.51229 | 115 |
| Job Autonomy | 28.0348 | 7.40309 | 115 |
| Self- efficacy | 20.2087 | 4.72674 | 115 |

4.2. B. Table Exhibiting the Regression between Quality of Work Life and Job Autonomy and Self - Efficacy – Model Summary

Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .458 ^a | .210 | .196 | 5.83986 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self - efficacy, Job Autonomy

4.3.
B.

Table Exhibiting the Regression between Quality of Work Life and Job Autonomy and Self – Efficacy – Coefficients

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 18.453 | 2.967 | | 6.220 | .000 |
| Job Autonomy | .216 | .075 | .246 | 2.897 | .005 |
| Self – efficacy | .485 | .117 | .352 | 4.141 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Work life

5. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the critical role that Quality of Work Life (QWL), job autonomy, and self-efficacy play in shaping the professional experiences of healthcare employees. The results align with existing literature, which consistently emphasizes that better QWL is strongly associated with higher job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and lower turnover intentions. In the context of hospitals, enhancing QWL means not only addressing basic hygiene factors such as fair wages, safe working conditions, and manageable workloads, but also fostering motivators like recognition, opportunities for growth, and empowerment. Job autonomy emerged as another central factor, reinforcing the idea that when healthcare professionals are given greater independence in decision-making and flexibility in performing their tasks, they experience higher motivation, accountability, and engagement. This autonomy is particularly significant in healthcare, where rigid systems and high-pressure environments can otherwise limit creativity and reduce morale. Self-efficacy, on the other hand, plays a mediating role, boosting employees' confidence in their ability to handle challenges, adapt to demanding situations, and maintain resilience under stress. The study therefore suggests that self-efficacy acts as a psychological buffer, reducing the negative effects of stressors such as long working hours, patient demands, or workplace conflicts. Collectively, these findings stress the importance of creating a supportive work environment where QWL is prioritized, autonomy is encouraged, and self-efficacy is nurtured through training, mentoring, and empowerment strategies. For healthcare institutions, this not only leads to improved employee well-being but also translates into better patient outcomes, organizational efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

6. Conclusion

This study underscores the significance of Quality of Work Life (QWL), job autonomy, and self-efficacy in enhancing the professional experiences of healthcare employees. By creating a supportive work environment that promotes employee empowerment, recognition, and growth, healthcare organizations can not only boost employee morale and retention but also drive better patient outcomes and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, investing in the well-being and development of healthcare professionals is crucial for building a resilient and high-performing healthcare system.

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