

## Quality of Life and Quality of Work Life Balance: Case Study of Public and Private Sectors of Lithuania

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### Abstract

*The main aim of this article is to compare the quality of life and quality of work-life balance among employees working in the public and private sectors of Lithuania. The authors research showed that the most important factors of quality of life for private sector workers are absence of stress, follow mode, changes, use ecological products, whereas in public sector – also absence of stress and ecological products, but in contrast private sector for them are important satisfaction of communication and healthy food. The greatest impact on the quality of work-life has the nature of work, relationships with management and colleagues, environment and workload. The high value of the quality of work-life directly influences the higher quality of life.*

**Keywords:** quality of life, quality of work life, quality of life and quality of work life balance, public sector, private sector.

### 1. Introduction

Today Quality of Life (QoL) is one of the various areas of interest to scientists. Happiness, well-being, life satisfaction, and all this in a general sense – is the most human aspiration of QoL (Ruževičius & Braškutė – Saulė, 2015). QoL in a rapidly developing world is becoming more important because, despite the prevalence of smart technology and growth, which should facilitate a person's life, more and more people feel unhappy and depressed. Increasingly, it is recognized that both the QoL, both quality of work-life (QWL), and especially – the balance is the key of a happy and meaningful life factors. QoL and QWL were started to explore the last century in the second half and benefited from growing scientific interest because of their importance for a happy life. Distancing absence leads to poor quality of the rest, resulting in stress and health problems (Akranavičiūtė & Ruževičius, 2007; Rapley, 2008; Ruževičius, 2013). In the Lithuania researches, which are about the QoL, usually associated with health, economics, sociology, however, does not carry out the QoL and QWL balance, distinguishing between public and private sector workers' assessments, this topic is not widely explored in the literature. QoL and QWL, the balance of the most important factors of invention, the received data examination and interpretation of the results would make it easier to achieve the life and work balance.

*The object of the research* is the QoL and QWL in public and private sectors workers.

*The purpose of the research* is to compare QoL and QWL balance between private and public sectors workers and compose model, which reflect differences among assessments.

#### Research tasks:

1. To analyze the QoL and QWL, the balance of the concepts, theories and evaluation indicators of diversity.

2. Compare working in the public and private sectors, the QoL and QWL, and the qualities of balance, to distinguish the essential differences between the groups of respondents estimates.

*The hypothesis  $h_j$ :* public sector employees bowing to assess better QoL and QWL balance than private sector workers.

*Research methods* were to apply the scientific literature and document systematic analysis, comparison, questionnaire and synthesis methods. The research data, statistical analysis was

performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS IBM 23) software using statistical analysis required functions and Microsoft Excel 2010. Variable Statistical differences were used to assess the independent samples tests, chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) criteria. The statistical difference between the indicators of significance was evaluated by the significance level ratio (p):  $p < 0.05$  indicators differences were regarded as statistically significant. Reliability evaluation was used Cronbach alpha test. Nonparametric estimation of data has also been applied McNemar test, parametric – repeated evaluations of variance analysis.

### 2. QoL: development and elements

QoL is an important concept in many fields of science – sociology, political science, philosophy, marketing, environmental studies, medicine, but each academic discipline develops different perspectives, which are covered by the concept of QoL. The concept of QoL was first used by A. C. Pigou in his book about economic well-being in 1920 (Ruževičius, 2013). There was no reaction to this and was ignored till the end of World War II. At that time The World Health Organization (WHO) expended health definition and included the concepts of physical, psychological and social well-being. The WHO defines QoL as an individual purpose-aligned cultural and value system by which a person lives, relative to their aims, hopes, living standards and interests. This is a detailed concept which incorporates an individual's physical and psychological health, their degree of independence, their social liaisons and how they relate to their surroundings. QoL conceptual models and instruments for research, evaluation and assessment have been developed since the middle of last century (McCall, 2005; Ruževičius, 2012). However, Greek philosophers were searching for meaning of life which could help people pursue a higher existential level of their life. In the past century QoL was determined as material welfare or wealth. Later, the perception's changes of the meaning of life and values influenced the QoL conception and all factors changes (Ferrer, 2002). Evaluation of the QoL must encompass all elements. The QWL is the important component of the QoL. QWL includes such work areas like employees' health and well-being, guarantee of employment, career planning, competence development, life and work balance and

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other. The results of evaluation of QWL factors could be possibility for social programs establishment, implementation and development in organizations, at national or international level (Akranavičiūtė & Ruževičius, 2007; Brown et al., 2004; Ruževičius, 2012). The main problem is that there is no universal QoL determination. QoL is influenced by individual's physical and mental health, the degree of independency, the social relationship with the environment and other factors (Ruževičius, 2012; 2013). QoL could be defined as an individual's satisfaction with his or her life dimensions comparing with his or her ideal life. Evaluation of the QoL depends on individual's value system and on the cultural environment where he lives (Gilgeous, 1998).

Nonetheless, when analysing the QoL, it should be kept in mind that this concept is wider than the issues of an individual's health. J. Brown (1993) observes that from both political and philosophical perspectives, the perception of the QoL can be based on one of the following three points of view (quoted from Diener et al., 1997):

1. The characteristics of good life can stem from normative ideals based on religious, philosophical or some other systems. For instance, an individual can be positive that the essential element of the QoL is helping other people – based on one's religious principles.

2. The essence of the QoL lies in the fulfilment of the individual's priority needs. Due to scarce resources, people prefer things that enhance the quality of their lives. Therefore, people organise their lives considering the resources available to them, as well as their personal needs.

3. The QoL can also be perceived through an individual's life experience. If a person perceives her or his life as good and desirable, it is possible to assume that it is indeed so in her or his case. From such a point of view, the core criteria for the evaluation of the QoL are joy, pleasure and contentment with life.

According to B. K. Haas (1999), the QoL can be most accurately defined by the following five criteria (quoted from Merkys et al., 2008):

1. The QoL is the assessment of the current (here and now) circumstances of an individual's life.

2. The QoL in its essence (content) is multifaceted.

3. The QoL is based on individual values, and is variable.

4. The QoL encompasses objective indicators as well as subjective evaluations.

5. The QoL can be most accurately evaluated by individuals who are capable of conducting subjective self-assessment.

### 3. The conception of QWL

For most people, work is not just a source of income, it meets the needs of the people and higher – the desire to realize themselves, to develop their capabilities, experience the meaning of life, belong to a certain social class, professional group, career advancement, or to communicate with colleagues. Job satisfaction is mostly determined by its content, so normally it especially satisfied with working in a creative, skilled work (artists, scientists), and among those working less skilled labor (manufacturing or construction sectors) are generally less satisfied with the work (Monkevičius, 2015). The QWL covers areas such as employee health and welfare, job security and career planning, competence development, working conditions, the balance between life at work and life after work. These aspects of quality evaluation provide opportunities for social programs for the development, implementation and improvement of organizational, national and international level (Ruževičius, 2013).

The low culture of the organization's work, poor management, and woeful microclimate can cause constant stress and frustration, which will be accompanied by a person not only at work but also in their personal lives. In today's rapidly changing world, organizations progress is directly related to the quality of human resources, so success is not only technology, but motivated employees who can use or develop new technology. The rapidly growing number of scientific evidence, saying that the organization's results and success depends on the how much workers are feeling happy in work.

The QWL, according to the English researcher G. James, can be defined from three different perspectives:

1. QWL is a target (e.g., to improve the working place, make the working environment more comfortable, etc.);

2. QWL is a process (it combines the needs of the employees and the goals of the organisation);

3. QWL is a philosophy (the individual is valued as an asset that can be nurtured through knowledge, experience, etc.) (James, 1992).

The QWL should be analyzed as related to the total QoL. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to establish their correlation. The QWL is one of the dimensions which comprise the composition of the total QoL. In turn, QWL is interrelated with and inseparable from other areas of QL in multiple ways, such as the individual's social life, education, development, and opportunities for self-realization, material welfare, etc. The QWL could be defined as synthesis of work place strategies, processes and environment, which stimulates employee's job satisfaction. It also depends on work conditions and organization's efficiency (Considine, 2002). Individual's QWL directly influences the QoL value. Generally, QoL is also determined as employee's and his or her work environment's relationship quality (Ruževičius, 2013; Schoepke, 2003). All QoL components are interdependent and influence individual's satisfaction with QoL.

The QWL concept encompass following factors: job satisfaction, involvement in work performance, motivation, efficiency, productivity, health, safety and welfare at work, stress, work load, burn-out etc. these mentioned factors could be defined as physical and psychological results of the work which affect employee. Other authors suggest to involve in this concept more work factors: fair compensation, safe and hygienic working and psychological conditions, knowledge and opportunities to realise one's skills, social integration and relationship, life and work balance, work planning and organization (Ruževičius, 2012). Some QWL factors are the same as in QoL, only they are related with employee's working environment and job.

The QWL domains and factors are as follows:

1. Consideration of work (material and non-material);

2. Emotional state (appreciation, esteem, stress, self-motivation, job satisfaction, safety for job);

3. Learning and improvement (career opportunities, acquisition of new knowledge and skills);

4. Social relationship in the organisation ("relations" with colleagues and supervisors, delegation, communication, command, division of work);

5. Self-realization (career opportunities, involvement in decisions making, etc.);

6. Physical state (stress, fatigue, burn-out, work load);

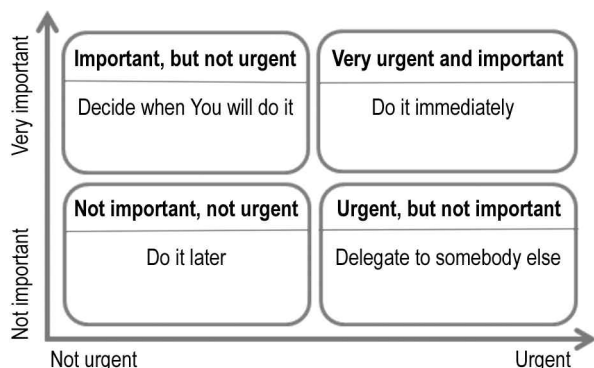
7. Safety and work environment (Gilgeous, 1998; Schoepke, 2003; Ruževičius, 2013).

### 4. The QoL and QWL balance

Work-life balance is closely related to the life and work-life qualities include inherent individual, family and work conflicts, recreation, for personal human consumption and time spent at work balance (Ruževičius & Braškutė – Saulė, 2015). Work-life balance is mainly explained by the time, activity or experience concepts (Hilbrecht, Lero, 2014). Accelerating pace of life, it seems that it becomes extremely difficult to find time for private life and leisure, as the work of getting attention. This importance of the work could be due to increased human needs that need more and more money, constantly rising prices of food and services. Statistics show that in the decade from 1986 to 1996, the work-life balance conception was mentioned 32 times in the media, while only in the year 2007, this name was inflexive even 1674 times (Barker, 2014).

Among the requirements for staff at work and in the family there is the inevitable interaction. The most common work-family roles requirements of interaction can be called a junction, because of work and family spheres approximation usually becomes a challenge to the employee, he must reconcile two requirements from both spheres of his life (Carr, 2008). In order

to achieve a work-life balance and flexibility needs attention from both the employer and the employee side. It was found that better results were achieved by those people who have more freedom and power in their activities, so the employer does not need to be afraid hired to give more freedom and trust them (Trakumaitė, 2013). In order to find a balance between work and personal life, especially become an important factor and time planning (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. The Eisenhower Matrix**  
(Source: Krogerus, Tschappeler, Earnhart, 2012)

The Eisenhower Matrix is reflected in the fact that if something is urgent it does not mean that it is important, therefore, of great importance assigning priorities to specific cases. The immediate and important works include those in which the individual creates the most value and which need to focus our efforts and your work calendar they need for the best and the prime-time period. Such works should occupy more than 50% of the time of day. Important, but non-urgent work is also significant as previously discussed, but to make these available over time. Such work should not forget them for about 20% of their working hours. Urgent but not important works are completely irrelevant and does not create value. Such work includes work that seeks to make colleagues, friends, however, not wanting them to answer, the man undertakes to do. Such work is advisable to do so only when carried out important work and for not more than 10% of their time, the best work at the end of the day, when there is no so much effort to do more important work. Unimportant and non-urgent operations can enumerate themselves, but their work should not rush. In most cases it can happen that after a while it turns out that they do not need at all. Such works splitting into four groups to be taken to improve both QoL and QWL, and is particularly useful for a better QoL and QWL balance.

## 5. The QoL and QWL balance in the public and private sectors research

This study of Lithuania employees explored influences of the private sector workers on aspects of QoL and QWL balance ( $n=71$ ) and an equivalent group of public sector workers ( $n=236$ ). Royalty survey questionnaire consisted of 157 questions. The first 5 questions were included in order to identify the demographic aspects. Respondents were asked to give their sex, age group, received monthly income group, education and place of employment – public or private sector. The remaining 152 questions for quality assessment: the first cluster (71 point) of respondents to ascertain the QoL, in the second (55 issues) – the QWL and a third (26 issues) – about respondents QoL and QWL balance. In all three blocks of questions asked to answer each evaluation of a five-point Likert scale, where 1 means “totally disagree” and 5 means “totally agree”. To analyse the results of the study process was used IBM SPSS Statistics 23 and for graphics was used Microsoft Excel 2010.

The study included a total of 307 employees, including 251 women and 56 men working in the public or private sector. The

majority of respondents 46-55 years old, how much lower proportion 26-35 years. Most of the respondents are middle-income groups workers – belong “301-600 Eur”, the receiving group (Lithuania the average wage in the national economy in 2015 in the fourth quarter after tax was 584.80 Eur (Lithuania of Social Security and Labour: in 2016). Slightly more than a third of respondents earn more than the average wage. Most respondents have university master’s degree in half less – higher bachelor, and the least – secondary and higher doctoral degree.

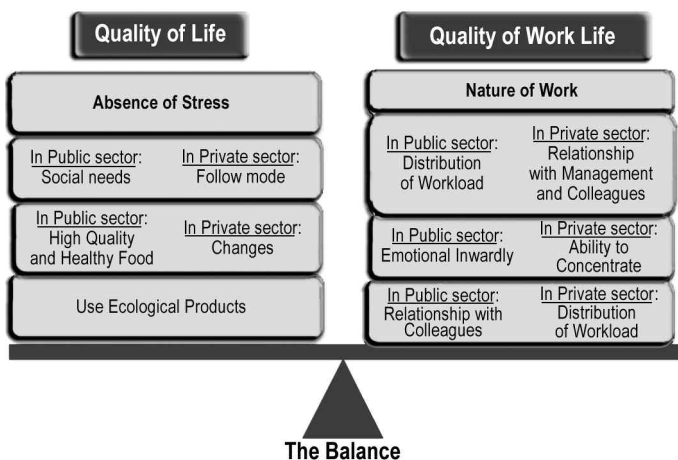
Article authors study revealed that overall the respondents feel the greatest satisfaction with the QoL, at least to satisfy the QWL. Comparing the two groups of respondents (employees in the private and employees in the public sector), revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between workers in the private and public sectors in assessing the QoL ( $p=0.051$ ) and QWL ( $p=0.561$ ), but there is a statistically significant difference in the evaluation of these qualities balance ( $p=0.003$ ). In the private sector workers to better the QoL and QWL balance ( $M=2.814$ ) than in the public sector workers ( $M=2.558$ ,  $t=-2.952$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), so the hypothesis  $h_1$  which is stating that employees who work in the public sector bowing to assess better QoL and QWL balance than private sector workers are excluded. Such a result could lead to the fact that the private sector is increasingly proposed job schedule or just the ability to work remotely – without even leaving home.

The author’s analysis and using SPSS package Pearson test revealed, there is a moderate positive relationship between QoL and life quality of the work and among private (Pearson  $R=0.345$ ,  $p=0.003$ ) and between the public (Pearson  $R=0.435$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) sector employee evaluation. Public sector workers have shown that there is a weak positive relationship between QoL and QWL balance assessment (Pearson  $R=0.167$ ,  $p=0.010$ ), while private sector employees answers the call did not show at all ( $p=0.268$ ). Public sector employees evaluation revealed moderate positive relationship between QoL and QWL balance (Pearson  $R=0.436$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), but private sector workers the replies of such a link could not be found ( $p=0.075$ ). The inverse relationship exists age category and QoL – the higher the age category of public sector respondents, the less it tends to evaluate QoL (Spearman  $R=-0.199$ ,  $p=0.002$ ), while this relationship does not exist at all in the private sector ( $p=0.673$ ).

Using the SPSS program Paired Sample t-test function revealed that the general analysis of all respondents, the respondents tend to better assess the QoL than the QWL. QoL assessment average of 2.93, while the average QWL – 2.59, the assessment of a five-point Likert scale. The differences were statistically significant because  $p=0.000$  ( $<0.05$ ) and T test value 15.041. Using Independent Samples t test function showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the QoL of those employed in the public and private sectors. It also does not exist statistically significant differences between these groups and the evaluation of the QoL at work. However, found that the QoL and QWL balance better the ( $t=-2.952$ ,  $p=0.003$ ) in the private sector employees ( $M=2.814$ ) than in the public sector employees ( $M=2.558$ ). After analyzing the results of the investigation and using two variables communication evaluation function Bivariate Correlation, it found that there was a statistically significant direct relationship moderate (Pearson  $R=0.406$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) between the QoL and QWL evaluation. The fact that there is a direct link between QoL and job satisfaction was found in India and study time (Shall, Fazil). The recent study compared men and women and the evaluation results – better working conditions evaluated in males than in females as well as men’s social importance of satisfaction seen significantly better than women. However, women were more favorably inclined to assess the balance of life and work and career opportunities. According to OECD statistics, men tend to work more hours – 17 percent of male workers work overtime, while women – 8 percent of OECD member countries (OECD: in 2016.).

The study revealed that there is a connection between the QWL assessment and QoL assessment (Pearson  $R=0.351$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), but there is only a weak link between QoL and the balance (Pearson  $R=0.162$ ,  $p=0.004$ ). It can be concluded that the better QoL the more positive they tend to treat QoL and QWL

balance. Such a result could lead to a favorite work, overtime lack of working environment without stress, which often determines the balanced agenda. It was found that QoL is closely related to the QWL and the balance of these two qualities (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. The balance of Life and Work-Life qualities in public and private sectors model**  
(Source: designed by the authors of this paper)

In both public and private sectors workers life-work balance model dominate immaterial factors but their distribution according to their importance varies – it can lead to a different type of work, rules of procedure, employees' personal values, which sometimes leads to the employee's choice of where to work in the sector. Employed in the public sector, the assessment of the QoL is determined mostly by the absence of stress ( $R=0.185$ ) social needs ( $R=0.181$ ), using high quality and healthy food ( $R=0.165$ ) and ecological products ( $R=0.161$ ). Whereas private sector workers prefer lead to absence of stress ( $R=0.266$ ), however, unlike the public sector, attributed great importance to compliance with the regime ( $R=0.236$ ), also they are open for changes ( $R=0.218$ ) and ecological products ( $R=0.216$ ). Both private ( $R=0.413$ ) and public ( $R=0.442$ ) sectors identified the principal factor leading to QWL – the work, but the second factor is different – the public sector workers identified burnout influence ( $R=0.222$ ), in the third place is emotional inwardly ( $R=0.196$ ), while the fourth – relationship with colleagues ( $R=0.181$ ). Meanwhile, the private sector opinion is different – in the second place is the relationship with the leadership ( $R=0.221$ ), the third – the ability to concentrate and focus on enabling environment ( $R=0.220$ ), while the menstrual ailments has a slightly smaller contribution ( $R=0.190$ ). Such factors significance of the differences can be explained as follows – mostly public sector entities are closely linked to each other under the authority of large volumes, so the workers there have the fear to make mistakes, because they can then be difficult to correct. Private sector employees are more independent, they are dealt with at the errors do not cause major problems. Relations with management are important in the public sector workers employed in the assessment on the fact that managers are a lot of them often have to communicate, and any disagreements can lead to tension.

It is important to note that QoL and QWL balance model quality may vary depending on age, gender, employment. Author's study revealed the QoL depends on the age of respondents. The older the respondent belongs to the category, the worse tends to evaluate QoL ( $R=-0.172$ ). Such a result could lead to age-caused health problems, started to slow down the pace of life, movement and the lack of active leisure. While it is established that age is improving strategic thinking, foresight, prudence, acquired more wisdom, improves the ability to reflect and to streamline the ability to control the life changes, holistic understanding and foreign language skills. In addition, older workers are more dedicated to their work and are able to look further into it. With age, increasing work experience, growing and valuable older workers social capital – in particular increasing professional competence in the accumulation of more and more tacit knowledge, improving communication skills, as well as the deepening of structural knowledge about the organization and its functions and expanding relationships with clients and communication network and better perceived operating environment changes taking place (Ilmarinen, 2012).

## 6. Conclusions

QoL – is a complex and multifaceted concept that includes physical, psychological, spiritual, social and economic fields, and is inextricably linked to human health. QoL should be systematically monitored not only in society, but also and especially in certain populations, especially in a difficult economic and social conditions of people living in communities. Subjective QoL determines life satisfaction in general and objective QoL reflects the social and cultural needs of the material well-being, social status and physical well-being. QoL is measured subjectively, dynamic object. Employees, who feel happy in their work, have higher labor productivity than those for which they work do not provide happiness. A happy employee is not necessarily the one who committed the common aspirations of the organization, but there is a strong connection between what makes people happy and what motivates them to effectively work. Increasingly, it is recognized that both the QoL, both QWL, and especially – the balance is the key of a happy and meaningful life factors.

In author's research was comparing the two separately investigated groups of respondents (workers employed in the private and public sectors), it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between workers in the private and public sectors in assessing the QoL and QWL, but there is a statistically significant difference in assessing the qualities of balance. The study revealed that there is a direct link between QoL and QWL evaluation of both the private and public sectors – the better evaluated QoL, the higher respondents tend to evaluate the QWL, and vice versa. The most important factors of QoL for private sector workers are absence of stress, follow mode, changes, use ecological products, whereas in public sector – also absence of stress and ecological products, but in contrast private sector, for them important satisfaction of communication and healthy food. The greatest impact on the QWL has the nature of work, relationships with management and colleagues, environment and workload. The high value of QWL directly influences the higher QoL. The QoL, happiness, life satisfaction and subjective well-being are interrelated.

**Q-as**

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