

Workplace Empowerment, Quality of Work-Life and Employee Commitment: A Study on a Distributor Company in Quezon Province

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Abstract

Employees are the organization's primary asset, and they determine the fate of the organization. Employees should be motivated, committed, and enthusiastic in their job to produce a productive output. Hence, the study aims to determine the effect of workplace empowerment on employee commitment mediated by the quality of work life. The primary data comes from distributing survey questionnaires and conducting an interview. The 60 respondents are employees from the logistics company located in Quezon Province. They are under finance, sales, human resources, logistics and warehouse, motor pool, and security and maintenance. The sampling method is total enumeration. The survey questionnaire consists of 45 items using a 5-point Likert scale. An interview is also conducted with nine questions. A descriptive causal research design is used for the data analysis, and regression analysis is used to test the hypotheses. The results of this study show that workplace empowerment (support, opportunity, resources, and power) does not significantly affect employee commitment. However, as workplace empowerment is treated as a whole, it significantly affects employees' commitment. Furthermore, the result shows the quality of work-life has a full mediation effect. This study developed a CAPSTONE Project to support employee development by conducting training seminars about work-life balance.

Keywords – workplace empowerment; quality of work-life; employee commitment

1. Introduction

Employees determine the organization's fate and are considered the organization's primary assets. For employees to produce the best productive output, they must be motivated, committed, and enthusiastic about their job (Nitafan, 2020). The employee's health and well-being are among the most critical aspects of the logistics company as they rely on the workforce. The research attempts to incorporate employees being the center of long-term assets of the organization. In a medical context, various kinds of research study focus on employees' well-being. However, the study on workplace empowerment, employee commitment, and quality of work-life are limited in a logistics context. This research may contribute to filling the said gap.

Gartner's 2020 ReimagineHR Employee survey showed a 21% increase in high performers when employers support employees' overall well-being. As employers support their employees personally and professionally, there is a significant impact on employees' quality of life. Employers benefit by having high-performing teams, attracting more talent, and lower employee turnover. According to Gallup's employee engagement survey 2022, as employees are more engaged and are in a highly engaged business unit, in absenteeism, there is an 81% difference and a 14% difference in productivity. It is more likely that engaged

employees stay with their employer. This study focuses on determining the effect of workplace empowerment on employee commitment where quality of work-life is a mediator.

This research covers the employees of a Distribution Company, a Filipino logistics company that strives to provide the best services while continuously nurturing people. As seen in the community needs assessment, the company's problem is that poor employee performance affects the organization's efficiency. This happens when employees tend to be absent without prior notice, which affects the overall operation and efficiency of other employees. According to the company's data, there are 85 instances that employees are AWOL and 511 instances that employees are absent. These absences, leaves, and AWOLs cause to have inefficient operations. The workload of the absent employee is given to the available employee. It may hinder the said employee from working efficiently. Furthermore, the individuals' limitations cause performance to fail (Aliyyah et al., 2022).

According to the study of Rushton et al. (2022), logistics is an important activity that widely uses resources and persons that affect the economy. It is imperative to a logistics company that employees' good health and well-being are taken care of so that their outcome is effective and efficient. In return, the organization's outcome is also the same. This study addresses two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For the SD Goal 3, it focuses on good health and well-being. On the other hand, Goal 8 focuses on decent work and economic growth. This study is for businesses to support their employees better in their health and well-being while working. This study is also for businesses to support their employees better in their quality of work-life in the organization. On the other hand, this study would give insight into the organization and managers by understanding the variables. It would also guide them to create strategies for employees to have value-driven and meaningful working lives in the organization.

The main output of this study for the chosen community is a training seminar. This project is to support employees' development by conducting training seminars about work-life balance.

This study aims to determine the effect of workplace empowerment on employee commitment mediated by the quality of work-life. The results from this study would be the basis for conducting a training seminar to support employees' personal and professional development.

2. Research Frameworks

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 is based on the study of Nayak et al. (2018) in which explored workplace empowerment and employee commitment relationship and the mediation of quality of work. The study's target population is Indian private healthcare employees. To select their participants, simple random sampling is used in their research. The hybrid approach is utilized, using questionnaire and informal interaction to maximize the response rates. The study indicated that there is a moderate level of the variables. Moreover, there is a moderate correlation between WE and QWL, and WE and EC. Furthermore, there is a high level of correlation between QWL and EC. It showed that WE and QWL have a significant relationship with EC.

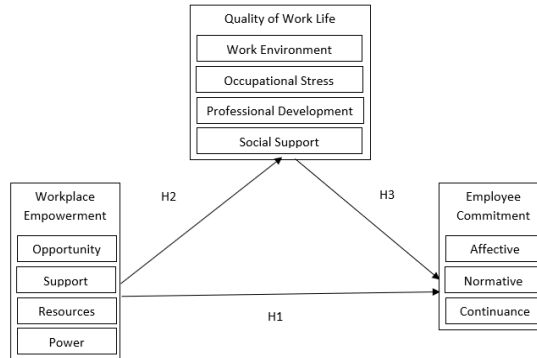


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework Source: Workplace empowerment, quality of work life and employee commitment: A study on Indian health sector (Nayak et al., 2018)

The operational framework is adapted from the study of Nayak et al. (2018). Their study is conducted in India, and their participants are from the health sector. On the other hand, this study is conducted in the Philippines; specifically, a distribution company in Quezon Province and its subsidiaries are employees of the organization. The operational framework is shown in Figure 2.

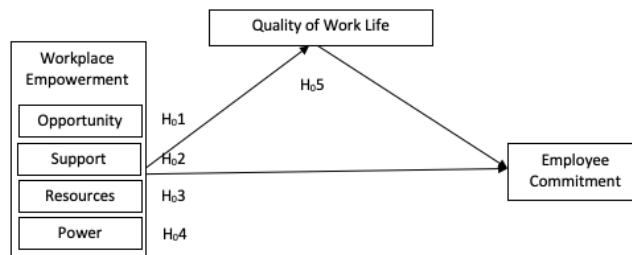


Fig. 2. Operational Framework

The framework consists of workplace empowerment, employee commitment and quality of work-life. This research aims to determine the effect of opportunity, support, resources, and power under workplace empowerment on employee commitment mediated by the quality of work-life. In this model, the independent variable is workplace empowerment – opportunity, support, resources, and power, while employee commitment is the dependent variable. The quality of work-life mediates between workplace environment and employee commitment.

3. Research Methods

The design that was applied in this research is descriptive research design, and both quantitative and qualitative research design were used. A causal research design in this study was employed to determine the effect of workplace empowerment on employee commitment mediated by the quality of work-life. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The study locale is in Quezon Province, where the

participants of this study were all employees of the company. The sampling method used was total enumeration. A reliability test was done to see the reliability of the questionnaire in a local setting.

Primary data was collected through a survey. This study adapted the questionnaire used in the study of Nayak et al. (2018). The questionnaire had a total of 45 items. There were 16 items for workplace empowerment while for the quality of life, there were 18 items. There were also 11 items to measure employee commitment.

To measure the variables in this study, a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 to 5 described as: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (2) Disagree, and (1) strongly disagree. To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was done by administering the survey among 20 employees from the Batangas branch of the company. Overall, the instrument passed resulting in significant loadings Cronbach's Alpha = 0.864. Even though the pilot-test result of employee commitment's Cronbach Alpha is 0.210, the result for the main respondents was 0.832. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0-1. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.00 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. George & Malory (2003 cited by Goel & Srivastava, 2016) provides the following techniques: a) >0.90 = excellent; b) $0.80-0.89$ =Good; c) $0.70-0.79$ =Acceptable; d) $0.60-0.69$ =Questionable; e) $0.50-0.59$ =Poor; and f) <0.50 =Unacceptable.

After the results have been analyzed, an interview was conducted face-to-face. The location of the interview was in a meeting room on the company's premises. The interview was conducted on May 8, 2023, at 4:00 in the afternoon. There was also a free meal included in the interview. The participants were selected by their respective department heads. The departments included in the interview were Finance, Sales, Human Resources, Warehouse and Logistics, Motor pool, and Security and Maintenance. There were two participants selected from each department. Participants were given a consent form, and verbal consent was asked. Confidentiality was reiterated to the participants. The 9 questions asked in the interview were based on the survey questionnaire. For the documentation, the researcher used an audio and video recording device. Computerized transcriptions of the participants' responses were then accomplished both in Microsoft Word and Excel formats. The use of the IBM SPSS Text Analytics software facilitated the interpretation of the transcribed word-for-word responses by identifying the frequencies of similar words from various statements and building categories or themes from such.

For ethical considerations, this research project complied with research guidelines established by the De La Salle Lipa Research and Publications Office. The research data was gathered with the utmost confidentiality and by the company's privacy policy. The research paper questionnaires were disseminated face-to-face to the employees of a Distribution Company. The questionnaire included pages of the informed consent form that consisted of the information sheet and the consent section. After the completion of answering the questionnaire, an interview was held with the same respondents. Consent from the participants was obtained before they answered the questionnaire and interview.

The study's expected outputs were programs that are meaningful to the organizational health and working climate. The project action plan is to support employees by conducting training seminars about balanced work-life.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the average responses to each of the factors. It is revealed that the respondents have a high level of agreement on all the variables. There is a high level of workplace empowerment with an average rating of 4.35 and SD of 0.46 and this is attributed to the high level of work opportunity where work there are

challenges with work. There is also a high level of quality of work-life with an average of 3.98 and SD of 0.45, which attributed to the high level of good working relationships of colleagues is being practiced. Furthermore, there is a high level of commitment with an average of 3.82 and SD of 0.54 which indicates to the high level of employee loyalty that the organization deserves.

Table 1. An example of a table

Variable	Mean	Std. dev	Interpretation
Workplace Empowerment	4.35	0.46	High
Quality of Work-life	3.98	0.45	High
Employee Commitment	3.82	0.54	High

Table 1 presents the level of empowerment of employees and the results show that there is a high level of workplace empowerment. This shows that employees are provided opportunities to use and gain knowledge, skills, and abilities in their tasks. Employees are also given enough resources for them to use in their work. This also shows that employees have work flexibility and initiatives. Furthermore, employees are given constructive criticism and problem-solving advice from superiors. These results are supported by previous study of Norbu et al., (2020) and Andika et al., (2020) that empowered employees who are committed to the organization if they are given a job, being empowered, and treated fairly.

It can be shown in the table that employees have a high level of quality of work-life. This shows that employees believe that they have a good relationship with colleagues and are respected by superiors, subordinates, and customers. They are also given opportunities to further continue their education. These results are supported by previous study of Kerdpitak et al. (2020) who cited that organizational support also helps employees' commitment and the organization's culture to improve HRM practices and performance.

Meanwhile, in terms of employee commitment, it can be seen from the table that their commitment is also high. Employees believe that the organization deserve their loyalty and feel that they have a moral obligation to remain. They also believe that they feel to have a strong sense of belongingness to the organization. These results are supported by previous study of Nayak et al. (2018) where employee commitment is employee's loyalty and willingness to continue working with the organization.

4.2 Effect of Workplace Empowerment - Support, Workplace Empowerment - Opportunity, Workplace Empowerment - Resources, Workplace Empowerment – Power on Employee Commitment

Table 2. Effect of Workplace Empowerment - Support, Workplace Empowerment - Opportunity, Workplace Empowerment - Resources, Workplace Empowerment – Power on Employee Commitment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Interpretation
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.206	0.625		1.929	0.059	
	Workplace Empowerment – Opportunity	0.278	0.172	0.264	1.614	0.112	Not Significant
	Workplace Empowerment – Resources	0.061	0.198	0.063	0.308	0.759	Not Significant
	Workplace Empowerment – Power	0.117	0.218	0.113	0.538	0.593	Not Significant
	Workplace Empowerment – Support	0.143	0.198	0.134	0.723	0.473	Not Significant
		R ² =0.247		F-value=4.521	p-value<0.05		Sig.=0.003b

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

The results contradict the study of Thurston et al. (2018) where there is a strong relationship between empowerment and commitment. As employees feel their value, their well-being is being taken care of. This result also contradicts the study of Nayak et al. (2018) wherein there is a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 3. Qualitative Results of Workplace Empowerment - Opportunity, Workplace Empowerment - Resources, Workplace Empowerment - Power, and Workplace Empowerment – Support

Questions	Generated Themes	Statements Involved
Q1: Could you explain the instances that you were given an opportunity to develop your traits?	in dealing with customers / communication	6,6b,6c,8,9,10,12
	in decision-making activities	1,3,4,8,10,11
Q2: Could you explain if you are being given with enough resources and assistance in your work?	co-workers/ colleagues	2b,3,5,6
	adequate equipment	3,9,10,11
	help/assistance (in different ways)	1,3,4,5,6,9
Q6: In what ways are your superior is giving you a chance to make your own decision in a certain task?	trust /being reliable	2,9,10,11
	with instructions	1,3
	with proper communication	2b,4,5,9
Q5: In times that you are receiving constructive criticisms, how do you accept it?	positively – a way to improve	2,7,8,10,12
	positively – to realize the right actions/decisions	3,4,5,9,12

As shown in Table 3, it can be gleaned from all responses that employees have decision-making activities and used social skills in their daily tasks. The results show that employees are given the opportunity to develop their critical thinking by making decisions on their own. They were also given opportunity to develop their social skills in interacting with customers, superiors, and co-workers. The results are supported by previous study of Mukwakungu et al. (2018) that stated employee empowerment significantly influences customer satisfaction, quality improvement, and organizational effectiveness.

In the result of the interview, employees are given enough resources they need in their work. It shows that employees are given personal and professional assistance. It shows that the company have the capacity to mobilize resources to employees. The results are supported by previous study of Monje-Amor et al. (2020) stated that as the organization and supervisors give employee their basic needs, there is more employee engagement.

Meanwhile, it can be gleaned from all responses that employee’s decisions are reliable and are trusted by their superiors. The result shows employees who are given a chance to make their own decision help them reach their full potential. The results are supported by previous study of Alias et al. (2018) who cited that

empowerment is the most influential predictor of job satisfaction, where high-level positions entrust and give subordinates authority to handle their job.

Furthermore, in the result of the interview, it shows that employees positively receive constructive criticisms. It shows that employees take criticisms to improve their competencies such as the ability to make critical decisions, additional knowledge, and skills. The results are supported by previous study of Augustrianto et al. (2019) that employees that have positive attitudes show improvement in their behavior and QWL improves employee working conditions and greater organizational effectiveness.

4.3 Effect of Workplace Empowerment on Employee Commitment

Table 4 shows that workplace empowerment positively affects employee commitment with a p-value of less than 0.05 and an F-value of 18.141. The positive effect also indicates that the increase in workplace empowerment results in an increase in employee commitment. For workplace empowerment, an R² of 0.238 indicates that 23.8% could be attributed to the variation in employee commitment.

Table 4. Effect of Workplace Empowerment on Employee Commitment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Interpretation
1	(Constant)	1.307	0.594		2.202	0.032	
	Workplace Empowerment	0.579	0.136	0.488	4.259	0.000	Significant
R ² =0.238		F-value=18.141			p-value<0.05		Sig.=0.000b

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

The result shows that as workplace empowerment is treated individually there has no significance. However, if it is treated as a whole, it shows a significant effect on employee commitment. The result implicates that the organization must use opportunity, resources, power, and support, at the same time, to measure its significant effect on employee commitment. The results are supported by the previous study of Thurston et al. (2018) where employees perceive that they are valued, and their well-being is taken care of, there is a strengthened relationship between empowerment and commitment.

4.4 Effect of Workplace Empowerment on Employee Commitment

Table 5 illustrates that workplace empowerment and employee commitment relationship becomes not significant ($\beta=0.129$, p-value<0.05) when the quality of work-life is considered as a mediator ($\beta=0.837$, p-value<0.05), thus demonstrating a full mediation. Furthermore, an R² of 0.566 indicates that 56.6% can be attributed to the variation in employee commitment.

Table 5. Mediation Effect of Quality of Work-life

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Interpretation
1	(Constant)	-0.072	0.499		-0.143	0.886	
	Workplace	0.129	0.124	0.108	1.035	0.305	Not

Empowerment						Significant
Quality of Work-life	0.837	0.128	0.687	6.558	0.000	Significant
R ² =0.566	F-value = 37.142	p-value<0.05	Indirect Effect = 0.4896	Percent Mediation = 0.8456		

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

To further investigate the mediator, the Sobel test is utilized. The result confirms that quality of work-life significantly mediates workplace empowerment and employee commitment ($Z=4.369$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$). The results contradict the study of Nayak et al. (2018) in which there is a partial mediation, which indicates that quality of work-life and workplace empowerment are significant.

Table 6. Qualitative Results of Quality of Work-Life and Employee Commitment

Questions	Generated Themes	Statements Involved
Q3: What are the chances in your work that give you happiness?	when employees are happy	8,9,11
	salary	7,9
	no problem/ concerns	6,7
	fulfillment	1,8
Q4: In times that you feel failure in work, what do you do or your reaction to it?	“right the wrong” (assess and fix)	1,2,3,5,6,11
	emotion control	1,1b,3,9,10,11
Q7: What are the things that should be done for an employee to stay long in his or her work?	make him/her happy at work	9,10,11,12
	“beyond the salary”	9,11
	family	4,7
	co-workers	9,12
Q8: What are the things that you liked in your work?	effective management	9,11,12
	good/kind boss	2,7,9,10
Q9: What do you want to add about the ways on how an employee can stay long in his or her job?	training and seminar	1,8,12
	socialization activities (outing, teambuilding)	4,5,6,10,12

As shown in Table 6, employees have a sense of satisfaction working with co-workers. It can be gleaned from all responses that employees accomplishing their tasks give them sense of fulfillment in their job. The results show that employees’ happiness does not only rely on their salary but also by fulfilling their daily task. The results are also supported by the study of Saputra et al. (2022), where employee job satisfaction relies on employee commitment. The study indicates a positive reaction where employees are attached and committed to the organization.

In the result of the interview, the employees feel frustrations and problems from the job. The employees tried to control their emotions regarding fixing the difficult situation they face. It can be gleaned from all responses of the employees that having a positive mindset helps their situation more. The results show that the emotion of employees has an effect with their perception towards work. The results are supported by previous

study of Tamini et al. (2018) and Sattar et al. (2018) that stated employees' emotional intelligence affects their behavior, achievements, and performance in the workplace, but enhancing it will improve productivity and strengthen QWL.

As shown in the results, it can be gleaned from all the responses that employees expressed that they stay in the organization because they are happy with what they are doing and have collaboration with colleagues. The results show that employees who are happy and contented in their job are likely to stay in the organization. The result shows that employees who are satisfied towards quality of work-life, they are committed and stay in the organization. The results are supported by the study of Agus et al. (2020) where employees' contentment towards QWL has a stronger intention to stay in the organization and commitment.

Furthermore, it can be inferred from all the responses that employees appreciate the organization's thoughtfulness towards employee's welfare. The results show that the organization's culture and work ethics have an effect with employee's insight towards the organization. These results are supported by previous study of Fakhri et al. (2020) where employees' QWL is a relevant category, wherein the factors, supportive organizational culture, and organizational facilities have a positive effect on employees' QWL.

Meanwhile, the results show that employees stay longer in the company as they are encouraged and as they are given a chance to develop themselves. The result shows that employees are motivated and cope with organizational goals by having successful HRM practices that focus on organizational culture and employee commitment. These results are supported by the study of Nwachukwu et al. (2020) where the implementation of a strategy can significantly increase the organization's performance by emphasizing employee commitment. It is also vital that the management understands its policy, creating an environment that supports employee commitment and achieves superior strategic performance through strategy implementation.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the analyses, this study was able to determine the significant effect of workplace empowerment on employee commitment which was mediated by the quality of work-life. Workplace empowerment (support, opportunity, resources, and power) does not significantly affect employee commitment. Thus, this study failed to reject the null hypothesis 1 to 4. However, if workplace empowerment is treated as a whole, there is a significant effect on employee commitment. On the other hand, the mediation of quality of work-life between workplace empowerment and employee commitment is significant, thus the 5th hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, the full mediation of quality of work-life demonstrates that it affects employee commitment more than workplace empowerment.

Stated in the findings, there were moderate levels of quality of work-life in the result of the survey and the answers from the interview. It was recommended that the company must focus on creating strategic programs regarding employees' quality of work-life. This may include giving special awards in terms of employee performance to boost motivation, confidence, and productivity. The results also showed that there is a feeling of frustration and failure from the job which affects employees' quality of work-life. The company may conduct one-on-one sessions for employees to share their experiences professionally and personally to give them guidance in coping with their situation.

Stated in the findings, the results showed that the quality of work-life significantly affected employee commitment more. Thus, the company may consider creating more opportunities for employees to gain knowledge and skills. They may conduct training seminars about employee's work-life balance, as seen in the Project Action Plan. The topics from the seminars can support employees to develop personally and professionally.

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