

## Gap Analysis (Current Situation and Favorable Situation) Variables of Quality of Working Life and Organizational Apathy in the General Departments of Sports and Youth of the Northwestern Provinces of Iran

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The objective of this study was to analyze the gap (current and favorable situation) of the variables of work life quality and organizational apathy in general departments of sports and youth of the northwestern provinces of Iran.

**Methods:** This research was conducted through descriptive and correlational method. Population included all formal staffs of sport and youth organizations of west northern provinces of Iran (N=204, East Azerbaijan=86, West Azerbaijan=57 and Ardebil=61) in which all population (male=139, female=65) were selected as sample size using census sampling method. The organizational apathy scale by DanaieeFard et.al. (2010) and work life quality by Walton (1973) were used to gather data. The validity of scales was confirmed by experts and their reliability was calculated for work life quality ( $\alpha=0.82$ ) and organization apathy ( $\alpha=0.88$ ) through Cronbach's alpha.

**Results:** Results showed that current status of work-life quality (m=2.26) was in non-optimal level than to guessed mean (m=3), however, current status of staffs' apathy (m=2.31) was optimal than to guessed mean (m=3). Work-life quality inversely and significantly related to organizational apathy ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Further, there was not a significant difference between work-life quality, organizational apathy and demographic features (gender and education).

**Conclusion:** Considering the research findings, it is suggested that sports managers seek to improve the quality of employees' working life, which in turn could reduce the problem of organizational apathy and improve employee productivity.

### Keywords:

Organizational apathy, Sport marketing, Work life quality

## Introduction

Nowadays, human resources have received a lot of attention in the organizations. Optimizing abilities and skills, preserving staffs' motivation, optimizing job satisfaction and work life quality (QLW) and others have become important issues (Goodarzi, 2016). Through literature related to organizational behavior, it can be stated that what could direct organizations to achieve their goals in accordance with workplace dynamic conditions which is one of the necessities of 21 century are increasing work motivation, attempting and improving human communications, attracting their participation in the organizational decision-makings. Contrary, the causes of lack of motivation, decreased organizational commitment, decreased organizational performance and decreased participation in formal communications could be attributed to ignoring of human resource needs (Boroumand, 2017).

Nowadays, the concept of work life quality has become a major social subject in contemporary management literature in the world. Work life quality could be defined in two parts. In objective definition, WLQ is defined as real conditions of workplace in an organization including wages, amenities and safety, decision-making participation, democracy of supervisor, diversity and richness of jobs. In subjective definition, WLQ is defined as ideas and attitudes of individuals toward to WLQ in the whole and work life (organizational and job) in particular (Salmani, 2005). Walton has categorized WLQ into eight categories:

- Fair and sufficient payment
- Safety and health workplace
- Provision of growth opportunity and permanent job security
- Social attachment of work life
- The total space of life
- Social integration and cohesion in workplace
- Development of human capabilities (Mir Sepasi, 2007).

Literature related to work life quality of staff showed that it was significantly related to behavioral responses including job motivation, job performance, organizational apathy

(Samandari, 2017). Through studying relationship between WLQ and organizational performance of sport and youth organizations, Mollayezarandi (2015) reported that WLQ positively and significantly related to organizational performance. Samandari (2017) evaluated the relationship between WLQ and organization performance of sport and youth organization' staffs of Kerman province and resulted that its WLQ and staffs' organizational performance are optimal. Talebpour et.al. (2018) analyzed gap of main processes of human capital of sport and youth organization of Razavi Khorasan province and reported that this organization has critical status from maintenance perspective in human resource management part. In a study, Yosefi et.al (2018), studied the impact of WLQ on the organizational apathy of Iran Olympic committee and found that WLQ negatively and significantly impacted on the organizational apathy. Morgenroth et.al (2021) studied the (in) compatibility of identities through understanding gender differences in work-life conflict through the fit with leaders. Agarwal (2020) showed that there was a significant difference between WLQ of IT industries staffs based on their gender. Pace & Sciotto (2022) reported that there was significant difference between WLQ of Italian workers based on gender. Yah et.al. (2017) found that supporting of staffs by managers that was considered as the predictive factors of job satisfaction impacted on the staffs' WLQ. According to Bestas et.al. (2018), synergy and integration of management and staffs' WLQ could help to optimize performance and increase the effects of multi-dimensional approaches. In a study, Moda et.al. (2021) reported the importance of wage, hours and conditions of job, welfare in workplace as the key factors impacted on the staffs' productivity.

The complexity of human behavior in organization and its playing role in the organizational goals has attracted the attention of managers for many years. Therefore, it is necessary that managers taken to account staffs' behavior beyond their performance because of direct impact of staffs' behavior on

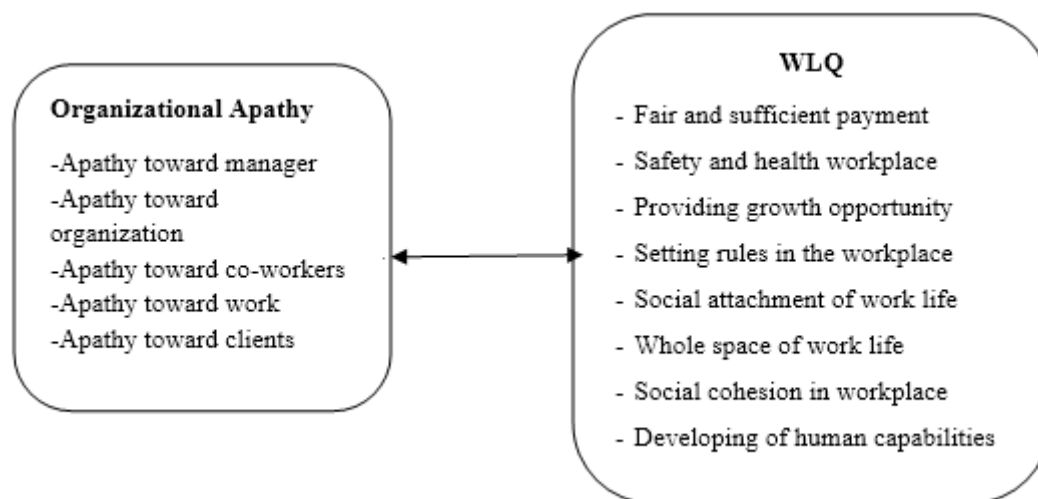
the organization performance finally. Organizational apathy is considered as one of these behaviors (Boroumand, 2017). From a psychological perspective, organizational apathy is a status that individual loss his/her hope to achieve their goals because of long failure and he/she from reality and the origin of the failure. From a sociological perspective, organizational apathy suggests lack of feelings, pessimistic, lack of motivation and, in other words, social depression. From an organizational perspective, the concept of organizational apathy has entered the field of management and organization in recent years and different authors provided various definitions for organizational apathy. It is a special type of apathy that the motivation of individual decreases, do jobs with less motivation and do not focus on the job that in turn decrease the productivity of human resources (Rezaiyan, 2000, 99). Apathy of staff manifests itself in five dimensions:

- a) Apathy toward to manager
- b) Apathy toward to clients
- c) Apathy toward to organization
- d) Apathy toward to work
- e) Apathy toward to co-workers (DanaieeFard et.al, 2010).

Tejero et.al. (2021) reported that the organizational apathy of some industry staff is less than non-optimal level during Covid-19. Through studying the relationship of work conflict, perceived organizational support with secondary school teachers' organizational apathy of Sabzevar city, Ghasemi (2016) found that there was a significant difference between male and female organizational apathy so that male teachers were more apathetic than female teachers. There was a significant difference between education and organizational apathy, so that individuals with high education were more apathetic than others (Khayami et.al.2020). Aghelzadeh et.al. (2017) studied teachers' organizational apathy and found that teachers' organizational apathy was less than average level. The dimensions of organizational apathy were apathy toward manager, to organization, to co-workers, to work and apathy to clients had the lowest mean. Furthermore,

organizational apathy in male teachers we more than female teachers. Nasiri & Foroumandi (2019) studied the organizational apathy based on selected components of WLQ in staffs of West Azerbaijan sport and Youth organizations and found that organizational apathy inversely and significantly related to WLQ. They showed that mean of all organizational apathy was less than average. Abolhassanzadehzavaram et.al. (2020) showed that the status of an organization was average based on qualitative features. Paper (2018) suggested that perceived conflict in an organization could have negative effect on the organizational trust and therefore the accountability and performance are influenced by its negative effect.

The Necessity and importance of this research can be proposed in both scientific and applied dimensions. In the scientific dimension, due to the limitations of research in organizational behavior in general and little research on the quality of work life and organizational indifference in particular in the current research community, more research is needed to understand the current situation better. Practically, the analysis of components such as quality of work life and organizational apathy will pave the path for growth and improvement of human resource management and organizational effectiveness. Considering the important and prominent role of the General Departments of Sports and Youth in preparing and setting up quantitative and qualitative development programs of physical education and sports in the province, it is necessary to evaluate the organizational behaviors of their employees and their organizational behaviors. Therefore, what is considered as the problem of this study is how to analyze the gap (current situation and favorable situation) variables of quality of working life and organizational apathy of the staff in the form of model presentation? To this end, in the present study, a theoretical research model was developed to analyze the gap (current situation and favorable situation) quality of work life and organizational apathy, in general Departments of Sports and Youth of the northwestern provinces of Iran based on the assumptions.



**Figure 1.** The theoretical model of research, retrieved of Walton WLQ model and DanaieeFard organizational apathy model

## Materials and Methods

This research is a descriptive and correlation study. Population includes all formal staffs of sport and youth organization of Iran' West Northern provinces (N=204, East Azerbaijan=86, West Azerbaijan=57 and Ardebil=61) that all population were selected as sample size using census sampling method because of the limitation of population (male=139, female=65). The following scales were made use to gather data:

**The organizational apathy:** This scale was provided by DanaieeFard et.al. (2010) including five dimensions (apathy toward clients, apathy to organization, apathy to work, apathy to co-workers and apathy to manager). It was scored using Likert-five points including strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Its reliability was evaluated in literature. Kazemi et.al (2018) (2018) confirmed its reliability using Cronbach' Alpha (0.93) and Zareiee (2018) calculated its reliability through Cronbach' Alpha as 0.87. In our research, the validity of scale was confirmed by sports management experts and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha=0.88$ ).

**WLQ:** This scale was provided by Walton (1973) including eight dimensions including fair and sufficient payment, safety and healthy workplace, developing human capabilities,

providing growth opportunities and permanent security, social cohesion and integration, setting rules in the organization, whole space of work life and social attachment. It was scored using Likert-five points including strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Its reliability was confirmed using Cronbach' Alpha as 0.92 (Walton, 1973). Kazemi et.al. (2018) calculated its reliability using Cronbach' Alpha (0.87) and Zareiee (2018) calculated it as 0.87 using Cronbach' Alpha. In our research, the validity of scale was confirmed by sports management experts and its reliability was calculated ( $\alpha=0.82$ ) through Cronbach's alpha.

Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test showed that data distribution was normal and we made use of One-Sample t test, independent t test, Pearson correlation coefficient, variance analysis to analyze data. SPSS, version 24 was used to analyze data.

## Results

According to descriptive statistic and table 1, from 204 participants, 139 (%68.1) participants were male and 65 participants (%31.9) were female. Furthermore, table 1 shows that, from 204 participants, 19 participants (%9) have diploma and associate degree, 113 (%56) participants have B.A. degree and 72 (%35) participants have M.A and Ph.D. degrees.

*Table 1.* Demographic characteristics of research participants

Demographic variables	frequency	percentage
Female	65	31.9
Male	139	68.1
Diploma & Associate Degree	19	9
B.A.	113	56
M.A and Ph.D.	72	35
total	204	100

In the next step, research findings have been provided in detail. Firstly, table 3 shows the current status of WLQ and organizational apathy of staffs.

*Table 2.* One-sample t test of WLQ and its dimensions

	Variables	M	value	DF	t	p
WLQ	Fair and sufficient payment	2.36			-17.50	.001
	Safety and health workplace	2.37			-24.01	.001
	Developing human capabilities	2.17			-31.17	.001
	Providing growth opportunity	2.24			-22.52	.001
	Social cohesion in workplace	2.15	3	213	-37.91	.001
	Setting rules in the workplace	2.22			-30.46	.001
	Whole space of work life	2.32			-20.84	.001
	Social attachment of work life	2.24			-28.92	.001
	Total	2.26			-62.17	.001
organizational apathy	Apathy toward clients	2.46			-13.10	.001
	Apathy toward organization	2.32			-16.84	.001
	Apathy toward work	2.27	3	3	-18.38	.001
	Apathy toward co-workers	2.15			-13.10	.001
	Apathy toward manager	2.23			-16.84	.001
	Total	2.31			-18.38	.001

To measure WLQ of current status of staffs, we are made use of one-sample t test. According to table 3, total mean of WLQ was 2.26. Furthermore, mean of eight dimensions of WLQ including fair and sufficient payment, safety and healthy workplace, developing human capabilities, providing growth opportunities and permanent security, social cohesion and integration, setting rules in the organization, whole space of work life and social attachment were 2.36, 2.37, 2.17, 2.24, 2.15, 2.22, 2.32 and 2.24, respectively. Safety and health workplace and social cohesion and integration have the highest and lowest means among WLQ dimensions. According to table and total mean of WLQ (2.26) which is less than 3, it could be claimed that current status of WLQ of sport and youth organization of West Northern provinces of Iran is significantly lower than optimal level. Furthermore, according to table 3, mean of total

organizational apathy is 2.31. Further, means of five dimensions including apathy toward clients, apathy toward organization, apathy toward work, apathy toward co-workers and apathy toward manager were reported as 2.46, 2.32, 2.27, 2.15 and 2.33, respectively. Apathy toward clients and apathy toward co-workers had the highest and lowest means, respectively. According to total mean of organizational apathy (2.31) which is lower than guessed mean (3), we could claim that the current status of organizational apathy of staffs of sport and youth organization of West Northern provinces of Iran is significantly optimal. Then, we test the relationships between WLQ and organizational apathy (table 3) using Pearson Correlation coefficient test, and difference between WLQ and demographic features (gender and education) of staffs using Independent t test (table 4) and On-way Variance analysis (table 5).

**Table 3.** Correlation between WLQ and organizational apathy

Variable	N	R	Sig
<b>WLQ and organizational apathy</b>	204	-.163*	.017

According to table 3, correlation coefficient between WLQ and organizational apathy is calculated as -.163. Sig level (.017) is less than error level ( $\alpha=.05$ ) suggesting that WLQ inversely and significantly related to

staffs' organizational apathy. Furthermore, table 4 shows the results of independent t test to measure the difference between WLQ and organizational apathy of staffs based on gender.

**Table 4.** Results of Independent t test

	F	P	t	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
<b>WLQ</b>	.420	.894	.133	212	.003	.025
<b>Organizational Apathy</b>	9.827	.096	1.673	206.687	.089	.053

According to table 4. There is no difference between organizational apathy and work life quality of staffs based gender ( $p>0.05$ ). In

table 5, results of one-way variance analysis are provided.

**Table 5.** One-way Variance Analysis comparing staffs' WLQ based on Education

	Group	N	M	SD	F	P
<b>WLQ</b>	Associate Degree	19	2.30	.163	.630	.530
	B.A	113	2.25	.186		
	M.A and Ph.D.	72	2.25	.158		
<b>Organizational Apathy</b>	Associate Degree	19	2.25	.524	.215	.807
	B.A	113	2.30	.460		
	M.A and Ph.D.	72	2.31	.508		

According to table 5, means of WLQ of staffs with diploma and associate degree, B.A. and M.A. and Ph.D. are 2.30, 2.25 and 2.25, respectively. We made use of one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) to compare means of staffs' WLQ based on education level. Normality of data, in dependency of groups and equality of variances are prerequisites to using this test. According to table 5, F value is (.630) and p (.530) value of staffs' WLQ is higher than .05 suggesting that the education level of staffs does not significantly impacted on the staffs' WLQ. Furthermore, according to table 8, organizational apathy means of staffs with diploma and associate degrees, bachelor degree and masters and Ph.D. degrees were 2.25, 2.30

and 2.31, respectively. According to table, F value is (.215) and p (.807) is higher than .05 suggesting that education level of staffs does not significantly impacted on the organizational apathy.

### Discussion

Nowadays, the success of organizations and different societies is dependent to optimal use of management science and to studying the path. Considering importance and role pf human resource in the achievement of organizational goals, it is so important to study workplace, behavioral features of staffs and the way staffs' behaviors are formed in the organization which are considered as the most

important discussions in the literature related to organizational behavior. Since sport and youth organization play a substantial role in the training of physical forces, enhancing a healthy spirit in the individuals, generalizing public and championship sport, training national and international champions in order to achieve global prestige and increase national pride and unity, it is so critical to analyze the current status of staffs' organizational components. Therefore, this study analyzes the gap (current status and optimal status) of WLQ and organizational apathy components of sport and youth organizations of West Northern provinces of Iran. Results showed that current status of staffs' WLQ was lower than optimal level. Furthermore, safety and health workplace and social cohesion have the highest and lowest mean among components of WLQ. Given to total mean of WLQ (2.26) which was lower than 3, it could be claimed that current status of staffs' WLQ is significantly lower than optimal level. Work life quality has been emphasized as a global concept in human resource management and organizational development and it is considered as the organizational performance techniques. To end this, it is necessary to equip managers to behavioral management knowledge and its utility skills in order to understand the workplace status and staffs' need to be able to balance the workplace life and their personal life. According to our results suggesting low quality of work life of staffs, it is necessary to redefine organizational behavior basics as a whole and work life quality in particular while identifying weakness points of staffs' problems in the sport and youth organization. Through changing and providing optimal conditions, they should be able to increase work life quality of staffs through staffs' participation in decision makings, solving the problems, creating security and safety including psychical and mental safety in workplace, paying sufficient salaries and benefits based on competences and attempts, decreasing job tensions among staffs, increasing trust and spirit of cooperation and participation, creating opportunities for progress, increasing facilities and welfare services for staffs (employees club, sport teams,

consular services, credit union, organizational house, transportation services), establishing a suitable and reasonable evaluation system in the workplace, being free in the selecting job routes for staffs, creating educational and motivational programs (in-service), establishing empathetic communications system among individuals and staffs, establishing pension benefits and insurance for staffs, establishing suggestions system, involving staffs in profit and share of firm or organization, designing of job and forming teamwork and creating independency in work place. Generally, our results are consistent with Talebpour et.al. (2018) and Salehnya (2020) results, however are inconsistent with the results of Samandari (2017). According to results, current status of staffs' organizational apathy was lower than optimal level. Results further showed that apathy to clients and apathy to co-workers had the highest and lowest means, respectively. Given the mean of organizational apathy (2.31) which is lower than 3, we can claim that current status of organizational apathy is significantly evaluated at optimal level. To explain our results, it can be stated that staff have low organizational apathy and the staff of sport and youth organizations have work motivation, commitment and suitable performance. However, it is again necessary that organizational managers seek to identify problems and issues related to low organizational apathy of some staff. In this regard, what could help organizations to achieve their goals is to identify staffs' behavioral features, attempting to provide spiritual, financial and mental needs of staffs, increasing work motivation, improving human communications and attracting their participation in the organizational decision-makings. Totally, our results are consistent with results of Salari (2015), Aqelzadeh et.al. (2017), Khayami et.al. (2019) and are inconsistent with Salehnya (2020), Abolhassanzadehzavarom et.al. (2020). According to third hypothesis results, WLQ inversely and significantly related to organizational apathy. In other words, increased WLQ lead to decreased organizational apathy. To explain our results, we could state that staff

will feel good at work, motivation, commitment, creativity, efficiency, loyalty, high performance and ultimately lower apathy in the organization, when they enjoy higher quality of work life in their organization. Therefore, it is necessary that managers of sport and youth organizations take into account the following cases to be able to increase WLQ and decrease organizational apathy in the organizations: the wages should be fit with social and staffs criteria, the benefits paid to staffs should be higher than their least life standards, the workplace should be safe and health from physical perspective, their work hours should be determined reasonable, paving the path through which they could improve their personal capabilities, progress opportunities and applying obtained skills, paving the path of freedom of speech through which staffs could state their opinions without of fear of ravage of higher authorities, facilitating the law dominance on the human dominance, explaining the perception of staffs toward organizational goals and objectives, taking into account staffs' participation in the achieving of organizational goals, balancing the WLQ and other parts of staffs life, enhancing the work space so that staffs feel they belong to the organization and providing opportunities including use of in dependency and self-controlling at work, enjoying of various skills, accessing to suitable information related to work and planning work programs for staffs. Totally, our results are consistent with results of Kazemi et.al. (2018), Nasiri & Farahmand (2017), Yah et.al. (2017), Bastas et.al. (2018) and Moda et.al. (2021). Further, results showed that there was no significantly difference between WLQ and demographic (gender and education) features of staffs. To explain our results, we could state that WLQ seek to improve human situations of staffs at workplace to be able to create healthier and more humanized situations. On the other hand, such a process could be influenced by various factors including lack of facility at workplace, managing styles, lack of sufficient opportunity to advance and unsuitable work conditions. From researcher perspectives, expertise nature of sport organizations, staffs close and

friendship relationships in formal or informal communications and similar perception of most of staffs from organization environment situation and work life quality could be the cause of lack of significant difference between WLQ of staffs based on their education and gender. Our results are consistent with findings of Nazari (2012), Agarwal (2022), however are inconsistent with the results of Ranjdoust (2010), Aqelzadeh et.al. (2017) and Ghasemi (2016), Agarwal (2021), Pace & Sciotto (2022).

### **Conclusion**

Considering the results of the study and the gap between the current situation and the desired situation of the quality of work life of employees, it is necessary to attend their work life quality. Sport managers should re-define the basics of organizational behavior as the whole, and work life quality and organizational apathy in specific while re-viewing the methods and styles of their management. They should pave the road to increase WLQ and decrease organizational apathy of staffs through changing and providing desirable situation in work place. It is also necessary for the managers of sports, while creating a friendly and intimate atmosphere, to make efforts to listen to the living and welfare problems of the employees. Finally, it is necessary for sports managers to pay attention to the system of suggestions and criticisms, and considering the opinions of colleagues in the decision-making system, and to set up special advisory committees (welfare committee, human resource management committee, etc.) according to the special situation of the organizational environment and the dynamic changes in the environmental conditions and try to improve the quality of work life of employees in all its dimensions in order to reduce their level of organizational indifference.

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