Factors affecting the quality of work life in terms of employees’ satisfaction of National Oil Products Distribution Company of Esfahan

S. Bagherian¹*, M. Tagheh Delshad², F. Farhadi³

¹ M.A Student of Governance Management, Noor Hedayat University, Shahrekord, Iran  
² MSc of Industrial Engineering, International Payamenoor University of Assaluyeh  
³ Ph.D. Student of Management, Professor of Noor Hedayat University, Shahrekord, Iran

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ABSTRACT

In the work life quality programs, it is trying to increase job satisfaction of employees by improving their intrinsic motivation level. Motivation and job satisfaction is to motivate a person. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting the quality of work life and the employee’s satisfaction of National Oil Products Distribution Company of Esfahan. The statistical population of this study is all contract-based and contractual employees of National Oil Products Distribution Company of Esfahan, which was 260 employees, that 159 were selected as the sample population. The findings showed that there is a strong reverse correlation between salaries and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services with employees’ job satisfaction and there is direct correlation between education and educational opportunities with employees’ job satisfaction and between participation in decision making and employees’ job satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of work life indicates a type of organizational culture or management style in which employees feel ownership, autonomy, responsibility, and self-esteem, and the organization's performance and efficiency increase through promoting dignity and offering opportunities for advancement. The quality of work life is a collection of actual working conditions in an organization, such as adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working environments, opportunities for continued growth and security, legal positivism in the organization and working life, total life space, unity and social cohesion, and the development of human capabilities.

The quality of work life is an employee's attitude toward a specific function of their work, and on the other hand, it is a comprehensive program designed to attract satisfaction, employee attention, and retention in the organization, and the quality of work life considers investment in individuals as the most important variable in the strategic

* Corresponding author:  
M.A Student of Governance Management, Noor Hedayat University, Shahrekord, Iran

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management equation. In recent years, the phrase "quality of work life" has become popular. This is due to the fact that this variable refers to a variety of outcomes for employees such as job satisfaction, growth possibilities, psychological concerns, job security, employer-employee interactions, and a low incidence rate.

Employee responses such as organizational identification, job satisfaction, job involvement, job effort, job performance, turn-over intention, change, and organizational transformation are all influenced by the quality of work life. A quality of work life program is a process which all members of the organization through the open and appropriate communication channels which have been created for this purpose, involved in decision-makings that effect on their job especially on their relationships and work environments and therefore, their participation and pleasure from the work will be more and more. There are several theories about job satisfaction.

Today, quality of work life has attracted much attention all over the world.

In modern society, people spend more than a third of their lives in the workplace, therefore, it can be said that quality of work life is one of the important issues of each organization [1]. Quality of work life can be one of the most important factors to encourage ethical behaviors among organizations managers [2].

A quality of work life is a process which all members of the organization through the open and appropriate communication channels which have been created for this purpose, involved in decision-makings that effect on their job and work environments [3]. As a result, their participation and job satisfaction are increased and neurological pressure caused by work on them is decreased. In fact, the quality of work life represents a kind of organizational culture and management style in which employees feel self-control and self-esteem [4]. According to the purpose of this study which is to prioritize the factors affecting the quality of work life in terms of the productivity and employees satisfaction of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company of Esfahan, this research tries to explain that considering the priorities of quality work life, which includes appropriate and adequate salary, safety and health of the work environment, cooperation and participation in decision makings, the opportunity for growth and development, and education and is consistent with the components of productivity and job satisfaction, prioritizes and categorized them.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Components of quality of life

In 1973, Walton defines the quality of work life as employees’ response to work and, in particular, the necessary consequences in satisfying job requirements and mental health. Using this definition, it can be said that the quality of work life emphasizes personal outcomes, work experience and how to improve the work to meet the needs of employees. Walton presents a theoretical model for explaining the quality of work life, which includes the components as described as follows.

1. Adequate and fair compensation: Equal pay for equal work and the proportion of payments with social criteria and other working criteria;

2. Safe and healthy working conditions: making safe working conditions physically and determining reasonable working hours;

3. Opportunity for continued growth and security: providing the context for improving individual capabilities, opportunities for development, opportunities for employing acquired skills and providing security in earnings and employment;

4. Constitutionalism in the organization: providing the ground for freedom of speech without fear of higher position reaction and being enforced of the rule of law over human domination;

5. Social relevance of the work life: how to infer and understanding of employees about social responsibilities in the organization;

6. Total life space: striking a balance between work life and other parts of the life of employees including leisure time, education and family life;
7. Social integration in the organization: Establish climate and work space to strengthen the sense of belonging of employees to the organization and that they are needed by the organization and develop human capacities: provide opportunities such as the use of autonomy and self-control in work, benefit from different skills and access to appropriate information [3,4]. Nowadays, improving the quality of work life of employees is one of the most important goals of the organization and employees. Today, the effective manpower is considered as the most important capital of any organization. Almost all scholars have considered human resources as the most fundamental source of the organization and they believe that this source should be raised as the main capital of the society. The optimal use of human resources relies on measures to preserve and protect the body and the spirit of employees that these measures are called the quality of life. A number of researchers believe that a part of the productivity downturn and reducing the quality of products and services is due to the shortages of the quality of work life [5].

Quality of work life means the attitude of people towards their jobs. That means how much mutual trust, attention, appreciation, interesting work, and appropriate opportunities for investing (material and spiritual) in the workplace are provided by managers to employees.

One of the major pests in management is the lack of attention to the quality of work life of the organization’s employees. This inattention greatly reduces the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization and satisfaction and because of the lack of knowledge of organization’s managers about the quality of work life, this category has lost its true relevance and sizes in organizations.

The quality of work life or the quality of work system is one of the most interesting methods of motivating and important solution in the design and enriching the employees’ job, which is rooted in the attitudes of employees and managers to motivation. The quality of work life is based on four dimensions: proper and adequate salary, safety and healthy work environment, cooperation and participation in decision making, opportunities for growth and development, and education [6]. Improving and promoting the quality of work life is considered as a common goal of the organizations’ managers that are required to realize this goal, it is necessary to better understand the factors affecting the quality of work life of the employees.

Part of these factors is related to the quality of relations with others, groups and institutions. These links and relationships are considered as productivity. Human resource productivity is one of the key factors for countries to achieve scientific and industrial progresses and, ultimately, workplace economic development.

Since human is the main basis for development, it is necessary to improve the quality of human resources in development, and any planning for the development of human resources plays a crucial and decisive role. Therefore, economic development will not be achieved without prioritizing the development of human resources that will not be realized except in the long-term, comprehensive scientific planning process based on accurate information from the past, the present and the clear path of the future [7]. Job satisfaction is a positive psychological sense that a person has about his/her job and is caused by factors such as working environment, job organizational system, relationship governing the and cultural factors. The lack of adequate wages and salaries in the job and the lack of adequate safety and health in the work environment, because the employees of the oil distribution company suffer from problems such as bad and unfavorable smell of workplace and constant dealing with the oil products, chronic headaches and permanent pollution in the workplace and the lack of cooperation and participation in improving the for growth, progress and education are among the problems of individuals towards their jobs.

Therefore, this research examines employees’ satisfaction and attempts to improve the current situation and adapt to the factors of productivity and job satisfaction and also paid attention to priorities the factors like the quality of work life and employees’ satisfaction and categorize them [8].

The quality of work life is different in societies due to the difference in human societies, their income levels and their wellbeing, and many other factors. And on the other hand, even in Iran, the examination of the quality of work life is hard due to differences in working environments (difference in governmental and private organizations, cooperatives, and small and large industries). On the other hand, even if done, it is unlikely to achieve a usable and generalizable outcome. Accordingly, a dynamic approach is needed to take into account the different dimensions of this subject and while the effect of different factors and changes (reducing and increasing) have been analyzed. Finally, it is possible to simulate management decisions in this field and study its effects over time. When the organization pays attention to the quality of the work life of its employees, it has done a great approach to attract and retain its employees. This gives the impression that the firm is capable of providing a suitable working
environment for its employees, resulting in job satisfaction [9]. The quality of work life also includes any improvements in company culture that result in employee growth and excellence. As a result, the value system of work life quality identifies people as the most important variable in the strategic management equation [10]. The findings of Ebrahiminejad et al. (2016), Kocman & Weber (2016), Gorji Mahlabani et al. (2016) showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between components of quality of work, fair payment and compensation, justice, cooperation and participation in organizational decisions with ethical culture; but, there was no relationship between the components of safety and occupational security with ethical culture. The findings also show that high satisfaction assessment can be due to lack of control of professional decisions [1, 11, 12].

Elzalbani, Jant & Marta (2013) and Malekian & Tavakolnia (2014) discovered that the level of quality of work life is high in their studies. Most employees are confident in their abilities, job features, and opportunities to engage in decision making and relationships, while some are dissatisfied with their pay. As the quality of organization’s ethical culture is higher, its budget pressures are decreased, as well as there is no significant relationship between time budget pressure and unethical culture with measures to reduce work quality [13, 14].

The conceptual model of the research was presented based on internal and external research and factors affecting the quality of work life and job satisfaction. This model has its own the dimensions such as quality of work life and job satisfaction. According to the conceptual model of the research, quality of work life dimension has adequate and fair compensation, and healthy working conditions, providing the continued growth and security, constitutionalism in the organization, social relevance of the work life, total life space, developing human capacities and social integration which in case of doing them by organizations’ mangers are considered as a bridge toward job satisfaction.

On the other hand, job satisfaction has the components of personality and personality traits, values, job position, and social impact that take a valuable step to improve the quality of work life. The conceptual model of research is shown in Figure 1.

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**Fig. 1. Conceptual model of research**

3. **RESEARCH METHOD**

The present study is an applied research and descriptive-correlation method. The statistical population of this study is all contract-based and contractual employees of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company of Esfahan. According to estimates, all employees in this office was 270 in all parts. Sample size was 159 extracted by random sampling method. Data collection has been done by desk study (data collection via internal and external articles information bases, studying management books and available resources) and field research by reference to
Two questionnaires were used to measure research variables. The first questionnaire assesses the quality of work life of individuals based on the Walton questionnaire and the second questionnaire analyzes job satisfaction in six dimensions; job type, developmental opportunities, organizational climate, leadership style and physical condition. There is also a section at the beginning of questions that question the employee's personal characteristics, such as gender, education level, service record, and individual position. Also, locations are regulated based on five-point Likert scale by score 5, very much; score 4, somewhat; score 3, low; score 2, very low, and score 1. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of quality of work life questionnaire was 0.736 and the job satisfaction questionnaire was 0.745 which indicates that the questionnaire has a very good reliability.

According to Table 1, all calculated values for Cronbach's alpha are high and acceptable for both questionnaires. In order to answer the research hypotheses, inferential statistics techniques were used and analyzed using statistical software SPSS 23. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to calculate a significant relationship between the quality of work life and employees’ job satisfaction.

4. FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between salary and benefits, facilities and welfare and treatment services with job satisfaction of Iranian employees. To answer this question, Pearson correlation was used. The null hypothesis states that there is autonomy between salary and benefits, welfare and treatment services with job satisfaction of employees and the opposite hypothesis states that there is correlation between salary and benefits, welfare and treatment services with job satisfaction of employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>inferential statistics</th>
<th>Employees’ Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a significant relationship between salaries and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services ...</td>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>-0/563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance Level</td>
<td>0/000</td>
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<td>Number</td>
<td>159</td>
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</table>

According to Table 1, the significance level between salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services with job satisfaction is 0/000 and less than the normal value of 0.05, then null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the independence between salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services is rejected with job satisfaction of employees. There is a reverse correlation of 0/563 between the salary and benefits, facilities and welfare services with employees’ job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between education and educational opportunities with job satisfaction of Iranian employees. To answer this question, Pearson correlation was used. The null hypothesis states that there is autonomy between education and educational opportunities with employees’ job satisfaction and the opposite hypothesis states that there is correlation between education and educational opportunities with employees’ job satisfaction. The results of this test are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Employees’ Job Satisfaction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a significant relationship between education and educational opportunities</td>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>0/090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance Level</td>
<td>0/261</td>
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<td>Number</td>
<td>159</td>
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According to Table 2, there is a significant level between education and educational opportunities with job satisfaction at 0/261 and is more than the normal value of 0.05, and then the null hypothesis is accepted. As a result, autonomy between education and educational opportunities is accepted with employee's job satisfaction.
Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between participation in decision making and job satisfaction of Iranian employees. To answer this question, Pearson correlation was used. The null hypothesis states that there is autonomy between participation in decision making and employees’ job satisfaction and the opposite hypothesis states that there is correlation between participation in decision making and employees’ job satisfaction. The results of this test are presented in Table 3.

<table>
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<th>Employees’ Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>participation in decision making and job satisfaction</td>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>0.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance Level</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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According to Table 3, the significance level between participation in decision making with employees’ job satisfaction is 0/000 and less than the normal value of 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the autonomy between the participation in decision making and the employee's job satisfaction is rejected and there is a direct correlation of 0.757 between participation in decision making and employee’s job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: there is a significant relationship between democracy and Iranian employees’ job satisfaction. To answer this question, Pearson correlation was used. The null hypothesis states that there is autonomy between democracy and employees’ job satisfaction and the opposite hypothesis states that there is correlation between democracy and employees’ job satisfaction. The results of this test are presented in Table 4.

<table>
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<th>Employees’ Job Satisfaction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>there is a significant relationship between democracy and employees’ job satisfaction.</td>
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<td>0.736</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance Level</td>
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According to Table 4, the significance level between democracy and employees’ job satisfaction is 0/000 and less than the normal value of 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the autonomy between democracy and employees’ job satisfaction is rejected and there is a direct correlation of 0.736 between democracy and employee’s job satisfaction.

In summary, the inferential statistics of the findings are as follows: The quality of work life variable has the lowest score of 2.91 and the highest score of 3.36 with an average of 3.1 which has four dimensions, Education dimension and educational opportunities have the lowest score of 1/67 and the highest score of 2/33 with average 2. Democracy dimension has the lowest score of 1/75 and the highest score of 3/00 with average 3.43; salary and benefits dimension, facilities, welfare and treatment services have the lowest score of 3/00 and the highest score of 5/00 with average 3/98; participation in decision making dimension has the lowest score of 2/75 and the highest score of 4/00 with average 3/29 and job satisfaction variable has the lowest score of 2/7 and the highest score of 3/63 with average 3/03. There is a significant relationship between quality of work life and employees' job satisfaction. Pearson Coefficient was used for answering this question. The null hypothesis states that there is autonomy between the quality of work life and job satisfaction of employees and the opposite hypothesis states that there is correlation between the quality of work life and job satisfaction of employees.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study seeks to clear whether there is a significant relationship between salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services with job satisfaction of oil company employees? In this study, four hypotheses have been proposed to investigate this relationship. In Chapter 4, each of these hypotheses was examined, in which the results of these hypotheses are summarized.

Analysis of the results of the first hypothesis test: the results of main hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services with the job satisfaction of Iranian
employees which is in accordance with the research findings show significance level between salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services with the job satisfaction of employees at intensity 0/563. These results are in line with the results of Elzalbani in 2017, Asgari and Abbasnejad in 2006, Monajemzadeh and Baradaran in 2009, and Mirkamali in 2010. In explanation of this hypothesis, it can be said that when employees of the oil company in the organization have the appropriate salary and benefits, facilities, welfare and treatment services, they will also feel satisfied and employees will be interested and loyal to the organization and will also have a better job performance. There is also a tendency for them to stay more in the organization and the possibility of their progress in the organization. Absent is less and motivation is high and their approval and their accompaniment will be greater with changes in the organization. Organizations can prevent emotional problems in their employees by preventing a lack of satisfaction, reducing their dissatisfaction and increasing productivity in the organization [1, 15, 16].

Therefore, one of the indicators of a good working environment is to provide the conditions that all employees feel proud of what they do. Also, the work environment should be physically fit and employees feel a sense of justice and on the other hand, it is important to identify satisfied employees and provide special services to preserve and improve their level of satisfaction and efficiency. Employees can maintain their satisfaction if pay attention to them and receive their which this is possible through providing special services to employees. As it is clear, the cost of recruiting a new employee is more costly than the cost of maintenance existing and current employees.

As a result, today managers need to understand the importance of maintaining and existing employees and increasing their satisfaction. And they have to make great efforts to attract new employees instead of maintaining existing and present employees and promote the ability and capabilities of human resources that are not at the optimal level. Therefore, according to the work and job position of each employee, they will pay him the appropriate salary. It should be noted that timely and fair payments will increase employee satisfaction and subsequently increase service quality. The physical conditions of the work environment usually result in job satisfaction if it is convenient and far from risk. Moderate levels of temperature, humidity, ventilation, light and sound play an indisputable role in creating material conditions. Therefore, a safe and hygienic environment should be created in the organization so that the employees can serve with comfort and in complete health and satisfaction. Managers should motivate their employees and inform them of the opportunities for progress and also create job security so that employees can provide high-quality services [17].

**Analysis of the results of the second hypothesis test:** The results of main hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between education and educational opportunities with the job satisfaction of Iranian employees which is in accordance with the research findings show significance level between education and educational opportunities with the job satisfaction of employees at intensity 0/261. These results are in line with the results of Monajemzadeh and Baradaran in 2009, and Mirkamali in 2000. In explanation of this hypothesis, it can be said that there is a relationship between education and educational opportunities. In explaining this hypothesis can be said the organization needs to provide facilities to employees to develop their personal talents more and better. And they also provide opportunities to progress for employees in the expertise of each individual so that employees can give their skills that they have acquired in a proper context to the colleagues and improve the organization. If employees of the organization are busy with the same job for many years and know exactly what is expected of them every day and there is nothing new to learn, the organization's employees experience a feeling of empty, feeling of tired before starting job, they feel frustrated and having difficulty for doing things and lack of passion and enthusiasm [18,19].

**Analysis of the results of the third hypothesis test:** The results of hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between participation in decision making and employees’ satisfaction of Oil Company which is in accordance with the research findings show significance level between participation in decision making and employees’ job satisfaction at 0.00 and it is less than normal value, so this hypothesis is rejected and autonomy between participation in decision making and employees’ job satisfaction is also rejected. There is also a direct correlation between decision making and employees’ job satisfaction at destiny 0.757. These results are in line with the results of Alzalbani in 2017, Kocman & Weber in 2016, Ehsanzaei et al. in 2014, Mirkamai in 2000, Iranzadeh and Mehregan in 2009. In explanation of this hypothesis, it can be said that by applying the thoughts and opinions of its employees, the organization can facilitate their participation in decisions making so that they know the problems and issues of the organization as their issues and problems and by doing this, there is a kind of a sense of duty and thoughts among the employees about the fact that if anyone does their job well, others do their job well.
If employees feel more dependent and affiliated with their work environment and those who working in the environment, they will willingly provide more services and working with the total space of life through establishing a concept of balance between working time at work and time for the family, can create a great deal of balance between work and individual’s life. It should be tried to improve the quality of employees’ lives for interesting them to provide higher quality services. And it should be reinforced the creating a sense of socialization in the organization, the freedom of individuals to express the ideas and their feelings toward each other and, in short, creating a work space that affects employees’ sense of belonging to the organization and the organization’s mutual need for them. By trying to increase unity in a set, can lead employees to deliver high-quality services. Organization provide the ground to develop individual’s capabilities by giving independence to its employees and providing any kind of information and skill that employees need in their work environment. Today, a manager is called a successful manager who can provide the minimum acceptable work using the maximum punishment power such as reprimand, deduction of salary and incentive facilities such as awards, extra work, and selection of the sample employee. But experts believe the effective manager is someone who can employ 80 to 90 percent of the individuals’ abilities [3, 20].

Analysis of the results of fourth hypothesis test: The results of this hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between democracy and job satisfaction among the employees of the oil company, according to the research findings, there is a direct correlation between democracy and job satisfaction at 0.736 which is in line with Iranzadeh & Mehregan results in 2009, Almasi, Lotfiollahi & Yazdani in 2011, Ehsanzaei et al. 2014. In conjunction with this hypothesis it can be acknowledged that legislation is considered with job satisfaction in the employees in the form of freedom of speech and being enforced of the rule of law over human domination. Existence of law and practice makes it possible that employees be responsible to it and do not reduce the quality of their services by taking into account the consequences of not acting on the rules [21].

Limitations: Given the fact that the present study was carried out in 2018, the limited time available makes it much less possible to examine the subject in depth, therefore, its generalization to possible time intervals should be done with caution. This research was used to collect data using two questionnaires. While, there are better tools such as observation, interview in qualitative and quantitative methods. Data is based on employee self-reporting information and it may affect the attitude and personal judgment of the employees in response to the questions.

This research has been conducted in a governmental organization with a particular culture and the generalization of the results is not possible with other governmental and private organizations. Since the present study does not determine the direction of causality, it is possible to conduct research with the longitudinal plan and in an experimental manner with the implementation of interventions and programs among employees, colleagues, and supervisors with the control group using qualitative questionnaires and supervisors’ evaluation of employee job satisfaction.

Applied Suggestions: The suggestions of this area are described in detail in the following, which is a good solution for improving the working environment of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company.
1. Oil products distribution is one of the hardest jobs, therefore, it is possible to add employee in the list of hardest jobs and use of its advantages.
2. Full implementation of the job classification scheme, because, according to the Labor Code, all workshops with more than 50 employees are obligated to implement this job classification scheme. According to the job classification scheme, all those who have similar conditions in terms of duties and responsibilities are placed in a category and thus receive equal rights. It doesn't matter whether the workforce is permanent, temporary or seasonal; however, it should be included in the classification scheme. Every four years it should also be reviewed in the way of jobs classification. Currently, this classification has not been implemented in the oil company. While the salary of experienced workers increases with the implementation of a classification scheme and timely revision.

6. RESEARCH PROPOSALS

By doing any scientific work, the way is opened to the new path and the continuation of the path requires further research. In this regard, the research which is necessary to continue the results of this research is as follows:
1. Considering that in this study, a questionnaire has been used to collect data, in order to achieve more reliable results, it is recommended to other researchers, in addition to use the questionnaire, apply the interviews and other methods of data collection.

2. The researchers have conducted this research in different and similar organizations and with respect to the results compare their finding and results with the results of the present study.

3. Given that job satisfaction and quality of work life are a concept related to this field and it may be said that it is the most intangible organizational aspect and it cannot be analyzed and understood using the questionnaire, it is suggested that these concepts be investigated in future research with qualitative and especially mixed methods.

REFERENCES


