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Effectiveness of work life quality improvement training and enrichment of marital life training on increasing the quality of work life and job satisfaction among of Dual- Career Couples

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Abstract

Women have also entered the employment arena by changing the human societies, and now there are many families in which both couples work. The couple's employment affects the quality of life, as well as job satisfaction. This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of work life quality improvement and enrichment of marital life trainings on the quality of work life and job satisfaction in dual- career couples in a quasi-experimental design with pretest, posttest, and follow- up with control group. Forty dual- career couples were selected using multistage cluster random sampling method in Ilam city, and were assigned randomly to experimental (20 couples) and a control groups (20 couples). The experimental group received thirteen-90-minutes sessions of work life quality improvement and enrichment of marital life trainings, in and were assessed in three stages pretest, posttest, and follow-up (2 months) in life work quality and job satisfaction variables. Data were analyzed using repeated-measures analysis of variance. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in quality of work life and job satisfaction. Also, there is a significant difference between the three stages of quality of working life and job satisfaction in the experimental group. However the work life quality improvement training and enrichment of marital life training increase the quality of work life and job satisfaction in dual-career couples.

Keywords: Work life quality improvement, enrichment of marital life, job satisfaction, dual- career couples.

Extended abstract

When women enter the labor market, the shape and structure of roles will change in a family, and there are families where both men and women are

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working. These changes have caused interaction of work environment and family, and overflow phenomena has occurred. Overflow refers to when experienced strains in work environment are transferred to the family and they impact on health of the individual in another role (Ilies et al., 2007).

Quality of work life is one of the components that has been affected by this overflow. Quality of work life reflects employee satisfaction with work life, which enhances work performance and job commitment, and influences on job satisfaction (Lee, Dai, Park, McCreary, 2013). Job satisfaction also indicates satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job, or emotional reaction to the job (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992; Darvish, 2007).

Therefore, overflow can affect people's quality of life and job satisfaction, caused by conflict and role interference. According to the resource scarcity approach, people have a certain amount of resources, and spending too much in one area of work or family can affect the amount of resources consumed in another. (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Also, based on the theory of resource preservation, chronic stresses in each of the domains of work-life can lead to the accumulation and increase of these stresses in both domains, making it difficult to pass around this challenge for people and challenges one's performance in both domains (Carvalho & Chambel, 2017).

Educational programs many address the issues of families and couples. But given the overflow, these couples need programs to address both the family and work areas. One of these programs is the training of quality of working life (attention to work domain), and enriching the relationships (attention to family domain).

The quality of work life program includes any improvement in organizational culture that promotes employee growth and excellence in an organization (Filippo, 1998). Therefore, the value system takes the quality of working, investment on individuals as the most important variable in the strategic management transaction into consideration (Shareef, 1990). Marriage enrichment program for couples communication, works on conflict resolution between them, financial management, marital satisfaction, leisure couple activities, religious beliefs of, relationships among kids and parents, family and friends relationships, real expectations of couple from each other, marital expectations, the role of relatives, in Marital life, and educates the couples in these areas (Khamseh, 2003).

Therefore, given the challenges that occur in work and family, the issue of family and work interaction has become gained a crucial importance (Rupashree, 2010; Rizwan et al., 2013). Such that work and family cannot be seen separately, because some problems occur both at home and in the workplace that require a holistic strategy due to the interconnectedness and taking effects from of each other (Akdere, 2006; Huang et al., 2007). Overall, there are various studies on this subject that confirm that each training provided separately has been able to alleviate the problems of the working couples, but given the important role of overflow, so far these approaches have not been studied concurrently. To this end, different training programs can be specified to achieve this goal. Among these

approaches, we can mention enrichment of marital life and training of marital quality of life.

Method

Population, sample, and sampling method

The present study was conducted in a quasi-experimental design to pre-test and post-test and follow-up with control group. The population of this study included all working young couples (with a maximum of five years of marriage) in Ilam city. 40 couples (80 participant) were selected using multistage cluster random sampling method from four main clusters: educational and cultural (departments of Education Ministry and Universities), administrative and utilities (municipal and government utilities departments), labor and production (oil & gas company, and government factories), and military and law enforcement (Sepah, Basij, and Police), and from every cluster, two administrations were randomly selected, and finally, ten couples were purposefully selected from both-working couples from each administration based on the inclusion criteria of age less than 40 years according to administrative orders, government administration for both couples (employees working in government agencies, institutions and corporations), having at least 5 years of marriage experience, full consent to participate in research and signing consent forms, full participation in meetings, and not engagement in a divorce case. Participants were randomly assigned to either the control or experimental groups.

Instruments

Quality of Work Life Inventory: This Inventory was developed by the Walton Quality of Work Life Inventory (1973) and has been used by many researchers. The inventory has 29 items with five point rating scale (very low, low, medium, high, very high), which their scores are 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively. Walton (1973) reported a test reliability coefficient of 0.88. Also, the reliability coefficient of Quality of Life Career Questionnaire (Ardalan & Yousefi, 2014) was 0.91. Moreover, Sultan Hosseini et al. (2009) indicated 0.85 for this coefficient.

Job Satisfaction Inventory: It is one of the valid and accurate instruments for measuring job satisfaction by the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) first formulated by Smith, Kendall & Hulin (1969) at Cornell University, USA. Job satisfaction is achieved from various aspects of a job such as payments, promotion opportunities, peer supervisor and work environment factors such as supervisor style, policy guidelines, working conditions, and job benefits. Na'ami and Shokerkon (2004) reported Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient as 0.83 and Nazariyan Madavani and Mokhtari Dinani (2013) 0.83.

Data analysis

In current study, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Repeated measures analysis of variance).

Findings

Based on the results of, the mean scores of quality of working life and Job satisfaction variables of participants of pre-test stage to follow-up stage increased.

Table 1
The results of repeated measure analysis of variance work life quality and job satisfaction variables in pre-test, post-test, and follow-up stages

Variables	Source of changes	SS	df	MS	F	p	Eta
Quality of working life	Within subjects: stage	5054.35	1.32	3824.56	315.20	0.001	0.80
	Quality of working life × group	4864.22	1.32	3680.68	303.34	0.001	0.79
	error	1250.75	103.8	12.13			
Job satisfaction	Within subjects: stage	10468	1.53	6812.84	394.07	0.001	.083
	Job × group	10418.63	1.53	6780.30	392.19	0.001	0.83
	error	2072.06	119.85	17.28			

The results of Table 1 shows that there is a significant difference between the three stages of quality of working life ($F = 315.20, p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($F = 394.07, p < 0.001$) in the experimental group. These findings show that the quality of working life and job satisfaction has increased from pre-test to follow-up.

Table 2
The results of repeated measure analysis of variance work life quality and job satisfaction variables in experimental and control groups

variables	Source of changes	SS	df	MS	F	p	Eta
Quality of working life	Between subjects: group error	8930.40	1	8930.40	12.70	0.001	0.14
Job Satisfaction	Between subjects: group error	12950.70	1	12950.70	13.66	0.001	0.15
		73910.75	78	947.57			

The results of Table 2 show that there are a significant difference between experimental and control groups in quality of work life ($F = 12.70, P < 0.001$, effect size = 0.14) and job satisfaction ($F = 13.66, P < 0.001$, effect size) variables; that it means the scores of experimental group in the variables of quality of work life and job satisfaction has increased.

Discussion

Findings showed that simultaneous training of “quality-raising in work life” and “marital life enrichment” has a significant effect on quality of work life quality and job satisfaction, increasing quality of work life and job satisfaction. This findings are consistent with the studies of Brotheridge and Lee (2005),

Akdere (2013), Sharma and Jyoti (2006), Cheung and Tang (2009), Al-Qutop and Harrim (2011), Almalki et al., (2012), Rabani et al., (2016).

The two domains of family and work can positively and negatively affect each other (Lourel et al., 2009). Organizational factors such as policies, employee relationships, and job characteristics (Morgeson et al., 2010), and family factors and work-family conflict can affect job satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

Among the mechanisms that play their roles in both domains of family and work and can affect therapeutic effects in both domains is contagion. Consistent with Brotheridge and Lee (2005) contagion theory, it can be argued that changes in the family environment resulting from enriching relationships, and improving the quality of work life and job satisfaction through “quality-raising in work life” training, can transfer and it may change and improve the relationships of people in the workplace. Another mechanism that plays a role in the work-family discussion is the transmission of stressors and cross-over strains. Crossover refers to the interpersonal transmission of stressor factors from one person to another (Westman & Vinokur, 1998). Thus, stressor factors within a person in a workplace can be experienced by him/his partner at home (Bakker et al., 2009; Muurlink et al., 2014). The simultaneous effectiveness of enriching relationships and improving the quality of work life by enhancing positive relationships, interactions, and emotions in the family and workplace can increase positive intersections and reduce negative crossovers.

Positive contagions and positive crossovers can increase the balance between work life and family life. According to Walton's (1973) model, work and family environments are in direct interaction and relationship with each other. Combined training programs can create a work-life balance by establishing the concept of work-time balance for the family. Such a balance can increase employees' social dependence on the family and the workplace and increase individuals' beneficial social roles in both domains. Therefore, combined training programs with making balance in both work and life, increase job satisfaction and quality of life for employees (Nafari & Lakayan, 2013).

According to social exchange theory, it can be said that quality of work life improves employees' behavior towards the organization due to their understanding of the organization, and employees experience higher satisfaction, increasing quality of work life and job satisfaction. Accordingly, training in improving marital relationships can be transferred from the family to the workplace, and such training can also be applied in the workplace. On the other hand, improving the quality of working life can also extend from the workplace to the family domain and improve family interactions (Garcia-Cabrera et al., 2018).

Therefore, training in relationship enrichment programs can improve employee performance and relationships in the family (Rizwan, Jackani, Ameen, Hussain, Farooq, & Omair, 2013), which, given the transfer of workplace and family outcomes to one another (Sharma & Jyuti, 2006), from employees to couples and their partners at home and to colleagues in the workplace (Westman, 2005), the balance between work-life and family life

will be established. Such a balance can improve one's perception of the organization in responding to needs, expectations and values, enhancing the quality of working life and job satisfaction. Therefore, improving family interactions can reduce negative organizational outcomes such as absenteeism, work fatigue, lower productivity, lower job satisfaction, and improve job satisfaction and quality of work life (Argentero et al., 2007).

Based on these findings, it is recommended that organizations provide training programs for both-working couples. In this regard, it is recommended to provide a comprehensive and native model for training of such couples.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declared no conflicts of interest