

A Work-Life Identity Model of Well-Being: Towards a Research Agenda Linking Quality-of-Work-Life (QWL) Programs with Quality of Life (QOL)

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Abstract QWL is conceptualized in terms of the interface between employee role identities and work resources. QWL programs serve to enhance QOL by (1) providing appropriate work resources to meet the expectations of employee role identities, (2) reducing role conflict in work and non-work life, (3) enhancing multiple role identities, (4) reducing role demands, (5) reducing stress related to work and non-work role identities, and (6) increasing the value of the role identity. We describe a variety of QWL programs related to work life (decentralized organization structures, teamwork, parallel structures, ethical corporate mission and culture, the organization work schedule, etc.) and non-work life (work at home, flextime, compressed work week, part-time work arrangements, job sharing, etc.) and show how they serve to enhance QOL using the language of work-life identity. Doing so helps develop a research agenda based on the work-life identify model.

Keywords Quality of work life · Quality of working life · Work well-being · Work-related well-being · Employee need satisfaction · Work and life satisfaction · Work and happiness · Work and subjective well-being · Job satisfaction · Work satisfaction · Work-non-work roles · Role identities

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In the last few decades, we have witnessed a trend indicating that many corporations are increasingly implementing job satisfaction and empowerment programs (e.g., Wilkinson 1998). These programs promote employee well-being in the workplace and they are often the result of management's self-interest to promote profitability. Management has found that programs designed to increase job satisfaction and empower employees *may* increase employee productivity and job performance (e.g., Armenakis and Bedeian 1999; Greenhaus et al. 1987; Petty et al. 1984). In turn, higher levels of productivity and performance serve to increase the organization's economic well-being.

From this perspective, management views employee participation in organization development activities as a means to higher financial returns. While an economic orientation may remain a necessity for business organizations, it need not preclude a focus on employee well-being. Quality-of-work life (QWL) programs can result in job satisfaction and quality of life (QOL, i.e., life satisfaction, happiness, and subjective well-being). The often-overlooked non-financial consequences of QWL programs are venerable ends in and of themselves (Wolf 1971).

At the core of the QWL movement is the satisfaction of employees' needs through organization development (e.g., McGregor 1960). Though QWL has been associated with employee productivity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and low turnover rates, QWL researchers have shown that QWL plays an important role in life satisfaction and QOL (e.g., Kabanoff 1980; Lawler 1982; Lee et al. 2002; Near et al. 1980; Sirgy et al. 2001). The current research agenda links QWL research to overall QOL.

Based on Wolf's (1971) challenge to enhance employee well-being, we make an attempt in this paper to advance the research agenda pertaining to the QWL-QOL relationship (in terms of the spillover between job satisfaction and life satisfaction). Specifically, an interactionist model of the relationship between QWL programs and QOL is proposed to spur the research agenda. The model considers how the multiple roles assumed in various life domains (e.g., work, family, leisure, spiritual life, etc.) define our "selves," and how the relative fulfillment of needs posed by valued role identities can be met through QWL programs. The fit between the requirements of the person (as determined by salient role identities) and the conditions of the environment (as determined by the characteristics of a QWL program) results in a range of affective experiences. Based on the interactionist model, we hypothesize how various QWL programs may contribute to QOL.

A Work-Life Identity Model

Both QWL and QOL represent conditions of work life and life in general. QWL programs can contribute to QOL through satisfaction of basic and growth needs in a variety of life domains: work, family, leisure, spiritual, among others (see Fig. 1). The thread that binds a QWL program to QOL is the affect associated with the multiple domains that comprise work and non-work activities. The most typical indicator of this affect is self-reported satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is viewed as an attitude or, more recently, an emotional state (Weiss et al. 1999) associated with one's job experiences, whereas life satisfaction is

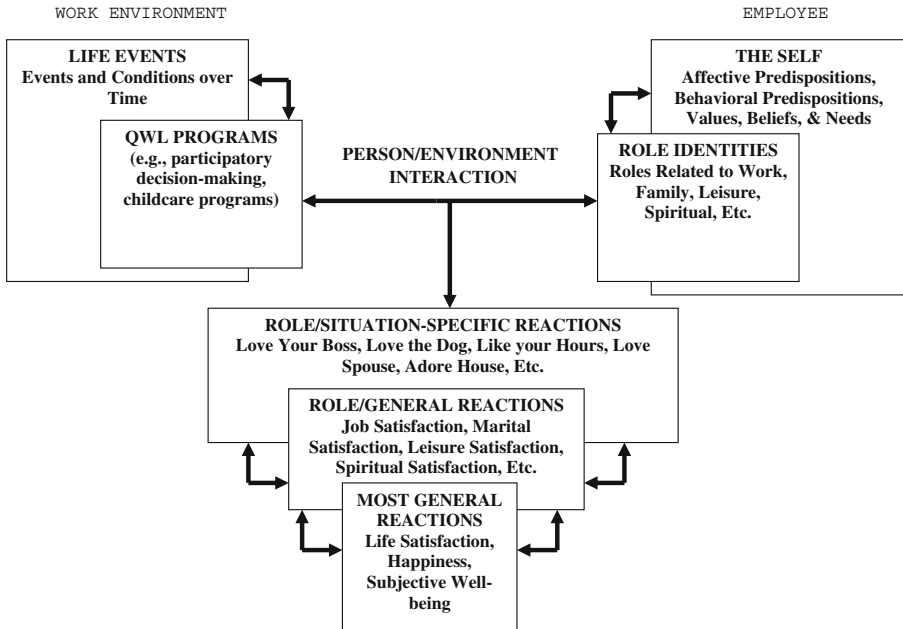


Fig. 1 A work-life identity model of well-being

considered to be an outcome of a cognitive calculus in which evaluations of all salient life domains are cognitively integrated (summed or averaged). Given that job satisfaction is positively related to life satisfaction (e.g., $r = +.44$; Tait et al. 1989), it should follow that perceptions of QWL and QOL should also tend to be positively related because affective reactions to work experiences spill over to non-work domains, and vice versa. While Judge and Watanabe (1993) have argued that some people can segment their feelings or compensate for divergent affective reactions across life domains, they estimate that 68% of people experience reciprocal *spillover* between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (see also Rain et al. 1991; Rice et al. 1985; Staines 1980).

The spillover from one's experience in a particular life domain (e.g., work life, leisure life, family life, spiritual life) to one's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life in general may be affected by a variety of moderators. For example, a study conducted by Efraty et al. (1999) has shown that the spillover between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is moderated by organizational commitment. That is, employees who reported a higher level of organizational commitment experienced greater spillover than those who expressed lower levels of commitment. The authors explained this finding using the saliency-bias hypothesis. Spillover of affect from one life domain to another is more likely to occur when the domain is considered highly salient in the mind of that individual than when the domain is not considered salient. Specifically, employees who regard their jobs as very important in their lives are likely to experience heightened satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs, which in turn

spills over horizontally to other non-work domains and vertically (bottom-up spillover) to affect general life satisfaction.

Interestingly, both job- and life-satisfactions share a substantial dispositional component (e.g., Diener et al. 1999; Hart 1999; Heller et al. 2002). A top-down approach to the study of job and life satisfactions suggests that common traits (e.g., positive and negative affectivity) influence both. In fact, although personality removes a huge chunk of the variance from the job–life satisfaction relationship, the link still remains. It is interesting to note that situational influences on subjective well-being (a bottom-up approach) have been found to account for a significant amount of variance in subjective well-being (as cited in Diener et al. 1999; also see Sirgy 2002). QWL programs traditionally assume a bottom-up approach to fostering productivity and satisfaction. Perhaps the interaction between internal factors and external circumstances may better predict outcomes from QWL programs, just as Diener et al. (1999) suggest that examinations of Person-X-Situation effects may better explain subjective well-being.

An interactionist model of the relationship between QWL programs and QOL would necessarily include characteristics of the person (employee), characteristics of the work environment (QWL programs), and the affective reactions that result from the dynamic fit between the two. First, the employee is defined in terms of the *self-concept*. The “self” may be described as the combination of affective predispositions, behavioral tendencies, values, and beliefs. It is organized in terms of social roles (e.g., Stryker and Serpe 1994). Social roles occur within the various life domains of work, family, leisure, spirituality, community, etc., but are more specific. For example, at work, we may assume the roles of manager, professional, and team member simultaneously; at home, we may be spouse, parent, and caretaker. Further, the degree to which we identify with a role may make it more or less salient and more or less important. As role demands are placed upon the individual, the urgency and quality of response depend upon the centrality or salience of the role to the self-concept. As role conflicts arise, satisfaction with work and life is adversely affected (e.g., Lee et al. 2000).

The next ingredient of the model is the *work environment*. This environment is composed of physical, cognitive, and emotional resources and demands related to work. Because of the spillover of life domains, the reactions to the conditions of the work environment do not exist in isolation. Ideal QWL programs serve to enhance QOL by (1) providing appropriate work resources to meet the expectations of employee role identities, (2) reducing role conflict in work and non-work life, (3) enhancing multiple role identities, (4) reducing role demands, (5) reducing stress related to work and non-work role identities, and (6) increasing the value or importance of a role identity.

The last major component of the model is the result of the *fit between the person and the work environment*. A negative discrepancy between role demand and work resources results in negative affect whereas a positive discrepancy results in positive affect. This proposition is based on role identity and self-discrepancy theories. Distress arises from the disruption of the self in important social roles (Burke 1991). We prefer that our self-concepts remain stable and unconflicted; role demands and conflicts get in the way of this preference. Higgins’ (1989) self-discrepancy theory suggests how this happens. Self-discrepancy theory differentiates among three

aspects of the self: the actual, ideal, and ought self. Discrepancies between the actual–ideal self and the actual–ought self predict different types of distress (Large and Marcussen 2000) because they block the attainment of personal goals. This idea extends to the discrepancies between our most important role identities and the demands and resources of the work environment. If work demands disrupt our important role identities, negative affect occurs. While sociological social psychologists have tended to focus on the negative affect produced by negative role discrepancies (e.g., Large and Marcussen 2000), the implication is that met needs should result in satisfaction. So, if work resources support our important role identities, positive affect should result. And, as previously described, affect spills over across role identities. Work role demands and conflicts that interfere with the attainment of the goals that come with role identities decrease subjective well-being. Conversely, work resources that facilitate personal goals maintain or increase it. Furthermore, work resources contribute to QOL by enhancing multiple role identities, increasing the value and meaningfulness of the work role identity, and reducing work-role demands.

The Work-Life Identity Model of Well-being (see Fig. 1) is based on the following premises:

- (a) Whereas QOL is a condition, affect is a reaction; conditions and reactions to conditions are different. Affect is the core element in the perception of QOL. All references to QOL in this model relate to the *perception* of QOL (i.e., life satisfaction, happiness, and subjective well-being).
- (b) The self is composed of multiple role identities. These include work roles, family roles, leisure roles, spiritual roles, etc.
- (c) Affective reactions to events and conditions depend upon the salience of role identities (i.e., those roles that are more important to the self are more responsible for feeling states than those that are not as strong).
- (d) Affect spills over across role identities. Thus, job satisfaction, leisure satisfaction, family satisfaction, spiritual satisfaction, etc. are reciprocally related.
- (e) Needs are a consequence of role identities. Central role identities represent values and define our most important needs.
- (f) Affect generated by a QWL program represents a bottom-up influence on life-satisfaction, happiness, and subjective well-being.
- (g) The goals of a QWL program must be relevant and appropriate to an employee's most important roles.
- (h) QWL programs enhance QOL to the degree that they provide appropriate work resources to meet the expectations of employee role identities, reduce role conflict in work and non-work life, enhance multiple role identities, reduce role demands, reduce stress related to work and non-work role identities, and increase the value or importance of role identity.

This is the crux of our model. Identity theorists (e.g., Burke 1991; Stryker and Serpe 1994) have thus laid the groundwork for explaining how both positive and negative self-evaluations can result from the interaction between the social self and the external environment. Increasing positive self-evaluations (or decreasing negative self-evaluations) in important work and non-work role identities serve to increase QOL.

There are many QWL programs. We will discuss some of them in terms of two major categories: QWL programs that affect *work-related* role identities and QWL programs that impact *non-work* identities.

Satisfaction in Work Life and Spillover to Overall Life

QWL programs related to the work role identity can be categorized into four major groups: (1) the work environment, (2) management/supervisory duties and responsibilities, and (4) corporate policies dealing with employee pay and promotion. We will discuss selected QWL programs in some detail. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the QWL programs that satisfy needs in work life, how these programs affect QOL, and what kind of employees are most receptive to these programs.

QWL Programs Related to the Work Environment

We identified several QWL programs related to the work environment. These are decentralized organizational structures, teamwork, parallel structures and quality circles, and ethical corporate culture.

Decentralized Organizational Structures Based on the assumption that bureaucratization is positively associated with job dissatisfaction and off-the-job alienation, Efraty and Sirgy (1995) conducted a study showing workers in a decentralized bureaucracy experience greater spillover (between job satisfaction and life satisfaction) than workers in a centralized bureaucracy. Decentralized bureaucracies allowed workers to enjoy greater work discretion and less immediate supervision. Work discretion and low levels of supervision serve to reduce work role stress,

Table 1 QWL policies and programs that satisfy employee needs in work life

The work environment	Job facets	Management/Supervisory duties and responsibilities	Corporate policies related to employee pay and promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralized organizational structures • Teamwork • Parallel structures and quality circles • Ethical corporate mission and culture • The organization's work schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in decision-making and high involvement programs • Job enrichment programs • Programs to enhance occupational status and prestige 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TQM • Performance feedback and role clarity Behavior • Ethical supervisory • Co-leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion opportunities from within • Incentive plans

Table 2 Summary table of mediator effects related to work-related QWL programs

QWL programs	Hypothesized Mediators (QOL is enhanced through the QWL program by ...)
QWL programs related to the work environment	
Decentralized organizational structures	reducing work role stress, which in turn reduces negative self-evaluations in work life. QOL is further enhanced by increasing the value of the work role identity, which increases the likelihood of positive self-evaluations in work life.
Teamwork	providing employees with greater work resources to achieve work role expectations. Achieving work role expectations serves to increase the likelihood of positive self-evaluations. Teamwork also serves to reduce work role demand, which in turn serves to reduce the likelihood of negative self-evaluations.
Parallel structures and quality circles	providing employees with greater work resources to achieve work role expectations. Achieving work role expectations serves to increase the likelihood of positive self-evaluations. Parallel structures and quality circles also serve to reduce work role demand, which in turn serves to reduce the likelihood of negative self-evaluations.
Ethical corporate mission and culture	providing employees with resources to meet the “do-gooder” work role, increasing the likelihood of positive self-evaluations. Further, ethical firms serve to increase the value of the work role identity, increasing the likelihood of positive self-evaluations.
QWL programs related to job facets	
Participation in decision-making and high-involvement programs	enhancing the value of the work role identity, which in turn increases the likelihood of positive self-evaluations in the work domain.
Job enrichment programs	enhancing the value of the work role identity, which in turn increases the likelihood of positive self-evaluations in the work domain.
QWL programs related to management/supervisory duties and responsibilities	
Total Quality Management (TQM)	allowing employees to engage in multiple identities at work, thus providing added meaning and value to the overall work role. Furthermore, fulfillment of these varied roles is likely to satisfy more needs, which in turn translates into positive self-evaluations in the work domain.
Performance feedback and role clarity	increasing the likelihood of meeting work role demand, which in turn serves to generate positive self-evaluations in the work domain.
Ethical supervisory behavior	heightening the importance of the work role identity, which increases the likelihood of experiencing positive self-evaluations. Furthermore, ethical supervisory behavior affects work satisfaction through perceptions of procedural justice. Ethical supervisory behavior serves to reduce role stress derived from perceptions of injustice, thus decreasing the likelihood of negative self-evaluations.
Corporate policies related to employee pay and promotion	
Promotion opportunities from within	enhancing the value of the work role identity and promoting multiple work role identities (e.g., specialist, team player, and supervisor/manager), which in turn increase the likelihood of positive self-evaluations at work.
Incentive plans (incentive programs, group incentive programs, profit sharing plans)	recognizing the outcome of meeting role demand, which in turn contributes to positive self-evaluations and positive affect in the work domain.

which in turn help reduce negative self-evaluations in work life. This, of course, serves to reduce spillover of negative affect from work life to overall life, thus decreasing the likelihood of diminishing QOL returns. Furthermore, greater work discretion and less immediate supervision serve to enhance the value of the work role identity, which in turn leads to positive self-evaluations. Increases in positive self-evaluations in relation to the work role identity (and decreases in negative self-evaluations) contribute to higher levels of subjective well-being or QOL through spillover.

Teamwork A team is a small group of people with complementary skills, who work together to achieve a common goal for which they are collectively accountable (Brill 1976). Teamwork, characterized by reciprocal trust and respect among team members, serves to enhance both QWL and QOL (e.g., Nandan and Nandan 1995; Qvale and Hanssen-Bauer 1990). It promotes work role identity by providing employees with greater work resources to achieve work role expectations (than non-teamwork) through the participation required by goal setting, problem solving, goal clarification and prioritization, and conflict resolution. Achieving work role expectations, in turn, serves to increase positive self-evaluations. The latter generates positive affect in the work domain, which in turn spills over to overall life, thus increasing subjective well-being. One can also argue that teamwork serves to reduce work demands by shifting this responsibility to the team and away from the self. This serves to decrease negative self-evaluations that may arise when work role expectations are not met.

Parallel Structures and Quality Circles Jobs generating higher levels of involvement involve *parallel structures*, also known as “collateral structures,” “dualistic structures,” or “shadow structures” (e.g., Galbraith 1998). Jobs with parallel structures provide an alternative setting to address problems and propose innovative solutions free from the formal organization structure. *Quality circles* are an example of parallel structures. Quality circles consist of small groups of 13–15 employees who volunteer to meet periodically, usually once a week for an hour or so, to identify and solve productivity problems (Galbraith 1998). These group members make recommendations for change, but decisions about implementation of their proposals are reserved for management.

Parallel structures, characterized in terms of voluntary employee meetings to identify and discuss problems at work, serve to enhance employee/work-environment fit and need satisfaction in the work domain. Just in the same way that teamwork is hypothesized to affect QOL, parallel structures promote work role identity. It does so by providing the employee with additional resources to meet work demands. Doing so increases the likelihood of positive self-evaluations in work life (as a direct result of meeting work role expectations), which in turn spills over to overall life. Furthermore, parallel structures reduce work role stress by shifting responsibility of task completion away from the self and towards the group.

Ethical Corporate Mission and Culture An ethical corporate mission and culture are important in enhancing work-related identity by generating positive affect that spills

over to other life domains. The results of a two-year empirical study based on face-to-face interviews showed that working for an ethical organization gave the employees a sense of meaning and purpose (Mitroff and Denton 1999). The study uncovered five basic designs or models in which organizations can contribute meaning and a sense of purpose in work. These are the *religious-based organization* (e.g., church-affiliated and -run businesses), the *evolutionary organization* (a firm that begins with a strong association with a particular religion and over time evolves to a more ecumenical position), the *recovering organization* (an organization that focuses on helping people solve certain problems and in doing so fosters a sense of spirituality), the *socially responsible organization* (firms in which their founders or heads are guided by strong spiritual/ethical principles that they apply directly to their business for the betterment of society), and the *values-based organization* (the founders or managers are guided by general philosophical principles or values that are not aligned or associated with a particular religion or spirituality).

Organizations with a high ethical corporate mission and culture may provide a better person-environment fit than organizations with a low ethical mission and culture. (For evidence of how a caring, ethical organization contributes to employee higher-order need satisfaction, see Giacalone's and Jurkiewicz's 2002 literature review.). Many employees may desire to engage in tasks that can contribute to the betterment of the human condition. An ethical organization places demands on their employees that are more congruent with the employees' work role identity (in the role of a "do-gooder") than other organizations. Also, ethical organizations may provide more work resources to meet the demands of the "do-gooder" than other organizations. Such organizations increase the value of the work role identity in the sense that employees feel that their work is meaningful because they help others. Under these conditions, employees are likely to experience high levels of positive self-evaluations, which in turn contribute to subjective well-being.

QWL Programs Related to the Job

Several QWL programs are related to the job. These are participation in decision-making/high involvement programs and job enrichment programs.

Participation in Decision-Making and High-Involvement Programs In a seminal study, Teas et al. (1979) found that participation in decision-making and high-involvement programs contribute positively and significantly to work satisfaction (see Levine 1995, for a review). High involvement programs act as a conduit to help employees express their thoughts and feelings in important organizational decisions, and this input is likely to influence the final management decision. High involvement programs afford employees with a greater sense of meaningfulness in their work activities, which increases the value of their work role identity.

Job Enrichment Programs Job design is the process of defining job tasks and work arrangements to accomplish them. This process may determine the amount of satisfaction that workers experience at work. As noted by Schermerhorn et al. (2000,

p.153), the best job design is always one that meets organizational requirements for high performance, offers a good fit with individual skills and needs, and provides opportunities for job satisfaction. Enriched jobs enhance motivation to work as prescribed by the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman and Oldham 1980). The Job Characteristic Model identifies five job characteristics that are essential for job design—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. If they are present, these job characteristics are likely to enhance the meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for outcomes and knowledge of actual results, as well as work-related outcomes such as intrinsic work motivation, quality of work performance, and satisfaction with the work. Thus we can argue that job enrichment programs contribute to QOL by enhancing the value of the work role identity, which in turn increases positive self-evaluations in the work domain. Increasing positive self-evaluations in the work domain contributes to subjective well being.

QWL Programs Related to Management Duties/Responsibilities and Supervisory Behavior

Several QWL programs relate to management duties and responsibilities. These include Total Quality Management, performance feedback and role clarity, and ethical supervisory behavior.

Total Quality Management (TQM) The idea underlying TQM is that all members of the organization are committed to high quality results, continuous improvement, and customer satisfaction. TQM also prescribes employee involvement and empowerment. Popovich-Hill and Hubbard (1995) conducted a study in the hospitality field to examine the effect of TQM on QOL. They found that indeed TQM had a positive impact on work and life satisfaction. TQM allows employees to assume multiple role identities within the work domain, including the role of planner, team member, coordinator, communicator, producer, and responsible party. Engaging in multiple identities at work provides adds meaning and value to the overall work role. Furthermore, fulfillment of these varied roles is likely to satisfy more needs, which in turn translates into positive self-evaluations contributing to subjective well-being.

Performance Feedback and Role Clarity The seminal study by Teas et al. (1979) found that salespeople's need fulfillment is directly related to role clarity and performance feedback; higher levels of role clarity and performance feedback lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. Role clarity and performance feedback help employees meet their work role expectations. Meeting those expectations generate positive self-evaluations, which in turn contribute to subjective well-being. Performance feedback and role clarity facilitate learning and enhance job performance.

Ethical Supervisory Behavior Employees view their jobs as purposeful and meaningful when their immediate supervisor treats them honestly, fairly, and with care. Thus, ethical supervisory behavior promotes the work role identity by

heightening the importance of the work role. Meeting those work role expectations is then likely to generate high levels of positive self-evaluations. Positive self-evaluations in the work domain contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

Ethical supervisory behavior affects work satisfaction through perceptions of procedural justice. That is, employees feel dissatisfied with their work when they perceive that their supervisors are not living up to their own role expectations of what a “good and ethical supervisor” should do. In a classic sociological analysis of the effects of supervisory style, Hopper (1965) has shown that close or punitive supervision becomes frustrating to subordinates when it violates the subordinates’ normative expectations of authority. More recently, the literature on organizational justice (e.g., Cropanzano et al. 2002) provides more evidence to support this contention. In role theory terms, feelings of inequity translate into role stress, which contribute to negative self-evaluations adversely influencing subjective well-being.

Corporate Policies Related to Employee Pay and Promotion

In this section we will discuss two sets of QWL programs related to employee promotion and incentives, namely promotion from within and incentive plans.

Promotion from Within Self-actualization, according to Maslow (1954), is the desire to become more and more from what one is to anything that one is capable of becoming. Promotion and career progress are important in that regard. Progressive companies have promotion-from-within programs (Messmer 2004). This means that open positions are filled, whenever possible, by qualified candidates from within the company. Promotion from within programs serves to enhance the value of the work role identity and promotes multiple work role identities (e.g., specialist, team player, and supervisor/manager). Meeting the needs of more role identities and highly valued role increase the likelihood of experiencing positive self-evaluations at work, which in turn contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

Incentive Plans There are many incentive plans that organizations use to reward their employees and satisfy employee needs for self-actualization, self-esteem, and social recognition. These include individual incentive programs, group incentive programs, and profit-sharing plans.

Individual Incentive Programs give income over and above base salary to employees who meet work-related role expectations. Merit pay can be construed as a type of an individual incentive program. Much evidence has shown that individual incentive programs are directly linked to job performance (e.g., Tharp 1985). These programs are perceived as the outcome of meeting role demand, which in turn contributes to positive self-evaluations and positive affect in the work domain, spilling over to subjective well-being.

Group Incentive Programs give pay over and above base salary to all team members when the team collectively meets a project goal. There seems to be much evidence suggesting that group incentive programs serve to improve job performance and employee productivity (e.g., Bartol and Hagmann 1992), which in turn

serve to enhance work satisfaction. This occurs as a result of recognizing the group incentive as an outcome of meeting role demand.

Profit-Sharing Plans are organization-wide incentive programs that provide employees with a share of the firm’s profits. There are many forms of profit-sharing plans such as stock options, stock appreciation rights, performance achievement plans, restricted stock plans, phantom stock plans, and book value plans (see Redling 1982, for a review). One can easily argue that profit-sharing plans go a long way to enhance satisfaction in the work domain as well as non-work domains (e.g., family life, leisure life, social life). Profit sharing is a means to generate more resources to promote role identity at work and outside of work.

Satisfaction in Non-work Life and Spillover to Overall Life

QWL programs that promote non-work role identities and need satisfaction were grouped in three categories. The first is alternative work arrangements, the second is components of employee’s compensation package, and the third is ancillary programs. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the QWL programs related to non-work life, how these programs affect QOL, and what kind of employees are most receptive to these programs.

Alternative Work Arrangements

Alternative work arrangements involve a QWL program designed to minimize work-family conflict and help employees balance the demands of their work and family lives. Greenhaus and Beutel (1985) suggested that the most common type of work-family conflict is time-based conflict, experienced when the time devoted to one role makes the fulfillment of the other difficult. Common programs tend to manipulate work arrangements such as full-time work-at-home, part-time work-at-home, flextime, compressed workweek, and part-time work arrangements (e.g., Duxbury and Haines 1991; Schermerhorn et al. 2000). Alternative work arrangements typically affect life satisfaction by reducing work-family conflict, which in turn enhances satisfaction with work and family life (e.g., Higgins and Duxbury 1992; Kopelman et al. 1983). For comprehensive overviews of alternative work arrangements, refer to the studies conducted by Frone and Yardely (1996) and Parker and Wall (1998).

Table 3 QWL policies and programs that satisfy employee needs in non-work life (e.g., family, leisure, financial, health, spiritual, community)

Alternative work arrangements	Employment benefits	Ancillary programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work at home • Flextime • Compressed work week • Part-time work arrangements • Job sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits • Retirement benefits • Supplemental pay benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare programs • Elder care programs • Fitness programs • Social programs & events • EAPs and counseling services • Innovative programs

Work at Home Full-time (or part-time) work at home—sometimes referred to as “teleworking,” “telecommuting,” and “flexiplace”—involves allowing employees to fulfill their job duties and responsibilities from their home, thus spending significantly more time at home than at the office. Madsen (2003) conducted a survey to investigate the differences in work-family conflict between full-time worksite employees and full-time teleworking employees. The study results indicated that teleworkers had lower levels of work-family conflict in various dimensions. Research has shown that multiple roles involving both work and family may decrease stress because of increased opportunities for need satisfaction (e.g., Valdez and Gutek 1989). It may be that work at home contributes to QOL by reducing conflict between family and work roles; work at home serves to reduce the work role demand and concomitant stress, and enhance multiple role identities-work and family roles.

Flexitime Flexitime refers to the use of flexible work schedules to help employees integrate work and life demands (Kossek et al. 1999). A variation of flexitime is “flexyears.” Under this program, employees can choose (at six-month intervals) the number of hours they want to work each month over the next year (International Management 1982). Research has shown many firms use flexitime; however, a majority of surveyed managers expressed more concerns about flexitime than other forms of alternative work arrangements (e.g., part-time work and leave of absence). With respect to the effect of flexitime on non-work life, Lucas and Heady (2002) conducted a survey of 125 full-time employed commuters from Atlanta, Georgia, the city with the largest average commute distance in the world. They found that commuters with flexitime reported less stress and fewer feelings of time urgency than those without flexitime. Thus, flexitime provides employees with resources allowing them to engage in work and non-work roles with less stress. By the same token, flexitime allows employees to engage in work and non-work roles with relative ease, thus satisfying more needs.

Compressed Work Week A compressed workweek refers to working more hours during the day but taking longer weekends (or days off) to allow the employee to spend more time on non-work matters. Much research has shown that employees gain from compressed workweek. For example, one study reported a 20% reduction in commuter trips (Northrup 1991). Another study has shown that childcare expenses can be reduced significantly by adopting a compressed workweek (Solomon 1991). A recent review (Madsen 2003) of the compressed workweek concluded that such a program has positive and long-lasting effects on both the organization and the employees. These positive effects may be due from reduced stress from commuting and the financial burden of childcare.

Part-Time Work Arrangements Part-time work arrangements refer to working less than the traditional 40-hours/week. Part-time work arrangements, characterized by working part-time to allow the employee to spend more time with family members, serves to reduce work-related stress by lowering work role demands; it helps meet role demand in the context of both work and family roles; it decreases conflict between work and family roles; it enhances multiple role identities; and it helps promote the family caretaker role by enhancing its perceived value. Doing so

Table 4 Summary table of mediator effects related to non-work-related QWL programs

QWL programs	Hypothesized Mediators (QOL is enhanced through the QWL program by ...)
Alternative work arrangements	
Work at home	reducing conflict between family and work roles; work at home serves to reduce the work role demand and concomitant stress, and enhances multiple role identities—work and family roles. Doing so decreases the likelihood of negative self-evaluations arising from failing to meet role demands in both work and family domains and satisfying more needs stemming from multiple roles.
Flextime	reducing conflict between family and work roles; work at home serves to reduce the work role demand and concomitant stress, and enhances multiple role identities—work and family roles. Doing so decreases the likelihood of negative self-evaluations arising from failing to meet role demands in both work and family domains and satisfying more needs stemming from multiple roles.
Compressed work week	reducing stress from commuting and the financial burden of childcare.
Part-time work arrangements	reducing work-related stress generated by work role demands, helping meet role demand in the context of both work and family roles, decreasing conflict between work and family roles, enhancing multiple role identities, and helping promote the family caretaker role by enhancing its perceived value. Doing so increases (decreases) the likelihood of positive (negative) self-evaluations in work and family roles.
Job sharing	reducing work-related stress by reducing work role demands, helping meet role demand in the context of both work and family roles, decreasing conflict between work and family roles, enhancing multiple role identities, and helping promote the family caretaker role by enhancing its perceived value. Doing so increases (decreases) the likelihood of positive (negative) self-evaluations in work and family roles.
Employment benefits	
Insurance benefits (worker's compensation, life insurance, health insurance)	helping meet demand of roles such as financial provider and family caretaker. Doing so decreases the likelihood of negative self-evaluations in the context of these non-work-related roles.
Retirement benefits (social security, pension plans, and early retirement)	helping meet demand of roles such as financial provider and family caretaker. Doing so decreases the likelihood of negative self-evaluations in the context of these non-work-related roles.
Supplemental pay benefits (unemployment insurance, length of vacation, buyback of unused sick leave, parental leave, and severance pay)	helping meet demand of roles such as financial provider and family caretaker (<i>unemployment insurance</i>); helping employees to reduce work role stress and promote non-work roles in family, social, leisure, and cultural life (<i>length of vacation</i>); rewarding work, thus promoting the work role identity (<i>buyback of unused sick leave</i>); enhancing the role of parent in family life (<i>parental leave</i>); helping reduce work and family role stress related to conditions of plant closing, downsizing, etc. (<i>severance pay</i>).
Ancillary programs	
Childcare programs	reducing conflict between work and family roles, which in turn serves to reduce the likelihood of negative self-evaluations in work and family domains.
Elder care programs	reducing conflict between the work role and the caretaker role, which in turn serves to reduce the likelihood of

Table 4 (continued)

QWL programs	Hypothesized Mediators (QOL is enhanced through the QWL program by ...)
Fitness programs	negative self-evaluations in work and family domains. reducing work and non-work stress, which in turn serves to reduce the likelihood of negative self-evaluations in work and non-work domains.
Social programs and events	promoting social role identity—helping meet demand of the social role, which serve to increase the likelihood of positive self-evaluation in social and leisure domains.
Employee assistance programs and counseling services	helping employees better fulfill their work and non-work roles as well as reduce work and non-work role stress.

increases (decreases) the likelihood of positive (negative) self-evaluations in work and family roles, contributing to subjective well-being.

Job Sharing Job sharing refers to situations in which specific job-related duties and responsibilities are shared between two or more employees (Voydanoff 1989). About 10% of firms questioned in one survey indicated that they allow for job sharing (Solomon 1994). Job sharing has become increasingly popular recently, especially in industries hard hit by unemployment and job losses. An example of such an industry is travel and tourism because of September 11 (Sherwyn and Sturman 2002). Some large companies have created job-sharing programs such as the Barclay Bank in the U.K. (Human Resource Management Digest 2003), where there is a national on-line job-sharing register to help employees find a potential job-share partner. Job sharing may serve to enhance family well-being. Job sharing promotes the development of one's work role identity as well as at least one valued non-work role identity—that of a parent, spouse or caretaker—by providing resources that reduce the conflict between the two.

Employment Benefits

A majority of companies in the U.S. offer at least some employment benefits to their employees (Grossman and Magnus 1988). For example, about 92% of medium and large firms and 69% of small firms provide health insurance. Most firms also provide retirement/pension benefits—88% of large firms, 78% of medium-sized firms, and 73% of small businesses. Social security is legally required and contributes toward most employees' retirement income (Grossman and Magnus 1988). A discussion of employment benefits in terms of insurance benefits, retirement benefits, and supplemental pay benefits follows.

Insurance Benefits There are essentially three types of insurance benefits provided to employees in the U.S.: worker's compensation, life insurance, and medical/health insurance. *Worker's compensation* is a program that provides income and medical benefits to work-related accident victims or their dependents regardless of fault. Some companies have instituted rehabilitation programs for injured employees (Bialk 1987). These include exercise programs, career counseling to guide injured

workers into less strenuous jobs, and nursing assistance. Obviously, one can predict that the worker's compensation program provides the injured employees a living allowance to satisfy basic needs affecting family's finances and health. Thus, worker's compensation can be construed as a QWL program that helps people meet demand of their roles as a financial provider and family caretaker, and obviously applies only to people who are accident victims.

Retirement Benefits Most U.S. companies offer at least three forms of retirement benefits: Social Security, pension plans, and early retirement. *Social Security* in the U.S. provides three types of benefits: (1) retirement benefits, (2) survivor's or death benefits, and (3) disability payments (Dessler 1997, p. 518). Thus, social security benefits help employees meet demand of their roles as a financial provider and family caretaker.

Supplemental Pay Benefits This program involves payment to employees for time off for holidays, vacations, jury duty, funerals, military duty, illness, sabbaticals, and maternity leave. It also includes unemployment insurance payments for laid-off or terminated employees and it contributes to employee well-being in the same way that insurance and retirement benefits do.

The average number of annual *vacation* days is generally high in industrialized countries. For example, the U.S. average is about 10 days/year, 30 in Sweden and Austria, 25 in France, and 20–25 in the U.K., Spain, Norway, Finland, and Belgium (Matthes 1992). Vacation allows employees to reduce work role stress and promote non-work roles in family, social, leisure, and cultural life.

With respect to *sick leave*, most employers grant full pay for a specified number of days—usually up to 12 days/year. Some employers offer a buyback of unused sick leave at the end of the year by paying their employees a daily equivalent pay for each sick leave day not used (Bunning 1988). A buyback option may serve to promote the work role identity by rewarding work.

Over 100 countries have enacted some form of *parental leave* policies with most assuring at least 2–3 months of paid job absences (Ruhm 1998). A study of parental leave in Europe has shown that parental leave serves to increase the employment rate of women (Ruhm 1998). Parental leave may contribute to QOL by enhancing the role of parent in family life.

Severance pay—a one-time payment when terminating an employee—varies from 3–4 days wages to several months of wages. Many countries have laws that force employers to provide severance pay under conditions of plant closings and downsizing (Dessler 1997, p. 511). Having severance pay serves to reduce work role stress. Thus, employees, in their role of being financial providers to their families, can deal better with job layoffs in case of plant closings, downsizing, etc.

Ancillary Programs

There are many ancillary programs found in the QWL literature designed to meet employee non-work needs. These include childcare programs, elder care programs,

fitness programs, social programs and events, employee assistance programs, and innovative programs.

Childcare Programs Many large employers offer subsidized childcare assistance in the form of covering the full or partial cost of childcare or providing childcare services at the work site (Blain and Haywood 2004). Subsidized daycare is becoming increasingly popular in the U.S. (Bureau of National Affairs 1988). Research has uncovered the positive effects of subsidized childcare to those organizations having them. These organizational effects include increased ability to attract employees, lower absenteeism, improved morale, favorable publicity, and lower turnover, among others (e.g., Campbell and Campbell 1988; Peterson and Massengill 1988).

Ezra and Deckman (1996) used data from the 1991 Survey of Federal Employees to investigate how the use of family-friendly policies (e.g., childcare programs, flextime) affects federal employees' satisfaction with their jobs and work/family balance. The study found that on-site childcare programs help employees, particularly mothers, face the demands of both work and family better. Ostensibly, this is due to the fact that the needs of both work and non-work roles are simultaneously met; and work-family conflict is reduced.

Elder Care Programs These programs are designed to help employees who take care of their elderly parents. Many companies offer a variety of plans such as company-sponsored elder care centers and subsidies to help employees cover the cost of placing their parents into an elder care center (e.g., Earhart et al. 1993). Elder care programs have the potential to enhance QOL of employees who have parents in need in significant ways. They do so by minimizing the conflict between the work role and the caretaker role.

Fitness Programs The scope of employee fitness programs ranges from company-paid memberships at private fitness clubs to complete on-site facilities. Falkenberg (1987) reviewed much of the evidence available concerning the effects of employee fitness programs on employee well-being and the organization. The effects include the following:

- Higher-fitness levels reduce stress and improve health;
- Long-term participation in fitness programs changes employee mental state (i.e., employees show less signs of depression and anxiety); and
- Short-term participation in fitness programs affects mood states (i.e., stimulates positive feelings about one's self, generates feelings of muscular endurance and increased physiological arousal that translate into feelings of exhilaration and relaxation).

Falkenberg (1987) argued that much of the evidence points out that employee fitness programs serve to reduce stress symptoms, absenteeism, and lateness. Reduction of stress occurs when employees exercise during demanding work periods, which may serve to reduce stress in both work and non-work roles. Reduced absenteeism and lateness occur when employees are better able to schedule work and non-work activities.

Social Programs and Events Some employers provide various social and recreational opportunities for their employees. These include company-sponsored athletic events, dance clubs, annual summer picnics, craft activities, employee retreats, and parties (Bureau of National Affairs 1992). QOL is likely to be impacted through the social life domain. That is, employees' QOL is enhanced through these QWL programs by increasing social and leisure well-being.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) EAPs are services that provide employees with counseling or treatment for problems such as alcoholism, gambling, or stress (e.g., Employee Benefits 2005; Rockett 2004). One study estimated that 50–75% of all large U.S. companies offer variations of EAPs (Hellan 1986).

In the hospitality industry, Tse and Jackson (1990) argued that alcohol abuse is more likely because the work environment encourages drinking. The environment associated with food, drink, and entertainment is conducive to drinking alcohol. The environment is also quite stressful because service is time-pressured. EAPs combating alcohol abuse can play a significant role in employee life satisfaction.

In general, one might argue that EAPs help employees better fulfill their work roles and their non-work roles as well as reduce work and non-work role stress. In addition to enhancing employees' QOL, EAPs contribute to the financial health of employers. Evidence suggests that EAPs reduce health costs, improve productivity, decrease absenteeism, decrease employee turnover, and increase employee morale and job satisfaction (e.g., Rockett 2004).

Innovative Benefits One study of innovative benefits (Dessler 1997, p. 527; The Research Staff of Hewitt Associates 1995) found Canadian companies offer benefits such as

- lakefront vacations;
- weight loss programs;
- child adoption assistance;
- company country club membership;
- season tickets to cultural activities and events such as the ballet, theaters, concerts, and museums;
- lunch-and-learn programs (employees can attend talks on a variety of subjects such as stress management, weight control, computer literacy, fashion, and travel);
- home assistance program (monetary assistance to help employees purchase a home),
- subsidized employee transportation (e.g., car pooling systems);
- food services (coffee wagons, vending machines, and cafeteria services); and
- executive perks (e.g., company car, chauffeured limousine, security system, company plane, yacht, executive dining room, liberal expense account, club membership, and credit cards, among others)

We don't have the space in this article to attempt to explain the psychological dynamics of each of these innovative benefits program. However, the same work-life

identity principles should apply. That is, QWL programs serve to enhance QOL by (1) providing appropriate work resources to meet the expectations of employee role identities, (2) reducing role conflict in work and non-work life, (3) enhancing multiple role identities, (4) reducing role demands, (5) reducing stress related to work and non-work role identities, and (6) increasing the value of the role identity.

Conclusion

This paper is designed to motivate industrial/organizational psychologists, management scholars, and QOL researchers to engage in research to further develop our understanding of the QWL-QOL relationship. We believe that the QWL programs discussed in this paper can play a significant role in employee life satisfaction, happiness, and subjective well-being. Future research could systematically and methodically test the QOL effects of these QWL programs guided by our interactionist model. Different QWL programs tend to affect different role identities in different ways. Some meet multiple roles. Some are effective in generating more resources facilitating the realization of role expectations. Some are effective in reducing conflict within a specific role identity or between two or more role identities. Others are designed to clarify and articulate role expectations to match work and non-work demands. The QOL effects of many of the QWL programs may also be moderated by a set of demographic and dispositional factors that deserve attention.

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