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QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE: PERCEPTION OF EMPLOYEES OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN MINAS GERAIS¹

ABSTRACT

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The objective of this research is to evaluate the quality of working life of public servants of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Minas Gerais. A survey was carried out with 103 professors and administrative technicians from an HEI. Data analysis was based on descriptive and multivariate statistics with the aid of the SPSS software. More specifically, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was carried out to measure the degree of employee satisfaction with respect to nine factors of quality of working life. Then, comparisons of means were made using the T and Anova tests. The results obtained showed that the averages of QWL indices perceived by different groups are higher, such as: women, those in management positions, those with a lower level of education, longer service time at the HEI, and permanent teachers.

Keywords: Quality of working life. Higher Education Institution. Quantitative study.

QUALIDADE DE VIDA NO TRABALHO: PERCEPÇÃO DOS FUNCIONÁRIOS DE UMA INSTITUIÇÃO DE ENSINO SUPERIOR EM MINAS GERAIS

RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é avaliar a qualidade de vida no trabalho dos servidores públicos de uma Instituição de Ensino Superior (IES) de Minas Gerais. Foi realizada um *survey* com 103 docentes e técnicos administrativos de uma IES. A análise dos dados se deu a partir de estatísticas descritiva e multivariada com o auxílio do *software* SPSS. Mais especificamente, foi feita a Análise Fatorial Confirmatória para auferir o grau de satisfação dos colaboradores com relação a nove fatores de qualidade de vida no trabalho. Em seguida, foram feitas comparações de médias por meio dos Testes T e Anova. Os resultados obtidos demonstraram que são superiores as médias de índices de QVT percebidas por diferentes grupos, tais como: as mulheres, os que ocupam cargos de gestão, aqueles que possuem menor nível de escolaridade, maior tempo de serviço na IES, e os docentes efetivos.

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Palavras-chave: Qualidade de vida no trabalho. Instituição de Ensino Superior. Estudo quantitativo.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, much has been said about "Quality", especially when it comes to the advancement of globalization and technological innovations, which have been expanding perspectives and forcing companies to create a new corporate perspective on issues of wellbeing and health of its employees (LIMA; OLIVO, 2015). Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019) highlight that innovations in production processes and the ease obtained for exchanging knowledge generate greater competitiveness between companies due to the great demand for qualified and skilled professionals to deal with the new challenges. However, some impasses arise from the excessive demand of the market, such as health problems, an increase in work accidents, lack of motivation and stress.

If, according to Silva and Extender (2016), work wears out the worker over time, some organizational actions are necessary in order to provide well-being and satisfaction to individuals. Some examples include offering the opportunity to experience other responsibilities and encouraging flexibility, some of the points that have been valued by companies (SILVA; ESTENDER, 2016). In such a way, it ended up by understanding the need of valuing human capital in organizations. Companies must be able to provide adequate conditions for the development of work activities, resulting in the well-being and satisfaction of employees in addition to business success (SILVA; ESTENDER, 2016).

Quality of working life (QWL) refers to the actions that an employer takes, along with its employee, to contribute to the improvement of workers' lives and their working environment (KLEIN; PEREIRA; LEMOS, 2019). QWL considers the physical, emotional and social aspects of the worker. Thus, it can be said that the objective of quality of working life is to create a healthy and harmonious work environment, which allows the individual's personal and professional development (FEITOSA, 2014). Given the above, this study aims to assess the quality of working life of public servants of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Minas Gerais. To achieve this goal, a survey was carried out – based on the questionnaire used by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019) – with 103 teachers and Administrative Technicians in Education (ATE) from a HEI in the interior of MG.

Pedro, Alves and Leitão (2020) state that the quality of working life of professors and researchers in higher education contributes to the performance of HEIs, in general, being improved, as well as contributing to teachers being more motivated, consequently generating ForScience, Formiga, v. 9, n. 2, e00980, jul./dez. 2021.

greater satisfaction for academics. Similarly, it is understood that the quality of working life for ATE also provides higher levels of motivation and satisfaction with work, which impacts on the service to the public, including teachers, academics and external users. Furthermore, considering aspects related to people management – such as QWL – in public organizations is essential, as servers are key parts for organizations to be able to meet the demands of society (MATIAS; MOURA, 2019). That said, and considering that the promotion of QWL has a significant impact on the results obtained by organizations, it is necessary to identify gaps in the treatment of QWL in organizations, as well as to make QWL programs more efficient. Through QWL, the individual has their value recognized in the organization, which increases their degree of satisfaction with the company and enables the optimization of resources and full achievement of organizational goals.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Origin, evolution and concepts of QWL

The concern with workers originated in the conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), when specific legislation was created to improve work, with a special focus on worker health, hygiene, satisfaction and safety (GALEANO; VIEIRA; ARAÚJO, 2008). There are reports that the first initiatives in QWL were in the middle of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. Records became more systematic with the advent of Scientific Administration theorists and the School of Human Relations (OLIVEIRA et al., 2010).

It was only in the 1980s that movements and concerns about QWL gained momentum. In Brazil, the awareness of workers and the increase in the company's social responsibilities contributed decisively to its implementation (BOWDITCH; BUONO, 2006 apud MATOS, 2010). From the 1990s onwards, the phenomenon of globalization and the constant advancement of technology evidenced the need to adapt to an increasingly competitive market, which caused profound changes in organizations (SILVA; FERREIRA, 2013). In the late 1990s, QWL programs emerged with the proposal to democratize work and, at the same time, increase the profitability and domination of managers over employees (LEITE; FERREIRA; MENDES, 2009).

The concept of QWL is broad and covers various fields, being studied by several scholars for some years (MATOS, 2010). Limongi-França (2004, p. 22) reinforces that "the visions and definitions of QWL are multifaceted, with ethical, political and personal expectations implications".

The various authors who deal with QWL present concepts with varied approaches based on physical, psychological and social factors present in the organizational life of human beings (PAZINI; STEFANO, 2009). The definitions of QWL are being adapted according to the historical and organizational context (OLIVEIRA et al., 2009).

Albuquerque and Limongi-França (1998, p. 42) define the quality of working life as follows:

> [...] is a set of actions of a company that involves diagnosis and implementation of improvements and managerial, technological and structural innovations inside and outside the work environment, aiming to provide full conditions of human development for and during the performance of the work.

Similarly, Schirrmeister and Limongi França (2012) state that QWL encompasses people management procedures aimed at healthy productivity, motivation, human development and personal and organizational well-being. In turn, Silva et al. (2016) conceptualize QWL as a process that involves people, work and organizations, with an emphasis on concern for the well-being of workers and the organizational process.

QWL is a concept that concerns the worker's perception of the working conditions offered by companies, which include: compensation, working hours, job security and stability, recognition and other aspects that contribute to the employee's satisfaction. to reduce professional tension and stress (FEITOSA, 2014).

Ferreira (2011) distinguishes two types of approaches to QWL: assistance (hegemonic) and preventive (counter-hegemonic), Frame 1 shows the main differences between the approaches.

Assistance QWL	Preventive QWL
The individual is an organizational adjustment	The organizational context must be adapted to the
variable.	worker.
QWL is an individual responsibility (each worker).	QWL is a collective responsibility.
It aims to increase productivity and improve the	Alignment between productivity and social well-
quality of goods and services.	being (healthy productivity).

Frame 1 - Basic distinctions between QWL approaches

Source: Adapted from Ferreira (2011, p. 34).

According to Ferreira (2011), the assistance QWL presents a reified idea of the individual, work and organization, with strategies aimed at keeping individuals working frantically in pursuit of productivity goals. The author points out the need to look at QWL from a preventive perspective, focusing on three dimensions: health and safety surveillance, psychosocial assistance to workers and the promotion of well-being at work. Ferreira (2011) also highlights the importance of thinking about QWL taking into account the perception of employees. Thus, the author considers five structuring factors to assess the concept of QWL:

- Working conditions: physical, material, instrumental and support conditions, which influence the work activity and can put physical safety at risk;
- Organization of work: issues related to time, control, performance of tasks and overload:
- Socio-professional work relationships: interactions with colleagues, superiors and the work environment (communication and conflicts);
- Recognition and professional growth: recognition at work (existential, institutional, professional achievement, results) and professional growth (opportunity, incentives, development);
- Work-social life link: perception of the institution and work and its relationship with social life.

The factors described above were used in the research by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019). After exploratory factor analysis, 9 factors were obtained (instead of 5) which are the guiding elements of this research. In the research, the authors sought to analyze the QWL assessment parameters in a public HEI in the interior of the state of Rio Grande do Sul and the perception of public servants in relation to such parameters. Thus, Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019) theoretically contribute to the assessment of QWL in the public context. Frame 2 presents the nine factors and the variables evaluated.

Factor	Evaluated variables
1- Physical space	Physical conditions of the work environment, instruments and materials available in it for carrying out the activities.
2- Opportunities for professional growth	Possibilities for personal development and career growth.
3- Job satisfaction	How well the individual feels pleasure and is happy in the place where he/she works.
4- Relationship with colleagues	The relationship of servers with their co-workers.
5- Recognition for the work performed	How much the person is recognized for the effort, dedication and activities performed.
6- Relationship with the boss	The relationship of servants with their bosses.
7- Execution of activities	Amount of work and time the server has to carry out its activities.
8- Performance and results evaluation	Degree of demand and inspection for results in the work of public servants.
9- Freedom in the work environment	Server autonomy to perform its activities.

Frame 2 - Factors and variables evaluated Source: Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019).

It can be concluded that quality of working life seeks to align a healthy work environment with the quality of products and services offered by organizations, with the enhancement of the human element. In this context, the responsibility of public and private organizations is highlighted to promote a human resources policy that provides satisfaction and quality of life to employees.

2.2 The importance of QWL in public and private organizations

Matias and Moura (2019, p. 155) state that "[...] the quality of working life has been increasingly expressed in the organizational context, whether private or public". As individuals spend most of their time in work organizations, the weight that work exerts on their lives is undeniable (DAL FORNO; FINGER, 2015). In addition to the economic value of work for the subsistence of workers and their families, work can also provide professional, personal, family and social fulfillment (MOREIRA, 2010).

QWL proved to be essential in the face of the new social reality: increased life expectancy, more time in productive activities, awareness of the right to health, new habits and behavior styles, social responsibility and sustainable development (LIMONGI-FRANÇA, 2004). When considering this changing scenario, it is important that managers rethink organizational practices, seeking to respond efficiently to new market demands (FERREIRA; ALVES; TOSTES, 2009).

The need for QWL programs in organizations is marked by the acceleration of changes in the world of work, with emphasis on technological innovations, with flexibility being the watchword of the market (FERREIRA; ALVES; TOSTES, 2009). Thus, the employee is expected to: ability to handle new technological tools, ability to deal with new problems and socially relate (teamwork) and act in environments of greater uncertainty (FERREIRA; ALVES; TOSTES, 2009). Therefore, the final quality of products and services must be accompanied by the quality of life of employees (FERREIRA; ALVES; TOSTES, 2009). Pozo and Tachizawa (2016) reiterate that the main concern of QWL is that the quality of an organization's services and products reflect the quality of life of those who produced them.

It is important to consider that the perception of QWL by employees, as well as by organizations, is associated with a motivational process (POZO; TACHIZAWA, 2016). When employees realize that they work in a place that is concerned with the working conditions offered and that offers opportunities for growth and participation, they tend to innovate and produce more effectively (POZO; TACHIZAWA, 2016). Thus, according to the authors, individuals feel that they are a relevant part of the organization and the motivational element becomes a competitive differential, configuring itself as a strategic tool.

On the other hand, if there is not adequate planning and implementation of actions to promote QWL, organizational results may be affected. If the individual perceives that their wishes are not satisfied, they feel unmotivated and, as a consequence, cannot reach the level of commitment and involvement expected by the organization (VENSON et al., 2013).

Aligning organizational issues with the human dimension expands the understanding of the human side in organizations, which increases the possibility of living better in the company (LIMONGI-FRANÇA, 2004). Employees must have their value recognized within organizations, since a satisfied worker develops a positive feeling that is reflected in the work environment, in the family context and in society (CAMPOS, 2016).

With regard to public service, with constant change processes, public organizations seek to become increasingly efficient and deliver better services to society (SOUZA; MARQUES; JORGE, 2014). In such a way, it started to demand more from the servers. However, the human resources policy has not kept up with such transformations. Employees are demanded for greater productivity, quality and commitment, but initiatives to promote the quality of life of these employees are still incipient (SOUZA; MARQUES; JORGE, 2014).

Especially in HEIs, as already mentioned, QWL contributes to the improvement of the performance of institutions, as well as helping teachers and EATs to be more motivated, consequently generating greater satisfaction for academics (PEDRO; ALVES; LEITÃO, 2020), since the way employees treat service users will directly reflect on their perception of the public service (DAMASCENO; ALEXANDRE, 2012).

Gomes et al. (2017) argue that, considering the relevance of higher education for the country's development, a possible solution to the problems in the HEIs – especially the problems of teachers, such as physical conditions, excessive functions, long working hours, etc. – is the promotion of QWL, with a view to providing a healthy work environment and the possibility of balancing the professional and personal spheres.

3 METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the quality of working life of public servants of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Minas Gerais, an electronic survey was used (FONSECA, 2002). To collect the research data, a questionnaire on QWL was applied to the servers of an HEI. The questionnaire used consists of 56 questions that help to assess the perception of QWL by employees. This instrument is based on the 9 factors identified by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019), which, in turn, is based on Ferreira's (2011) 5 structuring factors. Some questions were added to the questionnaire to list the individual characteristics of the participants. To gauge the opinion of employees, a 5-point Likert scale was used, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree". According to Trojan and Sipraki (2015), the main advantages of Likert scales are the simplicity of construction and the breadth of answers allowed, which contributes to the presentation of more accurate information about the respondent's opinion in relation to each statement.

The research was approved by the institution on June 24, 2020 and data collection took place between June 25 and July 22, 2020. The case study population included 192 servers, including professors and EAT. Servers received the questionnaire (link that directed to Google Forms) and instructions for participating in the survey via e-mail.

The survey was sent to all servers and, in total, 105 responses were obtained. However, two answers were repeated and therefore were excluded. Therefore, the sample consisted of 103 responding public servants, 67 of which were professors (54 permanent and 13 temporary) and 36 from EAT, which corresponds to 53.64 % of the population.

According to Dias, Silva and Macedo (2019), the sample size is a factor to be considered for a factor analysis, and a researcher will hardly carry out a factor analysis with less than 50 observations. Hair Junior et al. (2009) and Dias, Silva and Macedo (2019) agree that, preferably, the sample size should be greater than or equal to 100. For this reason, and considering that the questionnaires were sent more than once to the servers (in in order to reinforce the importance of participation), the data analysis was carried out with the 103 responses obtained.

For data analysis, descriptive and multivariate statistics were performed. To carry out the intended tests, the Statiscal Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used. At first, a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the participants was carried out in order to understand the profile of the sample. Then, the CFA was performed to assess the degree of satisfaction of employees with respect to the nine factors proposed by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019). According to Laros (2012), confirmatory factor analysis tests whether the theoretical factor structure fits the observed data. Tests T and Anova were also carried out to identify whether there are differences between the groups, for example, teachers and technicians, men and women, among others.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this topic, the characterization of the researched sample is initially presented. Subsequently, the procedures applied in carrying out the CFA are explained, based on the nine factors of Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019). Finally, the results of the T Tests and ANOVA are presented.

4.1 Sample profile

The analyzed sample consisted of 103 employees, including Professors and EATs of a HEI in Minas Gerais. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1 - Characteristics of respondents

Variable	Alternative	Frequence	Percentage (%)		
Sex	Male	64	62,1		
	Female	39	37,9		
Leadership position	Yes	22	21,4		
	No	81	78,6		
Occupation	Effective professor	54	52,4		
	Temporary professor	13	12,6		
	Admnistrative technician	36	35,0		
Instruction level	High school	2	1,9		
	Higher education degree	10	9,7		
	Lato Sensu Postgraduate degree	12	11,7		
	Master	56	54,4		
	Doctor	23	22,3		
Age group	18 to 30 years old	11	10,7		
	31 to 40 years old	45	43,7		
	41 to 50 years old	35	34,0		
	Over 50 years	12	11,7		
Length of service at the institution	Up to 6 months	7	6,8		
	Up to 1 year	10	9,7		
	Up to 3 years old	23	22,3		
	Up to 5 years	13	12,6		
	Over 5 years	50	48,5		
Time in public service	Up to 6 months	2	1,9		
	Up to 1 year	3	2,9		
	Up to 3 years old	16	15,5		
	Up to 5 years	10	9,7		
	Over 5 anos	72	69,9		

The researched institution is part of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, created by former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in 2008. As of that date, it has been in operation for 12 years, which may explain the fact that almost half employees have more than 5 years of work at the institution. Another important fact to be highlighted is that most respondents have qualifications beyond graduation (88.4 %).

4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

The CFA was carried out considering the 5 structuring factors of Ferreira (2011) and also considering the 9 factors found in the researches by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019). From the results, a greater adequacy was perceived when the variables were analyzed based on the 9 factors. Bartlett's sphericity tests and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy were performed. The KMO test indicates the proportion of data variance that can be considered common to all variables. The closer to 1 the result, the more adequate the sample for the application of the AFC (MESSETTI, 2007). The result of the KMO measurement was 0.791, which is considered median by Kaiser and Rice (1977) – values between 0.7 and 0.8 are median – and ideal for Hair Junior et al. (2005) – the closer to 1, the more appropriate the use of the technique.

Bartlett's test of sphericity can be defined as a statistic that is used to test the hypothesis that the population correlation matrix is equal to the identity matrix, that is, it is assumed that there is no linear correlation (uncorrelated variables) between the variables studied (MESSETI, 2007). In the Bartlett Test, given the significance of 0.000, the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix is rejected, which means that there is a correlation between the variables (HAIR JUNIOR et al., 2005).

Table 2 presents the CFA results of the factors proposed by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019). Of the original questions in Ferreira's (2011) questionnaire, 6 were taken by Klein Pereira and Lemos (2019), as they did not reach the appropriate value in the exploratory factor analysis.

Table 2 - Factors resulting from the confirmatory factor analysis

	Items					Fa	ctor loadii	ng			
Factor	Associated Issues	Cronbach 's Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Factor 1	The workplace is comfortable.	0,874	0,135	0,836	0,131	0,034	0,197	0,057	0,075	0,069	0,041
Space	The workstation is suitable for carrying out the tasks.		0,208	0,841	0,101	-0,034	-0,084	0,027	0,047	0,148	-0,102
physicist	The physical space to do my work is satisfactory.		0,252	0,812	0,005	-0,101	0,101	0,016	0,007	0,152	0,038
	The lighting level is sufficient to carry out the activities.		0,097	0,758	0,148	0,332	0,186	0,179	0,093	-0,107	-0,078
	Room temperature is comfortable.		-0,059	0,662	0,168	0,334	0,215	0,158	0,044	0,059	0,006
	The working instruments are sufficient to carry out the tasks.		0,079	0,349	0,136	-0,012	-0,046	0,094	-0,027	0,742	-0,051
	The consumables are enough.		-0,031	0,472	0,111	0,225	0,130	-0,104	0,055	0,561	0,096
Factor 2	The institution offers an opportunity for professional growth.	0,827	0,232	0,120	0,290	0,777	-0,029	0,038	0,047	0,018	-0,060
Professional	Personal development is a real possibility at the institution.		0,385	0,165	0,173	0,629	0,064	0,246	0,031	0,012	-0,062
growth	There are incentives for career growth.		0,184	0,154	0,281	0,761	-0,119	0,051	0,161	0,059	-0,010
opportunities	Managerial behavior is characterized by dialogue.	_	0,136	-0,015	0,509	0,093	0,259	0,251	0,084	0,367	0,027
	I feel recognized by the institution where I work.		0,652	0,146	0,343	0,266	0,165	0,211	0,303	0,003	0,018
Factor 3	At the institution, the activities I perform are a source of pleasure.	0,712	0,432	0,000	0,047	0,320	0,137	-0,002	0,088	0,467	0,047
Job satisfaction	The time I spend working at the institution makes me happy.		0,364	0,180	0,033	0,376	0,309	0,171	0,474	0,103	-0,095
	I feel that my work makes me feel good.	<u></u>	0,309	-0,076	0,063	0,006	0,421	0,103	0,574	0,294	-0,050
	I like the institution where I work.		0,165	0,235	0,165	0,149	0,040	0,229	0,575	0,039	0,018
Factor 4	Coexistence in the institution's work environment is harmonious.	0,403	0,430	0,018	-0,020	-0,042	-0,026	0,459	0,569	-0,036	0,024
Relationship	There is trust among colleagues.	_	0,124	0,166	0,202	0,111	0,096	0,655	0,096	0,138	0,209
with colleagues	Conflict in the work environment is common.		-0,427	-0,211	0,176	-0,021	-0,075	-0,656	0,088	0,157	0,176
	My working relationships with colleagues are harmonious.		0,035	-0,049	0,154	0,061	0,085	0,819	0,212	0,075	0,075
	My coworkers demonstrate willingness to help me.		0,146	0,111	0,405	0,048	-0,166	0,656	0,128	-0,069	-0,069
Factor 5	Recognition of individual work is an effective practice.	0,850	0,769	0,255	0,158	0,126	0,065	0,138	0,026	0,145	0,080
Recognition for	In this institution, the result obtained with my work is recognized.		0,720	0,063	0,320	0,218	0,077	0,140	0,364	0,010	0,052
the work done	Recognition of collective work is an effective practice.		0,697	0,344	0,174	0,310	0,103	0,137	-0,040	0,103	0,048
	In this institution, my dedication to work is recognized.		0,712	0,110	0,314	0,186	0,074	0,101	0,344	0,010	0,121
	Society recognizes the importance of my work.		0,054	-0,023	0,442	0,111	0,299	-0,021	0,532	-0,303	0,131
Factor 6	My working relationships with management are cooperative.	0,798	0,175	0,156	0,766	0,173	0,094	0,085	0,088	0,101	0,135
Relationship	My immediate boss is interested in helping me.		0,223	0,263	0,747	0,145	-0,045	0,287	-0,133	0,096	0,010
with the boss	In this institution, I receive incentives from my boss.		0,445	0,024	0,509	0,056	-0,156	0,374	0,126	0,116	0,056

	Items					Fa	ctor loadi	ng			
Factor	Associated Issues	Cronbach	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		's Alpha									
Factor 7	I can do my job without overloading tasks.	0,779	0,121	0,089	-0,025	-0,054	0,864	0,005	0,025	-0,080	-0,104
Execution of	I can do my job without pressure.		0,050	0,222	0,011	0,039	0,756	0,007	0,158	-0,079	-0,214
activities	At the Institution, I have time to do my job with zeal.		0,058	0,299	-0,027	-0,043	0,643	-0,036	0,048	0,167	0,138
Factor 8	At the Institution, there is a charge for results.	0,608	0,063	0,041	-0,007	0,083	-0,169	0,093	-0,013	0,137	0,743
Performance	There is oversight of performance.		0,228	-0,076	0,167	0,133	0,124	0,021	-0,265	-0,182	0,690
and Results	The rules for carrying out the tasks are strict.		-0,080	-0,042	0,089	-0,195	-0,131	-0,011	0,242	-0,036	0,707
Evaluation	There is a demand for deadlines to fulfill the tasks.		0,059	0,040	-0,092	0,582	0,093	-0,015	0,024	0,037	0,429
Factor 9	I have freedom in carrying out tasks.	0,510	-0,004	-0,034	0,222	0,254	0,595	0,117	0,052	0,240	-0,020
Freedom in the	I have the possibility to be creative in my work.		0,205	-0,216	-0,048	0,581	0,327	-0,021	0,027	0,508	-0,013
work	At the institution, I have free access to senior management.		0,288	0,191	0,668	0,165	0,004	0,015	0,274	-0,030	0,024
environment											

According to Hair Junior et al. (2005), Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of reliability ranging between 0 and 1, and the closer to 1, the greater the reliability between the indicators. While values above 0.7 are considered acceptable, those between $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$ are lower than acceptability and considered questionable (HAIR JUNIOR et al., 2005). Despite this, Landis and Koch (1977) classify the level of between 0.6 and 0.7 as moderate. Therefore, factors 4 (Relationship with colleagues), 8 (Evaluation of performance and results) and 9 (Freedom in the work environment) may deserve further discussion in future studies, as they had α of 0.403, 0.608 and 0.510, respectively. We highlight that these three factors were not included in the initial research by Ferreira (2011), but obtained by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019) in the exploratory factor analysis.

It is noteworthy that in the factor with the lowest Cronbach's Alpha, Relationship with colleagues, if the item "Conflict in the workplace is common" was excluded, the alpha value would be 0.769. Therefore, this result indicates that especially one item is contributing to the low reliability of the factor.

4.3 Analysis of QWL factors

Multivariate tests were performed with the factors obtained from the CFA and with the respondents' characteristics data. First, the T Test was performed considering the samples with groups of men and women. This test allows us to verify if there are differences between the means for these two groups. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 - T test for groups of men and women

QWL Factors		Men	V	Vomen	T test	
	Mean	Standard	Mean	Standard	Value	Sig.
		Deviation		Deviation		
Physical space	4,20	0,74	4,27	0,70	-0,441	0,367
Opportunity for professional growth	4,11	0,72	4,44	0,55	-2,640	0,067*
Job satisfaction	4,45	0,54	4,47	0,54	-0,208	0,513
Relationship with colleagues	3,85	0,41	4,44	0,44	-0,601	0,722
Recognition for the work performed	3,64	0,83	3,91	0,63	-1,870	0,110
Relationship with the boss	4,27	0,67	4,44	0,66	-1,325	0,698
Execution of activities	4,05	0,80	3,88	0,84	0,095	0,987
Performance evaluation and results	3,38	0,71	3,18	0,83	1,245	0,266
Freedom in the work environment	4,42	0,46	4,43	0,64	-0,091	0,089

Note: *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1

Analyzing Table 3, it is possible to see that only the Opportunity for professional growth factor presents a significant mean difference between the two analyzed groups. The female group had a higher value for this factor, 4.44, while the male group showed a value of 4.11. This result can be related to the fact that women, in addition to having more positive long-term thoughts, are seeking greater progress when it comes to education, training and professionalism. According to Leone and Baltar (2006), higher education has been an important factor in the professional progress of women, especially in the public sector. One aspect that would reinforce the employability of women comes from characteristics and abilities attributed to their gender, such as better resourcefulness in personalized service activities for different audiences. The authors also claim that women are more present in education, health and social services activities. In the other factors, no significant differences were found between men and women.

It was also analyzed whether there were different perceptions of QWL among employees who occupy or not management positions at the institution. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 - T test for groups that hold and do not hold a management position

QWL Factors	Н	lolds a	Does	n't hold a	T test		
	man	agement	management				
	pe	osition	p	osition			
	Mean	Standard	Mean	Standard	Value	Sig.	
		Deviation		Deviation			
Physical space	4,36	0,88	4,19	0,68	0,815	0,133	
Opportunity for professional growth	4,38	0,44	4,20	0,72	1,151	0,023**	
Job satisfaction	4,57	0,45	4,42	0,55	1,274	0,256	
Relationship with colleagues	3,88	0,36	3,87	0,44	0,167	0,478	
Recognition for the work performed	3,78	0,78	3,73	0,77	0,285	0,960	
Relationship with the boss	4,48	0,66	4,29	0,67	1,215	0,586	
Execution of activities	4,05	0,72	3,97	0,84	0,435	0,799	
Performance evaluation and results	3,18	0,88	3,34	0,73	-0,759	0,483	
Freedom in the work environment	4,41	0,47	4,42	0,55	-0,126	0,268	

Note: *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1

Source: Authors (2021).

As in the T Test for groups of men and women, by analyzing Table 4 it is possible to see that only the factor Opportunity for professional growth rejected the hypothesis of equality of variances, which demonstrates that being or not in a management position does not influence the perception of other QWL factors. The group that occupies a management position had a higher value for this factor, which was 4.38, while the group that does not occupy a management position had a value of 4.20. According to Veloso et al. (2011), managers positively perceive their possibility of professional growth in a higher proportion than other employees. According to the authors, it is possible to assume that managers have more developed individual skills, which increases professional value, resulting in a greater perception of professional growth within the organization.

The ANOVA test was performed to assess whether there was a significant difference in the perception of QWL in different age groups. It was found that no factor showed significant mean differences between these groups. Then, the test was performed considering the different levels of education. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 - Anova for groups according to education

QWL factors		Mean for g	groups according t	o education		F test		
-	High School	Higher education degree	Lato Sensu Postgraduate degree	Master	Doctor	Value	Sig.	
Physical space	4,21	3,91	3,98	4,34	4,22	1,172	0,328	
Opportunity for professional growth	5,00	4,14	4,18	4,22	4,27	0,720	0,580	
Job satisfaction	4,75	4,00	4,17	4,55	4,54	3,813	0,006***	
Relationship with colleagues	3,90	3,98	3,52	3,90	3,92	2,935	0,039**	
Recognition for the work performed	3,90	3,32	3,80	3,74	3,87	0,954	0,436	
Relationship with the boss	4,50	4,23	4,47	4,31	4,35	0,229	0,922	
Execution of activities	4,50	3,33	3,67	4,06	4,20	2,997	0,022**	
Performance evaluation and results	4,00	3,38	3,04	3,28	3,41	0,930	0,450	
Freedom in the work environment	4,67	4,20	4,17	4,44	4,58	1,794	0,136	

Note: *** p < 0,01; ** p < 0,05; * p < 0,1

Source: Authors (2021).

Significant mean differences were noticed in three factors: Job satisfaction, Relationship with colleagues and Execution of activities. As for the first factor, it is interesting to note that the most satisfied employees are those with the lowest level of education (high school). According to Machado and Silva (2014), the probability of more educated workers being dissatisfied with their occupation is greater than that of workers who do not have a high level of education. This is because the level of education increases the level of demand of workers, thus, individuals with higher education end up showing more dissatisfaction in their jobs.

Regarding the factor Relationship with colleagues, the highest average is for the group with complete higher education (3.98), with a significant difference for the lowest average, which is the group with postgraduate education (3.52). A possible explanation for this result would be the fact that Higher Education is an "intermediate category", in which there is not such a tense climate of competition. The university environment sometimes becomes a place of clash between egos, where professionals end up valuing their personal projects to the detriment of organizational goals. This fact can end up generating conflicting relationships, making the climate difficult and heavy.

When considering the Execution of activities factor, employees with less education had the highest average. According to Bianchi, Scalabrin and Penterich (2006), professionals from academia and teaching entities are continually evaluated on the productivity of their teachers, which ends up demanding an intense pace of work based on the delivery of results. Thus, professionals with a higher education end up being overwhelmed.

The ANOVA test was also performed to verify the existence of differences in the perception of QWL considering the length of service at the HEI. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 - Anova for the groups regarding length of service at the higher education institution

QWL factores	Mean fo	or groups in higher	F test				
	Up to 6 months	Up to 1 year	Up to 3 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years	Value	Sig.
Physical space	3,71	4,39	4,10	4,47	4,26	1,620	0,175
Opportunity for professional growth	4,40	3,92	4,36	4,42	4,17	1,182	0,324
Job satisfaction	4,43	4,58	4,50	4,63	4,37	0,890	0,473
Relationship with colleagues	3,60	4,04	3,97	3,89	3,82	1,720	0,152
Recognition for the work performed	3,71	3,62	3,93	3,98	3,62	1,080	0,371
Relationship with the boss	4,29	4,30	4,55	4,46	4,21	1,147	0,339
Execution of activities	3,29	4,30	3,81	4,05	4,08	2,210	0,073*
Performance evaluation and results	3,54	2,98	3,51	3,42	3,21	1,342	0,260
Freedom in the work environment	4,52	4,33	4,43	4,56	4,38	0,433	0,784

Note: *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1

By analyzing Table 6, it can be seen that there is a significant mean difference in only one factor, Execution of activities. The highest average for this factor is that of employees who have worked at the Institution for almost a year. It is possible that those who have been at the HEI for less time have a more intense work pace, either because they are substitute teachers (and therefore do not have great experience in the subjects they teach, which requires more time for preparation) or because they haven't got used to the culture of the institutionyet. As pointed out by Limongi-França (2004), QWL is essential in view of the new social reality in which individuals dedicate more time to work activities and have new habits and behavior styles (LIMONGI-FRANÇA, 2004).

Differences in QWL perceptions for groups formed by function are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 - Anova for groups formed by function

QWL factors	M	ean of groups by	function	F test		
	Effective professor	Temporary professor	Admnistrative technician	Value	Sig.	
Physical space	4,19	4,05	4,35	0,959	0,387	
Opportunity for professional growth	4,29	4,12	4,20	0,371	0,691	
Job satisfaction	4,58	4,50	4,25	4,425	0,014**	
Relationship with colleagues	3,90	3,74	3,87	0,81	0,448	
Recognition for the work performed	3,83	3,71	3,62	0,844	0,433	
Relationship with the boss	4,32	4,15	4,42	0,751	0,475	
Execution of activities	4,15	3,74	3,82	2,415	0,095*	
Performance evaluation and results	3,37	3,23	3,24	0,376	0,687	
Freedom in the work environment	4,61	4,41	4,14	9,921	0,000***	

Note: *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1

Source: Authors (2021).

Significant mean differences were found for three factors: Satisfaction at work, Execution of activities and Freedom in the work environment. The assessment of these factors is lower for administrative technicians. According to Campos (2016), administrative technicians are professionals who work on different fronts of the large administrative area (finance, people management, warehouse, library, etc.). Unlike teachers, who can define the format of their classes and have greater freedom to perform their tasks, administrative technicians have standardized tasks, which may explain the lower averages presented by this group.

As for the Execution of activities, the highest average is that of effective professors. It is possible for effective professors to better manage the amount of work and time to carry out such activities, since they must present the Individual Faculty Work Plan (IWP), which is a document composed of the list of activities to be performed and their respective loads weekly working hours. There is also the Individual Activities Report (IAR), which is a brief report on the activities and the list of documents evidencing the activities carried out, which must be presented at the beginning of the semester following the information (PORTAL IFMG, s/d.). The possibility of organizing and managing activities can contribute to greater satisfaction in this regard.

When considering the Freedom factor in the work environment, employees are more likely to have more freedom in the work environment due to their stability. According to Marqueze and Moreno (2009), stability (degree of job security) favorably influences the Job Satisfaction factor. Also according to Marqueze and Moreno (2009, p. 75), "greater job satisfaction, without anxiety and without fear, makes the worker find meaning in his work activity and present positive attitudes".

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to evaluate the quality of working life of public servants of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Minas Gerais. Thus, with the results obtained, it was possible to perceive relevant aspects for understanding the issue of quality of working life.

When considering the differences between the groups of men and women, the mean of women's responses were higher for most factors. Women have stood out in the professional field, seeking constant qualification and occupying important spaces in the academic world. For groups that occupy and do not occupy management positions, the former clearly have a more positive view of QWL, probably because of the benefits arising from this position.

When analyzing the differences between the groups formed by education, what could be observed was that the average of the answers decreased as the level of education of employees increased. Such dissatisfaction can be explained by the level of demand that increases as the level of education is more advanced.

As for length of service at the institution, servers with longer service time have the highest averages in QWL factors. Possibly those with less time of service at the institution feel more insecure and are in the process of adapting to the organizational culture.

In general, it can be said that effective professors have a more positive perception of the quality of working life, supposedly because of the stability and freedom they have at the HEI. However, they feel more dissatisfied with the performance of activities, a reason that can be attributed to their tasks that end up going beyond the limits of the academic environment.

The results of this research can be considered to promote improvements in QWL issues in the researched institution. Efforts should be directed towards correcting possible errors and adopting strategies that, in addition to improving the quality of life of employees, also improve productivity and organizational results. As stated by Pozo and Tachizawa (2016), when employees realize that they work in a place that is concerned with the working conditions offered and that offers opportunities for growth and participation, they tend to innovate and produce more effectively.

It is not known whether the investigated HEI adopts QWL programs. The present study used only quantitative research, which can be considered a limiting factor. In this sense, future research can be carried out, especially those of a qualitative nature, with a view to investigating how QWL has been considered in the academic environment, as well as understanding why some groups have felt more satisfied than others. As highlighted by Klein, Pereira and Lemos (2019), there is a wide variety of assessment models focused on the private sector, while the public sector lacks specific models capable of generating more consistent results in the assessment of QWL. A methodological limitation of this research is the fact that only comparisons of means were made, and cause and effect relationships between the analyzed groups and the QWL indexes were not investigated. It is suggested that future works investigate such relationships.

Finally, it is worth noting that Ferreira, Alves and Tostes, in 2009, already considered that in a scenario of change, managers should rethink organizational practices, seeking to efficiently respond to new market demands. In the current situation experienced, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, issues such as QWL, workers' health, work-family conflict, among others, should become the focus of further discussions, not only theoretical, but also practical.

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