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Quality of work life: an investigation of the work environment of small and medium enterprises

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Abstract: This study focused on the work environment and quality of work (QOW) life of small and medium enterprises' (SMEs) employees in Kogi State. The study specifically investigated the effect of quality work time and good work conditions on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Thus, a survey research design was applied. For the study, multiple regression and descriptive statistics were both used to analyse the data. Findings showed that quality work time has a strong effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State and that good work conditions have an effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The study concluded that QWL will continue to remain an essential issue that requires consistent attention in every workplace. The study recommended that SME owners should ensure quality work time for employees so as to increase their QWL in Kogi State, and that they should ensure good work conditions as they can enhance the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

Keywords: work environment; quality of work life; quality work time; good work conditions; conducive workplace atmosphere.

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1 Introduction

Employees form the spine of all enterprises. They are committed and concerned with helping the vision and mission of the enterprises materialise; leaving their social life dented. Some employees choose to make the most of their careers. A satisfactory work environment brings about employees' quality of life at work. Abudaqa et al. (2020) opined that employees are bound to have QWL in a positive working environment. Employees who have a decent quality of life at work may appreciate their jobs. Le et al. (2021) expressed that the quality of one's working life has lately been evaluated as a measure of employees and their job satisfaction. Quality of work (QWL) also has benefits for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Kogi State. Monkevicius (2014) argued that investment in QWL benefits not only employees but also the enterprise.

QWL reflects a conducive workplace atmosphere that induces a well-positioned mind, emotion, and attitude that favours a positive outcome at the workplace. Huang et al. (2020) posited that QWL is the degree to which an employee's personal and working requirements are met by participating in the workplace and attaining the organisation's goals. It is related to personality, job stress, high turnover, exit intent, and job satisfaction (Fu et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2013; Sahni, 2019). In reality, QWL appears to be a complicated concept. It may also mean a positive experience with regard to organisational value, respect, and support for employees.

A work environment with adverse elements (quality work time, health and safety issues, compensation, management, and work conditions) has negative effects on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The outcomes of the systematic review by Harncharoen et al. (2016) revealed the non-uniqueness of SMEs and the significance of the workplace environment on stress-related health issues. Employees must be made more human. This is possible through an adorable workplace environment. Adorable workplace environments guarantee employees' job satisfaction (Tot et al., 2021). Creating a work environment that is suitable for employees is also critical to lowering organisational stress (Karaaslan and Aslan, 2019). According to Diana et al. (2020), the process by which an enterprise realises its responsibilities to provide and foster working conditions that allow employees to find their own interests and needs is linked to QWL. El Badawy et al. (2018) opined that good QWL makes employees satisfied with their working conditions. This study mainly examined the work environment and quality of work life of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

2 Literature review

2.1 Conceptual clarification

The work environment can be viewed from different perspectives. Yusuf and Metiboba (2012) assert that the work environment encompasses the technical environment, the enterprise environment, and the human environment. The technical environment flows from the knowledge area. It is the environment of 'how' and 'what.' That is, the technical environment involves adequate knowledge and skills on how to handle equipment, machines, and materials with the use of sophisticated technology. The human environment entails the ecology of employees. It is important to note that interaction and a good working relationship make human activities tailored towards achieving organisational goals. The human environment is a complex environment that requires an effective managerial approach and prowess. Human activities within the work group or team may fall out of place if they are not effectively managed. There is strong interconnectedness between the human environment and the technical environment. Employees are able to accomplish their obligations and actions because of the technical environment. This environment is created in such a way that it stimulates spontaneous communication in the workplace, thereby increasing the possibility to share knowledge and vibrant ideas. This is the foundation for achieving optimum productivity. Systems, methods, policies, beliefs, and philosophies are all part of the organisational environment. The organisational environment is under management's control. Under a measurement system that pays people based on quantity, employees can only show a minimal amount of enthusiasm in assisting others who are attempting to improve quality.

A work environment is the context, social features, and physical conditions in which employees perform specific jobs. Adikoeswanto et al. (2020) posited that it is also the organisational context in which employees carry out their responsibilities. Hanaysha (2016) opined that the work environment is linked to the organisational setting in which employees conduct their duties, and a safe and enjoyable workplace can draw people's interest because their needs are met. Business enterprises must design their work environments to improve employee engagement and motivation, which will lead to the desired organisational success (Hanaysha, 2016). This is also corroborated by Harahap et al. (2020), who argue that business enterprises or firms have to communicate with and interact with the environment in which they are positioned. The ability of business enterprises to adapt to changes in the environment determines their positioning. The three constructs that are taken into consideration for the purposes of this study are quality work time, work conditions, and health and safety concerns.

When assessing social or corporate well-being based on individual employees or team cases, quality of life is a powerful mechanism. A high quality of life has been linked in literature to increased workplace efficiency. Leitão et al. (2019) posited that occupational stress (which includes workplace expectations, job control, job insecurity, organisational justice, intra-group conflict, job strain, effort-reward imbalance, employment level, and shift work) is now receiving more attention. This is because they have a greater impact on quality of life at work (QWL).

Nguyen and Nguyen (2012) expressed that QWL is about the well-being of employees, which refers solely to working conditions that improve satisfaction with the physical, social, economic, and psychological aspects of labour in the workplace. Indeed, numerous studies have investigated the concept of QWL from diverse perspectives, elucidating various aspects of the concept, including both causes and effects (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2012; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2019).

Quality of work life is defined as the degree to which an employee's personal and working requirements are met while engaged in the workplace and achieving the enterprise's objectives (Huang et al., 2020). Quality of life at work means considering individual and group differences in terms of high-quality working conditions when dealing with retaining good employees (Hashempour et al., 2018). The quality of work life program encompasses any adjustments to organisational culture that foster employee advancement within the organisation (Adikoeswanto et al., 2020). It is the degree to which an employee is content with his personal and working situations through engagement in the workplace while attaining organisational goals (El Badawy et al., 2018). QWL will emphasise addressing a person's physiological, psychological, social, and economic demands by focusing on their essence, considering oneself as the most valuable part of an organisation (Akar, 2018). By encouraging more teamwork and communication, it seeks to minimise organisational stress while also generating a positive attitude toward the organisation, fostering an environment that is supportive of both employee productivity and organisational success. It also seeks to enhance workplace learning (Karaaslan and Aslan, 2019).

2.2 Work environment and QWL

The salient elements of the work environment attracting issues in Kogi State are working time and working conditions. Working time refers to the amount of time an employee spends doing the job he or she is paid for. The wages and salaries of employees are

related to the number of hours spent on the job. There is an ethical work hour that is clearly spelled out in the policies of SMEs. Employees may spend longer time on the job with respect to overtime pay. Wong et al. (2019) expressed that long working hours are typical in most enterprises and are directly or indirectly hazardous to employees' health. However, it is worthy of note that quality work time affects employees. In this study, 'quality work time' refers to the standard working hours established by management and upon which employees are hired. The standard working time must be considerate and humane enough to allow employees to get a minimum amount of rest and concentrate on other things outside their jobs. Overtime hours are compensated at a higher rate by the employer, as required by law.

In numerous studies, a connection between QWL and extended work hours has been found (Afonso et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2016; Ogawa et al., 2018). Poor QWL may bring about depression. Doing work for more than 34 hours per week, 55 hours per week, and 48 hours per week raises the risk of employees' depression (Ogawa et al., 2018; Virtanen et al., 2011). This implies that employees who spend most of their time at work may face depression in no time. Working for a long time is unhealthy for key employees who are strategic to the goal of the enterprise. In their study, Ogawa et al. (2018) expressed that aside from when working long hours, the evidence on the impact of long work hours on depression is mixed. This signals the need to conduct research on the effect of quality work time on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Hence, the development of hypothesis 1 is that:

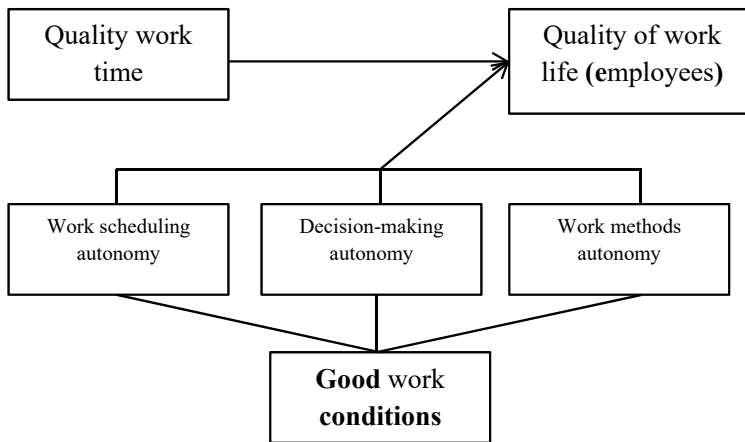
H1 Quality work time has a significant effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

SMEs must acknowledge the relevance of pleasant working conditions for greater organisational effectiveness. The work atmosphere has an impact on work life, morale, efficiency, and motivation. Working conditions pertain to the work atmosphere and aspects of an employee's terms and conditions of employment. This includes training, skills, and employability; health, safety, and well-being; and working time and work-life balance. Workplace autonomy (work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy, and work method autonomy) must be provided. SMEs must capture autonomy in their working conditions (Abe et al., 2017).

According to Vuong et al. (2016), it is necessary to support and develop a work atmosphere for employees to have favourable working conditions so that they may exhibit their potential. As a result, working conditions that suit an employee's individual needs will lead to a high QWL (Hackman and Oldham, 1974). A pleasant workplace environment may be motivating and have implications for employee QWL. Providing good working conditions aims to enhance employee well-being; as a result, taking actions to improve QWL is expected to increase employee motivation (Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy, 2013). As a sequel to the discussion above, we developed the hypothesis that:

H2 Good work conditions have a substantial effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

Figure 1 reveals how the considered constructs of the work environment link up with QWL. Work conditions' proxies are work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy, and work methods autonomy (Bashir et al., 2020). Thus, the conceptual framework is given below:

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Source: Hackman and Oldham (1974), Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2013), Kim et al. (2016), Afonso et al. (2017), Ogawa et al. (2018), Bashir et al. (2020)

2.3 Theoretical underpinning

Literature has shown that QWL is not grounded in any specific theory but is preoccupied with the entire work atmosphere, the influence of work on employees, and the effectiveness of enterprises. The ultimate goal is to enhance the workplace because a higher QWL will follow.

Frederick Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory relates to the quality of working life. The theory is relevant to this study because it states that QWL is influenced by a complex interaction of two categories of factors such as work conditions, safety, job commitment, and organisational support, among others. The theory has been used by Leiãto et al. (2021) to explain the QWL of employees. It is evident from the theory that low job satisfaction or employee welfare will result in low QWL. This implies that job satisfaction interacts with QWL (Parveen et al., 2016; Tot et al., 2021). Mathison (2012) maintained that QWL is a construct that is linked to employee welfare. Koziol and Koziol (2015) have also supported the idea that QWL is determined by the level of happiness of employees, with reference to good work conditions.

According to Herzberg, employees are dissatisfied with the fulfillment of lower-order conditions at work. Thus, work conditions are cardinal to the QWL of employees. Poor working conditions can also affect QWL, although in a negative way (Kiriago and Bwisa, 2013). In fact, the work conditions have been consistently reported as the most influential factor in QWL (Waghmare and Dhole, 2017). This is also in line with the previous findings of Leitão et al. (2019), who underlined the importance of factors related to employees having support and autonomy, being integrated into a good work environment, and acting as positive influencers of QWL (Waghmare and Dhole, 2017).

3 Methodology

In this study, the survey research design was applied. Respondents were given the option to express their opinions on the variables under investigation using this design. Kogi metropolis is home to a number of SME clusters. The study's population consisted of the employees of 50 small and medium-sized businesses. According to Oyelaran-Oyeyinka (2020), 'SMEs' are defined as businesses with fewer than 300 employees. Most SMEs operating in Kogi State have fewer than 200 employees. Thus, 150 employees were considered the benchmark for this study since this is 50% of the assumed 300 employees. The total population of the study was 7,500 employees. The sample size selection method developed by Sallant and Dillman in 1997 was used to manage a sizeable proportion of the population. The technique has the benefit of statistical power and assures a high level of accuracy. It guarantees that the right analytical unit is applied.

$$N_s = \frac{N_p(p)(1-p)}{(N_p-1)\left(\frac{B}{C}\right)^2 + (p)(1-p)} \quad (1)$$

where

N_s Estimated sample size

N_p The population

P % of respondents who were anticipated to respond in a particular manner

B Tolerable margin of error in the sampling

C Z-statistics associated with confidence interval (1.960 or 95%).

$$N_s = \frac{7500(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(7500-1)\left(\frac{0.05}{1.960}\right)^2 + (0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

where

N_s 365.4879515321267 (Approx. 365)

N_p 7,500

P 50% or 0.5

B 0.05 or +5%

C 1.960.

The sample size of the study was 365. Thus, 365 respondents were surveyed. The sample was chosen in phases using a multi-stage sampling approach. In the initial stage, the researchers split the SMEs in Kogi metropolis into groups based on activities. In the key process, the researchers grouped the respondents based on their similarities at the time of the survey.

This study utilised a validated *work related quality of life (WRQoL)* questionnaire of Van et al. (2007) to evaluate the perceived QWL. Zubair et al. (2017) also adopted the scale in a scholarly study. The *work design questionnaire scale (WDQs)* of Morgeson and

Humphrey (2006) was used to measure work conditions. Bashir et al. (2020) used the scale to measure work conditions. The *flexitime availability scale (FAS)* of Prem et al. (2021) was adapted to measure quality work time. The Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was used to assess the instrument's dependability. The coefficient alpha is the most commonly used metric for determining the reliability of a multiple-item scale. The results of all the constructs are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Reliability of constructs

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>No. of items</i>
WTE	Quality work time	0.703	3
WCS	Work conditions	0.740	2
WSA	Work scheduling autonomy	0.850	3
DMA	Decision-making autonomy	0.760	3
WMA	Work methods autonomy	0.730	3

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The researchers were able to assess the link based on the data that was collected and analysed. Both descriptive and regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The models in the study are given as follows:

$$QWL = a + \beta_1 WTE + \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

where

QWL quality of work life of employees

a constant

WTE quality work time

β_1 regression coefficients

ε_i error term.

$$QWL = a + \beta_1 WSA + \beta_2 DMA + \beta_3 WMA + \varepsilon_i \quad (3)$$

WSA work scheduling autonomy

DMA decision-making autonomy

WMA work methods autonomy

β_1 regression coefficients

ε_i error term.

4 Data analysis and discussions

Table 2 describes the factors connected to the general well-being of employees. The results show positive feelings during the work period (= 1.904; SD = 0.906); unhappiness and a feeling of being depressed (= 2.129; SD = 1.103); a feeling of being satisfied with life at work (= 2.048; SD = 1.080); a feeling that life is close to ideal (= 2.012;

SD = 0.900); and believing that things are working out well (= 1.904; SD = 0.879). The results show that factors (positive feelings during the work period, feeling that life is close to ideal, and believing that things are working out well) have lesser divergence since the values are less than 1. Other factors show more divergence. The mean scores of the factors (unhappiness and feeling of being depressed, feeling of being satisfied with life at work, and feeling that life is close to ideal) show a strong explanation of the general well-being of employees in Kogi State.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics on general well-being

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. dev.</i>
Positive feelings during the work period	1.904	0.906
Unhappiness and feeling of being depressed	2.129	1.103
Feeling of being satisfied with life at work	2.048	1.080
Feeling that life is close to ideal	2.012	0.900
Believing that things are working out well	1.904	0.879

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 3 Descriptive statistics on work scheduling autonomy

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. dev.</i>
Employees' jobs allowed them to make their own decisions about how to schedule their work	3.305	1.249
Employees' jobs allowed them to decide on the order in which things are done on the job.	1.944	0.869
Employees' jobs allowed them to plan how they do their work.	1.647	0.535

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 3 indicates the work scheduling autonomy of employees. The results show that employees' jobs gave them the freedom to choose how they wanted to plan their work ($\bar{x} = 3.305$; SD = 1.249); employees' jobs gave them the opportunity to choose the sequence in which tasks were completed on the job ($\bar{x} = 1.944$; SD = 0.869); and employees' jobs gave them the freedom to plan how they would perform their tasks ($\bar{x} = 1.647$; SD = 0.535). The mean score with the highest strength indicates that employees' jobs allowed them to make their own decisions about how to schedule their work.

Table 4 Descriptive statistics on decision-making autonomy

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. dev.</i>
Employees' jobs give them chances to use their personal initiatives	1.988	0.891
Employees' jobs allow them to make a lot of decisions on their own	1.839	0.879
Employees' jobs provide them with significant autonomy in making decisions	2.378	1.252

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 4 shows the decision-making autonomy of employees in Kogi State. The results show employees' jobs give them chances to use their personal initiatives ($\bar{x} = 1.988$; SD = 0.891), employees' jobs allow them to make a lot of decisions on their own

($\bar{x} = 1.839$; $SD = 0.879$), and employees' jobs provide them with significant autonomy in making decisions ($\bar{x} = 2.378$; $SD = 1.252$). Fewer divergences are observed in terms of employees' opportunities to use personal initiative on the job and employees' personal decisions on the job. The strongest mean score indicates that employees' jobs provide them with significant autonomy in making decisions.

Table 5 Regression results on quality work time and QWL of SMEs' employees

<i>QWL</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. err.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>[95% conf. interval]</i>	
WTE	0.673	0.042	16.13	< 0.001	0.591	0.755671
_cons	0.803	0.131	6.14	< 0.001	0.545	1.060629
Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs = 249		
Model	220.104	1	220.104	F(1, 247) = 260.02		
Residual	209.085	247	0.846	Prob. > F = 0.000		
Total	429.189	248	1.731	R-squared = 0.513		
				Adj R-squared = 0.511		
				Root MSE = 0.920		

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 5 shows the R^2 -value (0.513) for the effect of quality work time on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The result implies that 51.3% of the variation in QWL of SMEs' employees is accounted for by quality work time. The remaining 48.7% unaccounted variation in the QWL of SMEs' employees means that other variables (which are not captured in the model) can also explain the variation. The adjusted R^2 -value (0.511) rectifies positive bias; resulting in a value that is representative of the population. The degrees of freedom (260.02) are shown by F (1,247), and probability > F indicates a statistically significant regression model ($p < 0.01$). The F-value (260.02) reveals that the model has a high goodness of fit and contradicts the null hypothesis because the probability > F is less than 0.001. The square root of the mean square residual ($\sqrt{0.846}$) is the root MSE (0.92005), which is the standard deviation of the error component.

In the table, $\beta_1 = 0.673$ with a p -value < 0.01 is expected to lead to a mean change in the QWL of SMEs' employees given a unit change in quality work time. The coefficient of quality work time (0.673) is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), which means that within a given level of quality work time, there will be a 67.3% mean change in the QWL of SMEs' employees. The implication of this for the study is that the QWL of SMEs' employees is bound to increase given a 67.3% unit increase in quality work time.

Table 6 shows the effect of good working conditions on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State (given the R^2 -value of 0.987). This shows that good work conditions explain 98.7% of the variation in the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The 1.3% left out in the model indicates that there are other variables that can predict the variation in the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The adjusted R^2 -value (0.987) corrects for positive bias, which translates into a good representation of the population. The degrees of freedom are shown by F (3, 245), and Prob. > F indicates a statistically significant regression model ($p < 0.01$). The F-value (6,089.50) shows that the model has a high goodness of fit and contradicts the null hypothesis because the probability > F is less than 0.001. The square root of the mean square residual ($\sqrt{0.023}$) is the root MSE

(0.152), which is the standard deviation of the error component. We proxy good work conditions with work autonomy, scheduling autonomy, and decision-making autonomy methods.

Table 6 Regression results on good work conditions and QWL of SMEs' employees

<i>QWL</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. err.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>[95% conf. interval]</i>	
WCS2	0.961	0.015	66.19	< 0.001	0.932	0.989
WCS3	0.036	0.015	2.38	0.018	0.006	0.066
WCS1	0.001	0.019	0.03	0.974	-0.037	0.038
_cons	0.012	0.031	0.38	0.708	-0.049	0.073
Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs. = 249		
Model	423.509	3	141.170	F(3, 245) = 6089.50		
Residual	5.680	245	.023	Prob > F = 0.000		
Total	429.189	248	1.731	R-squared = 0.987		
				Adj R-squared = 0.987		
				Root MSE = .152		

Source: Field survey (2022)

The table demonstrates a positive linear relationship between work scheduling autonomy and employee QWL in SMEs (given that = 0.961; p-value 0.01). The coefficient implies that for every unit change in work scheduling autonomy, there will be an expected mean change in the QWL of SMEs' employees by 96.1%. That is, increased work scheduling autonomy will enhance a significant increase in the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The table shows that decision-making autonomy has a positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State (given that $\beta = 0.036$; p-value < 0.05). This implies that a 3.6% change in decision-making autonomy will bring about almost the same 3.6% mean change in the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. That is, decision-making autonomy has a significant linear connection with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The table also shows that work methods autonomy has a positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State (given that $\beta = 0.001$; p-value > 0.05). The result shows that work method autonomy has no significant positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

5 Discussion of findings

Findings showed that quality work time has a strong positive effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. This finding supports the position of Mily and Yameni (2017) that working time is cardinal to the QWL of employees. The study agrees with the finding of Hsu et al. (2019) that quality work time has a significant relationship with work-life balance. This is because work-life balance translates into QWL for employees. The linear relationship between quality work time and QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State was empirically defined in this study. It was discovered that a unit increase in quality work time is bound to increase the QWL of SMEs' employees. Hsu et al. (2019) asserted that the mediation of perceived time control led to this positive outcome.

Findings revealed that good work conditions have positive effects on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The study by Devi and Ganapathi (2014) also found that working conditions have a positive effect on QWL in small-scale industries. Similarly, Islam (2012) also found that working conditions significantly and positively influence the QWL of employees. Work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy, and work methods autonomy were tied to good work conditions, as used in previous studies (Zubair et al., 2017; Bashir et al., 2020). It was found that a positive linear relationship exists between work scheduling autonomy and the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Increased work schedule autonomy would result in a considerable improvement in the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Decision-making autonomy was found to have a positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. The finding indicates that decision-making autonomy has a substantial positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' workers. Work methods autonomy was found to have an insignificant positive linear relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

6 Conclusions

It is no doubt that QWL will continue to remain an essential issue that requires consistent attention in every workplace. This is because employees are cardinal to organisational success and, in some cases, organisational problems. Employee involvement in organisational problem solving and decision making can help achieve QWL. SME managers have the responsibility to build quality relationships between employees and their work environment. There are empirical outcomes showing the link between the constructs of the work environment and QWL.

There is a standard quality work time peculiar to varying enterprises, and working longer than required can generate dissatisfaction or emotional issues. This study was able to prove that quality work time has a strong effect on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. It means that working time is critical to employees' QWL. When an enterprise improves its quality work time, employees' QWL will improve. It was established that good work conditions have effects on the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Good working conditions reflect work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy, and work method autonomy. When there is existing work scheduling autonomy, the QWL of SMEs' employees will be guaranteed in Kogi State. Greater work schedule flexibility will boost the QWL of SMEs' employees significantly. Decision-making autonomy can also enhance the QWL of SMEs' employees. When decision-making autonomy is substantial enough, the QWL of SMEs' employees will correspondingly improve. Work method autonomy does not significantly result in improved QWL for SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

7 Recommendations

The study recommended that:

- 1 SME owners should ensure quality work time for employees so as to increase their QWL in Kogi State. The QWL of employees is bound to increase given the improvement in quality work time.
- 2 SME owners and managers should ensure good work conditions as it can enhance the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State. To achieve good work conditions, they should adopt work scheduling autonomy and decision-making autonomy. Improved effort in these areas will culminate in improved QWL for SMEs' employees in Kogi State. Little attention should be given to method autonomy as it has an insignificant relationship with the QWL of SMEs' employees in Kogi State.

8 Limitations

The respondents found it uneasy to attend to the questionnaires, but this issue was resolved by taking advantage of break time for the survey. A few respondents also spoke for a few minutes after leaving work. The sample size was small for its representation of the entire population. The study chose the sample to enable the effective management of the survey. However, because the study relied on scientific analytical techniques, the study's findings could be generalised.

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