

## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES THROUGH TRAINING, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND E-LEARNING AND IT'S IMPACT ON QUALITY OF WORK-LIFE OF EXECUTIVES AT AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRIES IN CHENNAI CITY**

Chandrasekar Thangavelu  
Research Scholar, Anna University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.  
Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Kalasalingam University.  
chanmba12@gmail.com

Dr. Jawahar Rani Kanagasabapathi  
Research Supervisor, Anna University, Chennai.  
Professor, Department of Management Studies,  
St. Joseph College of Engineering, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.  
jawaharrani@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

Every employee wants to have progression in their profession. The career advancement of the employees demands enhancement of their knowledge, skill, and attitude (KSA) according to the future position. The main objective of the present study is to explore the impact of career development practices through training, continuing education learning, and e-learning on quality of work-life of executives at Automobile industries in Chennai city. The present study is of exploratory research in nature. The survey method of data collection was adopted to gather primary data using self-developed questionnaire. The survey conducted among 300 executives from various passenger vehicles manufacturing automobile organizations located in and around Chennai city. The Descriptive statistical tools, Confirmatory Factor analysis, and structural equation modelling was adopted to analyze the primary data. The results of the study indicates that the career development practices through training, continuing education learning, and e-learning is having significant positive impact on quality of work-life of executives at Automobile industries in Chennai city.

**Keywords:** Career development practices, quality of work-life, e-learning, training, continuing education, automobile industry.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Indian automobile industry became the fourth largest in the world with sales increasing 9.5 per cent year-on-year to 4.02 million units (excluding two wheelers) in 2017. India produced 25.3 million automobiles, sold 17.7 million two-wheelers in FY 2016-17, and becomes the largest two-wheeler market in the globe. The automobile exports from India hiked 15.81 per cent in FY 2017-18, whereas two-wheelers exports increased around 17 per cent. Indian automobile industry consists of private and foreign players in various segments such as commercial vehicles, passenger cars, three and two-wheelers. The hyper competitive market demand acquisition and retention of talents in order to design, develop, and manufacture quality products and services to the customers according to their expectations, and even beyond their expectations. Executives in work place irrespective of the industry they work expects career advancement over a period of time which would satisfy their financial and psychological needs.

Career advancement programmes plays a critical role in talent acquisition and retention of the executives in Automobile industries. The automobile organizations are striving to establish a well-defined career path for the executives, with the possible designations, and level of KSA (knowledge, skill, and attitude) for each designation. Over a period of time, if the executive works in the organization acquires required minimum experience, educational qualification, and KSA, then he/ she would be considered for the career advancement to the next stage through systematic evaluation by head of the department or panel members. The career development practices for an executive occurs through gaining required KSA for the next level designation through training, continuing education, and e-learning practices. Most of the earlier researches proved that career advancement is one of the important factor which could leads to better perception of quality of work-life (QWL). The main objective of this paper is to assess the impact of career development practices through training, continuing education learning, and e-learning on quality of work-life of executives at Automobile industries in Chennai city.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Career development:**

According to Armstrong (2001), “career development was of excessive significance to the employee and the organization in the sense that there was communication between the business for which he/she worked and the growth of the organization through the employee’s career. A worker improved his/her career through an unceasing attainment of managerial or proficient skills and know-how which resulted in rewards and promotion”.

The terms ‘career development’ or ‘career advancement’ are used interchangeably. The term ‘career development’ denotes to the enduring journey of a person’s professional identity, whereas Career advancement is a short-term step or goal. In simple words, career development is wider than career advancement, career advancement is a sub-set of career development which comes through years of education, training and job experience.

Career development represents the step-by-step defined path of vertical advancement of employee through the various levels of a business from bottom to the top positions. The career advancement of an employee must be from race, gender, age or ethnicity. Career development programmes or career advancement programmes in many of the organizations offers suitable training, learning and development practices to their executives to nurture them as future leaders.

As mentioned earlier, the advancement of an executive to the next higher level designations are based on matching of their individual KSA with the KSA required in future designation. The KSA of every individual can be enhanced through systematic education, training, and work experience. So the main components of career development practices are training, e-learning and continuing education.

### **Training**

Employee is considered an important asset of any organization. The talent of the employees can be enhanced through appropriate training methods. Training plays a major role in sharpening the job-related KSA of an employee, which brings competitive advantage to the organization. So, therefore every organizations irrespective of the industry they belongs to make huge investments is developing the talents of their employees. Employees’ knowledge, skills, and behavior can be enhanced through training which improves their ability to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively. According to Rodríguez and Gregory (2011), “training plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of service offered to the customers”.

Training is a Human Resource Development (HRD) tool, which consists of planned programme designed to enhance the performance at the individual, group, and /or organizational levels (Cascio, 1995). It has tremendous capacity in transfer and utilization of state-of-the-art technical know-how, and plays a major role in all important components of HRD such as leadership development, organization of people, formation of self-help-groups, mobilization of people as well as resources, empowerment of resource-poor rural mass, entrepreneurship development, etc.,

### **E-Learning**

Another important way of developing KSA of an employee may be through self-learning e-learning. The term e-learning represented through various terms such as online learning, distributed learning, technology-enhanced learning, computer-based learning, or web-based training (Welsh et al., 2003). Nichols (2003) defines “E-learning as the use of various technological tools that are Web-based, Web-distributed or Web-capable for the purposes of education”. In other words, e-Learning is defined as, “the use of ICTs to enhance or support learning and teaching (Gay et al., 2006)”. E-learning can be defined as learning that utilizes Internet in the delivery, support, administration and assessment of learning (Kirschner & Paas, 2009). E-learning as all forms of electronically supported teaching and learning processes, which aim to construct knowledge by utilizing learner’s experience, knowledge and practice by using specific information and communication systems to implement the learning process. Many of automobile organizations in India initiated to offer e-learning modules

related to the present and future job profile of an executive in order to enhance their work performance and prepare them for future positions. Most of the automobile organizations also encourages their executives to take online short-term courses and Management development Programmes (MDP) related to their job domain from reputed technical institutes and business schools.

### **Continuing education**

Earlier the learning had not been considered as a lifelong process (Collins, 2009). The father of adult learning, Malcolm Shepherd Knowles, stated that “lifelong learning (LLL) would become the organizing principle of all education”. Continuing Education (CE) is otherwise termed as professional development and Lifelong learning, which refer to systematic full-time or part-time or distance education of a short-term certificate, diploma or long-term degree course or training process for the KSA development of an employee. Continuing education of employees are required because of rapid change in the technological changes in the industry due to hyper competitive business environment.

### **Quality of Work-Life (QWL)**

QWL denotes to the quality of association between workers and the work environment. According to Walton (1975) factors affecting QWL are, “Adequate and fair compensation, Secure and healthy working conditions, Opportunities for the development of human capabilities, Opportunities for continuous growth and security, Social alliance in the work organization, Law governed work in the organization, Importance of work, and the social relevance of work life”.

The different authors have given different set of factors which affects perception towards quality of work-life in the organization.

Chelte (1983) outlines “QWL as, excellence of association among employees and the entire working environment with human dimensions, technical and economic concerns.”

Rochita (2010) piloted a study to see the association among quality of work life and job satisfaction between university employees. The outcome of the research study discloses that the university employees were not content with the degree of autonomy they are enjoying, the individual growth opportunities, complexity in job, their control on the job and the amount of support they get from the top management in the job. The research also discloses that there is optimistic association among job satisfaction and QWL.

Chitra and Mahalakshmi (2013) has taken ten variables to evaluate quality of work life with factors such as backing from organization, work-family conflict, peers association, self-competence, influence of job, meaningfulness of job, positivity on organizational change, autonomy, admittance to resources and time control. Henceforth the study discloses that each of these QWL variables is a noticeable predictor satisfaction of job.

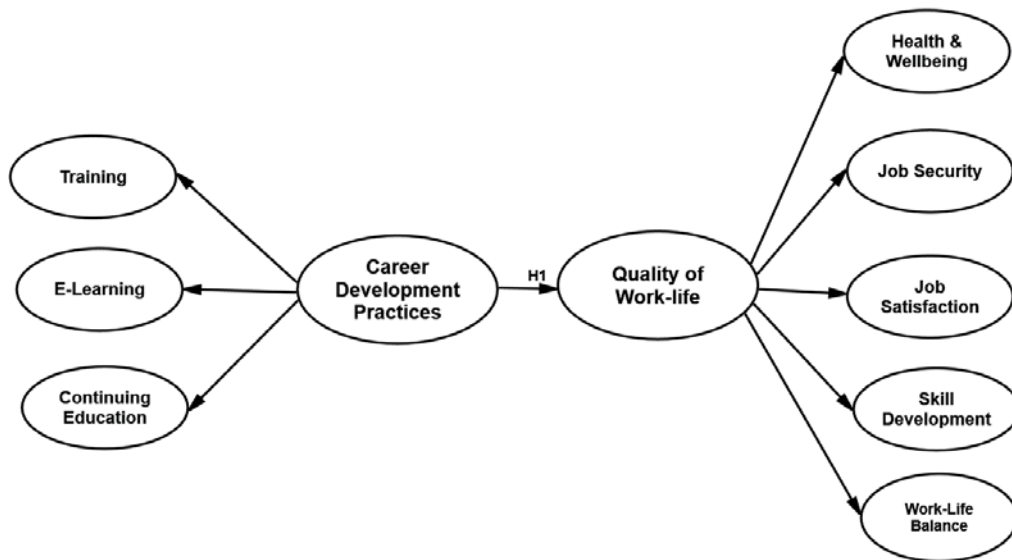
### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE QUALITY WORK-LIFE**

There are only few researchers who had attempted to explore the interrelationship between career development of employees and their perception towards quality of work-life in the organization.

Permarupan et al.(2013) in their study titled, “the association among career development and talent development practices: towards employee quality work life balance”, found that career development practices have a noteworthy and optimistic relationship with employee quality work life balance and they have also pointed out that their study can be further extended on the growth of ‘Employees Work-Life Balance’, to ‘Employees Quality Work-Life’ which indicate the significance of incorporating career development practices, and talent development system in cultivation a stability in employee work-life.

Amin(2013), examined the quality of work life of employees working in the public service. Meanwhile the outcome of the study confirmed, that career development and personal factor could boosted quality of work life of among the employees. The inference of this study is that it does donate to understanding of the ways by which the management can attempt to increase quality of work life on the needs of the employee and the organization.

Based on the above literatures, the researcher developed following conceptual model and hypothesis of the study.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

**Hypothesis:** The career development practices has positive impact on executives’ perception towards quality of work-life prevailing in in selected Automobile organizations at Chennai city.

**Research Methodology**

The present research followed exploratory research design. The research attempted to explore the impact of career development practices through training, continuing education, and e-learning on quality of work-life of executives at automobile industries in Chennai city. The survey method of data collection was adopted to gather primary data using self-developed questionnaire. The survey was conducted among the various levels (i.e. junior, middle, and senior) executives working in various departments of selected Automobile organizations located in and around districts of Chennai city. The sampling units selected for the survey is listed in table 1.

**Table 1. Sampling Units of the survey**

S. No	Company Name	Location	Sample Size
1.	BMW India	Chennai	50
2.	Mahindra & Mahindra	Kanchipuram	50
3.	Ford India Private Limited	Maraimalai Nagar, Chennai	50
4.	Renault India Private Limited	Oragadam, Chennai	50
5.	Hyundai Motor India Limited	Sriperumbudur, Chennai	50
6.	Mitsubishi	Tiruvallur, Chennai	50
<b>Total</b>			<b>300</b>

The researcher adopted multi-stage disproportionate stratified random sampling technique to select the samples from the target population. The each sampling unit listed above are considered as different strata, in each strata departments are considered as different sub-strata, from each department the executives in different level such as junior, middle and senior level is selected for the survey. The sample size of the present research is 300. Before, the main survey the reliability and validity of the questionnaire was verified based on the results of pilot test conducted among 30 samples from the selected automobile organizations (i.e. five from each sampling unit).

**Results and Discussion**

The data collected through structured questionnaire was processed through IBM SPSS 23.0. The respondents’ demographic profile summary is presented in table 2.

**Table 2. Respondents' Demographic Profile summary**

S. No	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
<b>1</b>	<b>Age group</b>		
	Less than 30 Years	126	42.0
	30 - 45 Years	102	34.0
	More than 45 Years	72	24.0
<b>2</b>	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	238	79.3
	Female	62	20.7
<b>3</b>	<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
	Diploma	34	11.3
	UG Degree	188	62.7
	PG Degree	78	26.0
<b>4</b>	<b>Level of Designation</b>		
	Junior	167	55.7
	Middle	85	28.3
	Senior	48	16.0
<b>5</b>	<b>Experience in the Present Organization</b>		
	Less than 5 years	85	28.3
	5 - 10 years	104	34.7
	10- 15 years	64	21.3
	Above 15 Years	47	15.7
<b>6</b>	<b>Number of Promotions received</b>		
	None	37	12.3
	One	103	34.3
	Two	96	32.0
	More than two	64	21.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the table 2, it is identified that 42% of the respondents working in the automobile companies are in the age group of less than 30 years, 34.0% of the respondents are aged among 30 to 45 years, whereas only 24% of the respondents belong to the age group of above 45 years. It is also perceived that majority of the respondents are male i.e. (79.3%) and rest (20.7 %) of them are female. With regards to academic qualification, majority (62.7%) of them are undergraduates, whereas 26.0% are post graduates, and only 11.3% are diploma holders. It is surmised that majority (55.7%) of them are working at the junior level and 28.3% are employed at the middle level and only 16.0% are designated at the senior level. It is also identified that nearly 34.7% of the respondents have an experience between 5-10 years' work experience, 28.3% have less than 5 years in the present organization, but 21.3% of them have 10-15 years of work experience, and 15.7% have above 15 years' of experience in the selected Automobile organizations.

It is identified that 34.3% of the respondents have received only one promotion in the present organization whereas 32.0% of the respondents have received two promotions and 21.3% of the respondents have received above two promotions while 12.3% of the respondents received no promotions at all, which indicates the career advancement of the executives in the Automobile organization.

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics**

S. No	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	Training	3.98	1.785
2.	E-Learning Practices	4.12	1.495
3.	Continuing Education	3.68	2.194
<b>4.</b>	<b>Career Development practices</b>	<b>3.93</b>	<b>2.058</b>
5.	Health & Wellbeing	3.89	1.485
6.	Job Security	4.04	1.747
7.	Job Satisfaction	4.13	2.046
8.	Skill Development	4.25	1.935
9.	Work-life balance	3.98	0.936
<b>10.</b>	<b>Quality of Work-life</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>1.629</b>

(Source: Primary data)

The descriptive statistics of the primary data is tabulated in table 3. From the above table, it is found that the executives of the selected automobile organizations better perceived the e-learning practices, job security, job satisfaction, and skill development, while compared to all other chosen factors. However, they have exhibited more than moderate level of perception towards all the chosen factors of the research. Among the factors of career development practices, they have better perception towards e-learning practices with the highest mean score of 4.12, which is followed by training (3.98), and continuing education (3.68). The executives perceive least perception towards continuing education while compared to all other factors of career development practices, so the automobile organizations can provide more opportunities for their permanent employees to pursue higher education in regular or part-time, distance or through online related to their job domain.

Among the factors of quality of work-life, the executives exhibited better perception towards skill development with the highest mean score of 4.25, which is trailed by job satisfaction (4.13), job security (4.04), work-life balance (3.98), and health & wellbeing (3.89). The overall mean score of career development practices, and quality of work-life are 3.93, and 4.06 respectively. Among the above given factors, the executives exhibited least deviation towards the perception of work-life balance with SD of 0.936, whereas the highest SD exhibited at continuing education.

## Results and Discussion

In the present research, “two-step approach” to structural equation modeling developed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) is adopted, in which first step is development of a measurement model and the second step is development of full structural model, whereas the measurement model deals with the latent variables and their indicators, and the structural model deals with all hypothesized relationship between all latent variables and its observed variables. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model is a pure measurement model, where there are unmeasured covariance between each possible pair of latent variables. Evaluation of the measurement model is evaluated like any other SEM model through goodness of fit indices. Full structural model helps to ascertain the overall fitness of the causal model with the sample data. The researcher developed and tested above-mentioned SEM models using IBM AMOS 23.0.

### 3.1 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

The researcher conducted Confirmatory factor analysis for the two latent variables (i.e. career development practices, and quality of work-life) of this study, in order to identify the best indicator for a particular construct. After that, overall fit of all variables of the study was identified through full structural model.

The results of CFA of the two constructs indicate a high level of fit which is presented in table 4. The absolute fit index of RMSEA (0.041) proved that the fitness between model and the data is good. The incremental or comparative fit indices such as TLI (0.933), CFI (0.943), and NFI (0.928) are having the values more than recommended value 0.90, which indicates perfect fit. The normed chi-square (CMIN/DF) of 2.437 also falls under the recommended range of maximum 3.0.

**Table 4. Model fit summary of CFA**

Model	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	NFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model 1	723.789	297	2.437	0.928	0.943	0.933	0.041

**3.2 Full Structural model**

Structural model of the study was developed as two factor model with two factors, namely career development practices, and quality of work-life. The results of the full structural model of the study presented in table 5, from which it is found that the data of the research fits with the model very well. i.e. TLI (0.928), CFI (0.957), NFI (0.944), RMSEA (0.035) and normed chi-square (CMIN/DF) of 2.442.

**Table 5. Model fit summary of Full Structural Model**

Model	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	NFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model 1	725.274	297	2.442	0.944	0.957	0.928	0.035

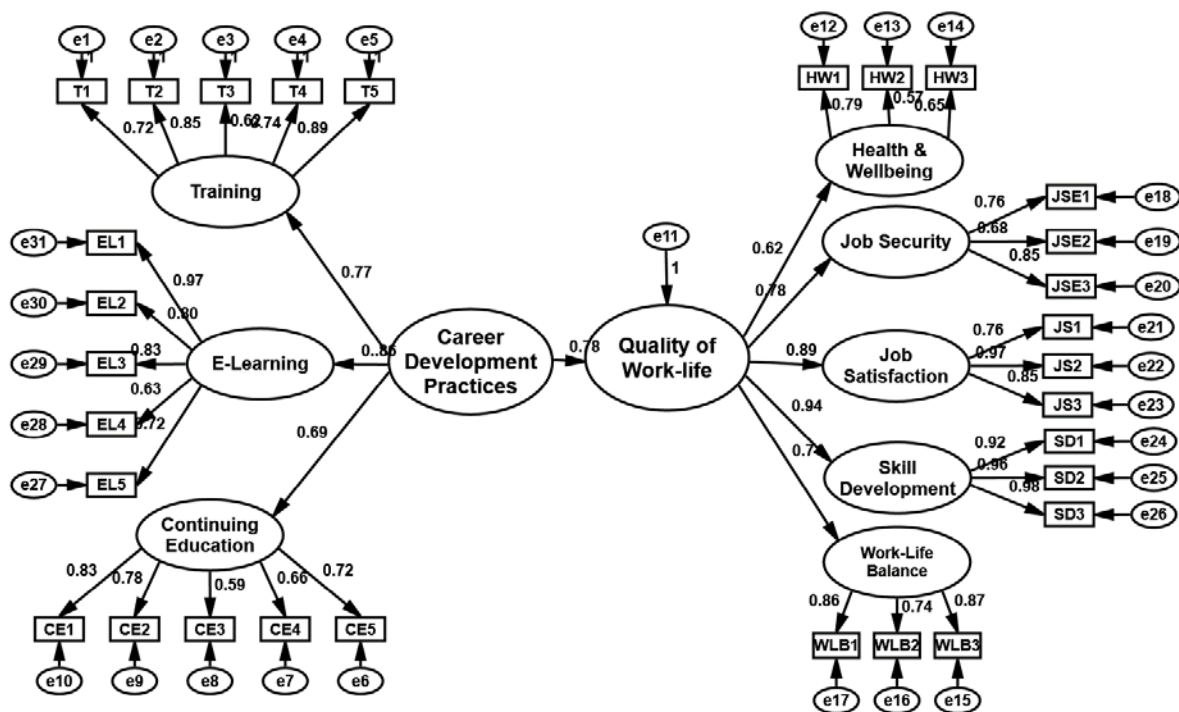


Figure 2. Full Structural model

The full Structural model of the present research is illustrated in figure 2 with its standardized coefficients. The standardized coefficient between variables and factors of the latent variables are more than 0.5, which confirms the convergent validity among all the variables with its latent variables.

The factors of career development practices such as training, e-learning and continuing education are also having standardized regression coefficients more than 0.5, and based on the values of coefficients it is found that e-learning practices is having significant impact on career development practices while compared to other two variables, namely training, and continuing education.

The factors of quality of work-life such as health & wellbeing, job security, job satisfaction, skill development, and work-life balance are having the standardized regression coefficients more than 0.5, and also it is evident

that skill development and job satisfaction plays a critical role in quality of work-life of the executives while compared to other factors.

The standardized regression coefficient value between career development practices and quality of work-life is 0.78, which proved that career development practices has positive impact on quality of work-life, which means one unit of increase in career development practices increase 0.78 units of perception of quality of work-life among the executives of the Automobile organizations in Chennai city. Therefore, it is proved that the main hypothesis of the study is proved at 1% significant level.

#### 4. Conclusions

Ever changing business scenario demands the development of professions in the industry in terms of upgradation of their knowledge, skills, and competencies, therefore career development practices for all kind of employees are the need of the hour, and particularly it is very crucial for the executives who takes major decision of the organization at different functional level. The retention of employees is a big deal in today scenario, because of availability of plenty of job opportunities for the talented man power, so in order to retain the talents available in the organization, the organizations are striving to establish and maintain better quality of work-life in the organization. From the present research, it is proved that the career development practices of the Automobile organizations are having significant positive impact in the perceived quality of work-life among the executives, so the organizations in order to enhance the quality of work-life of the employees, apart from the other factors such as health & wellbeing, job satisfaction, job security, work-life balance, they also should focus on career development practices of the employees in the organization.

#### References

- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). *Structural Equation Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach*. Psychological bulletin, 103(3), 411-423.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *A handbook for Human Resource Management Practice*, Kogan Page Ltd Publishers. 10th Edition.
- Armstrong, M. (2001). *A handbook of human resource management practice*. 8th edition, Kogan Page, London
- Chelte, A. F. (1983). *Organizational commitment, job satisfaction and quality of work life*. U.M. Dissertation information service.
- Chitra, D. & Mahalakshmi, V. (2012). *A study on Employees Perception on Quality of work life and Job satisfaction in manufacturing organization-An Empirical Study*. International Journal of Trade and Commerce-IIARTC, 1(2), 175–184.
- Collins, J. (2009). *Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century and Beyond*. Journal of Radio Graphics, 29 (2), 613-622.
- Ganguly Rochita (2010). *Quality of Work Life and Job Satisfaction of a Group of University Employees*. Asian Journal of Management Research, 209-216.
- Gay G, Mahon S, Devonish D, Alleyne P, & Alleyne PG (2006). *Perceptions of information and communication technology among undergraduate management students in using ICT, Barbados*. International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology, 2(4). 6-17.
- Kirschner, F., Paas, F. & Kirschner P.A. (2009). *A cognitive load approach to collaborative learning: United brains for complex tasks*. Educational Psychology Review, 21(1), 31-42.
- Nichols, M. (2003). *A Theory for E-Learning*. Educational Technology and Society, Vol. 6, No.2, 1-10.
- Walton, R. E. (1975). *Criteria for quality of work life*. In L. E. Davis, & A. B. Cherna (Eds.). Quality of working life: problems, projects and the state of the art (Vol. 1, Chap. 5, pp. 91- 104). New York: The Free Press, Collier-Macmillan.
- Welsh ET, Wanberg CR, Brown EG, & Simmering M.J. (2003). *E-learning: emerging uses, empirical results and future directions*. International Journal of Training and Development, 7, 245–258.
- Yukthamarani Permarupan, Abdullah Al- Mamun, Roselina Ahmad Saufi. (2013). *Quality of Work Life on Employees Job Involvement and Affective Commitment between the Public and Private Sector in Malaysia*, Asian Social Science, 9(7), 268-278.
- Zulkarnain Amin (2013). *Quality of Work Life in Indonesian Public Service Organizations: The Role of Career Development and Personal Factors*. International Journal of Applied Psychology, 3(3), 38-44.