

The life quality of workers in industrial zones of HCMC, Vietnam

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ABSTRACT - This research focused on understanding the current situation and factors affecting life quality of workers at Export Processing Zone/Industrial Parks (EPZ/IPs) in HCMC. Based on data collected from 250 employees, who are working at 5 companies in EPZ/IPs, the current quality of life of Vietnamese workers is at an average level. Although they feel satisfied with some aspects of work, there are many things to be done for improving the life quality of Vietnamese workers for contributing more on economic development and facilitating internationalization process. Within 7 factors affecting the quality of life of workers, 3 factors have the lowest scores including: satisfaction of life (2.63), happiness (2.8), and satisfaction of monitoring behavior (2.81). Other factors include: satisfaction of job requirement (3.12), organizational commitment (3.15), satisfaction of work environment (3.18), and satisfaction of support program (3.23). Based on this result, managerial implications have been suggested for various stakeholders, such as: HEPZA, the trade union and business managers.

Keywords: quality of life, Vietnamese worker, export processing zone, industrial park, Vietnam

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1986, when the Doi Moi policy (Innovation) of Vietnam Government was implemented, some pilot Export Processing Zone/Industrial Parks (EPZ/IPs) were established in Ho Chi Minh City. From the successful model of Tan Thuan EPZ in HCMC, many other EPZ/IPs were also established in HCMC and other provinces in Vietnam. Until now, HEPZA (Ho Chi Minh City Export Processing and Industrial Zones Authority) managed 15 EPZ/IPs with more than 1000 FDI businesses, attracting more than 274,000 employees, of which, 70% of workers come from the nearby provinces.

However, currently, many foreign investment projects in the EPZ/IPs are small-scaled and focused on labor-intensive industry, such as: textiles, clothing, footwear, electronic assembly... Besides, the infrastructure of EPZ/IPs is poorly developed and the nearby areas are not developed as the same pace as the development of EPZ/IPs. Residential development was spontaneous and supporting services were not developed. Especially, there are still residents living in some EPZ/IPs.

In addition, there is a lack of social infrastructure, such as accommodation, health centers, cultural centers, kindergartens, supermarkets... to serve the needs of more than 70% of migrant workers. Life of workers becomes more difficult, while the cost of living in the city is increasing and the spiritual life is so poor. In a small survey, the most reason for quitting job of these workers is the low salary. It is not enough to ensure the minimum demand in their life (2-3 million VND/ month).

Unstable jobs, difficulties in physical and spiritual life, low income, and high work load... are some characteristics of Vietnamese workers in EPZ/IPs. In particular, the current trade union mechanism is not effective in protecting the rights of workers. This situation leads to the increasing in the number of workers quit/switch simultaneously. Some statistics show that the rate of strikes in EPZ/IPs is also increasing annually, and there is no suitable settlement mechanism. So, it causes the bad effects on the economic growth and reduces the development of EPZ/IPs in practice.

The issue of wages and consumer price index directly affect various aspects of the lives of these workers, especially laborers doing the simplest jobs. However, there are conflicting viewpoints in solving this problem from related stakeholders, such as: businesses, trade union and state authorities.

Therefore, to improve the quality of life of workers, there is a need for more researches, data collection and analysis on various aspects of workers' life. These results are very necessary to help the government to make effective policies, to help business owners to stabilize their production, and to help workers to improve their quality of life, both physically and mentally.

Recently, Vietnam is joining ASEAN economic community, and signing agreements with some partners, such as: TPP, EU-VN partnership... These agreements required Vietnam to pay attention on labor problems, such as: independent trade union, minimum wages, and working conditions...

From the above reasons, the research about the quality of workers in HCMC is very important and necessary for businesses and the government. So, the topic “The life quality of workers in industrial zones of HCMC, Vietnam” was formed and conducted.

The objective of the study is to: (1) explore the quality of life of workers in the EPZ/IPs in HCMC, and (2) suggest management implications for FDI businesses and government agencies to coordinate, and to make policy for improving the quality of life of workers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The quality of life

There are many different definitions of quality of life (QoL). In this research, the definition of World Health Organization is used because of its popularity. WHO (1997) defines Quality of Life as individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and their relationship to salient features of their environment. Gayathiri et al. (2013) proved that QoL impacts on job satisfaction and then on business performance. Therefore, improving QoL is a good approach for increasing the employee well being as well as the business performance.

2.2. Related researches

A basic model for understanding the quality of life is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), in which, if the demand (from physical to spiritual) of workers is guaranteed, the satisfaction and the job performance of workers will be improved. Better understanding and managing of workers' needs will help to reduce feelings of stress at work, thereby reducing the possibility of job quitting, improving the productivity, and reducing the management costs of the enterprise.

Taylor (1979) identifies the essential components of quality of life of workers is fundamental factors related to work, such as: wages, hours of work, and working conditions, and the internal nature of job. He suggested that some other aspects could be added, including: (1) Personal energy, (2) The participation of workers in management, (3) Equality and reasonable, (4) Social support, (5) Use of existing skill, (6) Self-development, (7) Job promotion, (8) Social related of work/product, (9) Impact on operation. Taylor also suggested that the quality of life can vary by organization or workgroup.

Warr et al. (1979) examined a variety of factors obviously relevant to the quality of life of employees, including: (1) work status, (2) motivation of the work, (3) the power of the higher level, (4) intrinsic features of the work, (5) satisfaction in the work, (6) satisfaction in life, (7) happiness and (8) ability to self-assessment. Especially, Warr et al. (1979) found evidences for an association between overall job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction and “happiness”, but the combination is more meaningful with “ability to self-assessment”. Thus, while some authors emphasized only on the environmental aspects of work, Warr et al. (1997) and other authors have identified the relevance of other factors to the quality of life of workers, such as: personality, psychological aspects, and broader concepts of happiness and satisfaction in life.

Baba and Jamal (1991) listed typical indicators of quality of life, including: (1) satisfaction at work, (2) work status, (3) unclear job role, (4) conflict of job roles, (5) heavy workload, (6) stress at work, (7) organizational commitment, (8) job rotation. Baba and Jamal (1991) also found that the content of the work should be studied as a part of the concept of quality of life of workers.

Some authors argued that the quality of working life can vary between groups of employees. For example, Ellis and Pompili (2002) identified several factors that contributed to job dis-satisfaction and quality of life of nursing profession, including: (1) poor working environment, (2) migrant worker, (3) high work-load, (4) work-life balance, (5) work change, (6) lack of participation in decision making process, (7) isolation at work, (8) lack of recognition, (9) poor relationship with supervisor/colleagues, (10) conflicting role, and (11) lack of opportunities to learn new skills.

Meanwhile, Sirgy et al. (2001), based on spillover theories, suggested that key factor in the quality of life is the overall satisfaction of workers on many aspects, including: (1) satisfaction of job requirement, (2) satisfaction of work environment, (3) satisfaction of monitoring behavior, (4) satisfaction of support program, and (5) organizational commitment.

2.3. Research model

Based on above analysis, the model of Sirgy et al. (2001) was applied to this research because this model is relatively new, and it focuses on overall job satisfaction, a main part of life satisfaction. In this research, the respondents are workers in EPZ/IPs, mostly manual laborers and at a low educational level, so the overall job satisfaction plays a very important role. However, two factors from Warr et al. (1979) are also added to the suggested model to include satisfaction outside of work aspect, which are “life satisfaction”, and “happiness”. Therefore, a model for measuring the quality of life of workers was proposed including the following factors: (1) satisfaction of job requirement, (2) satisfaction of work environment, (3) satisfaction of monitoring behavior, (4) satisfaction of support program, (5) organizational commitment, (6) satisfaction of life, and (7) happiness. This research model could be summarized in the following figure.

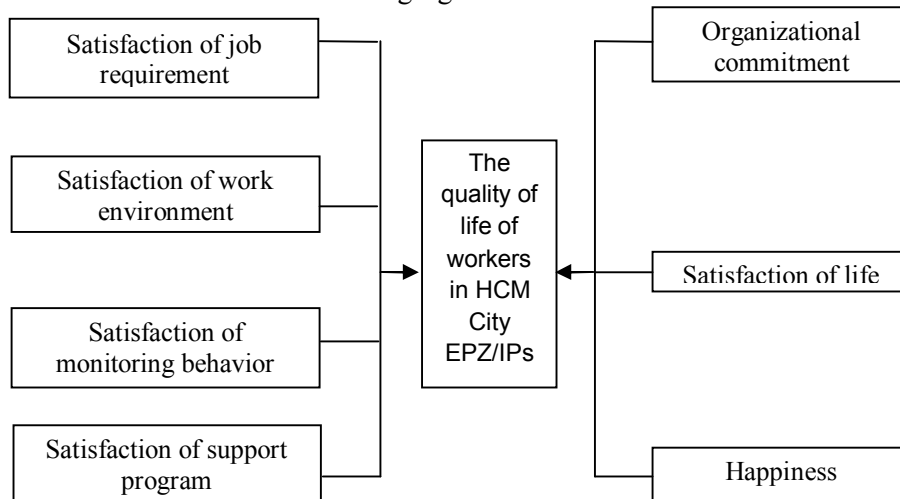


Figure 1. Suggested research model

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Data collection

The secondary data will be gathered from annual reports of businesses, articles of newspapers, review documents, analysis results from previous researches, and public data from the Internet... Based on above sources, information will be categorized and processed to understand the overall situation of the quality of life of workers in the EPZ/IPs HCMC.

The primary data are collected by 2 methods: (1) interviews with 5 experts from HEPZA and 10 HR managers from 5 businesses in EPZ/IPs; (2) survey from laborers working in enterprises in 3 EPZs: Tan Thuan, Linh Trung 1, and Linh Trung 2, and in 2 IPs: Tan Binh, Vinh Loc. The sample size should be greater than 200 (more than 5 times of measures in the research model). The questionnaires will be sent conveniently to workers in the EPZ/IPs at the end period of each working session from Monday to Saturday.

3.2. Data analysis method

Survey data will be cleaned and processed with SPSS 16.0 software. Data analysis includes:

- ✓ Descriptive statistics of sample data according to demographic variables;
- ✓ Descriptive statistics of sample data according to factors of the quality of life;
- ✓ Using cross-tabular techniques to explore the relationship and combination of 2 variables;
- ✓ Based on analysis, suggest solutions to improve the quality of life of workers in EPZ/ IPs.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Descriptive statistics by demographic variables

After 1 month of data collection, there are 265 samples collected for the research. After dropping out 15 occasions because of data missing, the remaining of 250 samples is used for data analysis; this number is also aligned with the minimum of 200 samples.

To know about respondents, some demographic variables were included in the questionnaire of this research, including: gender, marital status, age, working years, income, the number of company worked through.

About gender of sample, there are 94 males (37.6%) and 156 females (62.4%). This number is similar to the rate of the population (male:female workers in HCMC EPZ/IPs is about 40:60).

About the marital status of sample, the percentage of married workers is 64.4%, and single workers is 35.6%. This ratio is acceptable for understanding the needs of workers' life, such as: housing, living expense, entertainment need, and kindergarten need.

Age structure of the sample is distributed as follows: the smallest age group is "18 to 20 years old", and the largest age group is "over 30 years old". By descending order: "over 30 years old" group had 107 people (42.8%), "26 to 29 years old" group had 66 people (26.4%), "21 to 25 years old" group had 51 people (20.4%), and "18 and 20 years old" group had 26 people (10.4%).

In terms of working years, the ratios are distributes as follows: 1-3 years is 91 people (36.4%), 3-5 years is 74 people (29.6%), over 5 years is 59 people (23.6%), and the smallest group is workers less than 1 year (26 people, 10.4%). These ratios show that respondents are experienced workers (greater than 50% of respondents got 3 years experience or more).

The income of respondents mostly belongs to group "3-5 million VND" (162 people, 64.8%). The 2nd largest group is "5-10 million VND" (72 people, 28.8%). The smallest group is "more than 10 million VND" (12 people, 4.8%). This result shows that the total income of workers at EPZ/IPs is still at a low level (less than 5 million VND), which is not enough to cover the total expense of a family.

Finally, in terms of number of companies workers have worked through, the majority group is "2-4 companies" (153 people, 61.2%). The proportion of other 2 groups is fairly equal. For "only 1 company" group (50 people, 20%), and "more than 4 companies" group (47 people, 18.8%).

4.2. Descriptive statistics by factors of quality of life

Based on sample data, using 5 levels Likert measurement scale, the mean value of the quality of life of workers in the EPZ/IPs in HCMC is at the average level (3.01/ 5). This mean score is calculated based on 33 variables examined, with the equal weight for all variables. To clarify the quality of life of workers in various aspects, the analysis for each factor will be summarized as follows.

Satisfaction of job requirement

Table 1. Mean & Stdev. of Satisfaction of job requirement

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Suitable job requirements	3.29	0.834
2	Stable job requirements	3.29	0.705
3	Interesting work	2.90	0.378
4	Work by shifts	3.12	0.903
5	Suitable job for living earning	3.02	0.703
	<i>Overall satisfaction of job requirement</i>	3.12	0.705

In comparison with other variables in this group, "Interesting work" got the lowest mean (2.90). This showed that the current works is boring and workers are required to do the same job without any change for a long time. The managers should think of a work rotation policy, or requirement changing for refreshing and renewing organizational climate.

Satisfaction of work environment

Table 2. Mean & Stdev. of Satisfaction of work environment

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Convenient work environment	2.95	0.388
2	Satisfied with work tools/ machines	3.15	0.572
3	Getting sufficient feedback of work	3.15	0.572
4	Friendly colleagues	3.66	0.648
5	Fair treatment of managers	2.99	0.608
	<i>Overall satisfaction of work environment</i>	3.18	0.558

Through this table, the workers appreciated the friendliness of their colleagues. This criterion showed that social demand (or communicating with colleagues) is very important to Vietnamese workers.

Criterion that has the lowest mean is convenient working environment (2.95). Therefore, the manager should improve the working environment by restructuring workspace or adding more utilities.

Satisfaction of monitoring behavior

Table 3. Mean & Stdev. of Satisfaction of monitoring behavior

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Camera at work place	2.23	0.750
2	Checking personal belongings by security officers	2.18	0.727
3	Work monitoring by supervisors	2.98	0.873
4	Daily attendance check	3.85	0.481
	<i>Overall satisfaction of monitoring behavior</i>	2.81	0.708

The workers completely oppose the installation of cameras in the workplace (2.23). They also irritated with the action of checking their personal belongings when they leave the company (2.18). In their opinion, each production line has a team leader to monitor the workers' operation. So, these two policies are unnecessary, and they make the workers feel unrespected.

Satisfaction of support program

Table 4. Mean & Stdev. of Satisfaction of support program

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Social security, health security program	3.58	0.847
2	Get full allowances, bonuses	3.49	0.735
3	Satisfied with holiday, absence policy	3.90	0.301
4	Satisfied with annually vacation, internship...	2.66	0.941
5	Satisfied with support from the union	2.53	0.500
	<i>Overall satisfaction of support program</i>	3.23	0.665

Workers feel unhappy with the support of trade union (2.53), and they also unsatisfied with the annual vacation (2.66). This showed that the union's activities are still limited. On the other hand, the trade union reflected that some workers refused to join the organization and did not contribute funds to trade union activities. Particularly, with current regulation, the annual vacation is organized only if the business operated profitably, and trade union cannot intervene in this activity.

Organizational commitment

Table 5. Mean & Stdev. of Organizational commitment

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Training operational skills	3.25	0.433
2	Providing necessary information	3.34	0.475
3	Updating new knowledge	3.05	0.222
4	Annually raising salary	3.72	0.622
5	Training computer & foreign language skills	2.40	0.664
	<i>Overall satisfaction of organizational commitment</i>	3.15	0.483

Currently, the workers underestimated the training of computer and foreign language skills (2.4). To them, the training courses are not organized frequently and the contents are not updated. So, FDI managers should pay attention on improving the quality of training courses. Especially, a cultural/ language distance between foreign managers and Vietnamese workers is realized, and there must be some efforts to reduce this gap in reality.

Satisfaction of life

Table 6. Mean & Stdev. of Satisfaction of life

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Accommodation support	3.13	0.836
2	Satisfied of electric & water supply	3.03	0.900
3	Acceptable living cost	2.16	0.563
4	Enough savings for future security	2.21	0.674
	<i>Overall satisfaction of life</i>	2.63	0.743

Within 7 factors, “satisfaction of life” has the lowest score (2.63). Currently, income is not enough to cover the workers’ living costs. This leads to the lowest mean of “acceptable living cost” (2.16). In fact, the savings is not enough for ensuring the workers’ safety in the future (2.21). The business managers must have some solutions for stabilizing the living conditions for their workers.

Happiness

Table 7. Mean & Stdev. of Happiness

ID	Variable	Mean	Stdev.
1	Enjoyment in working	3.35	0.477
2	High salary without overtime	1.58	0.736
3	Have time for personal & family needs	3.15	0.568
4	Have time for resting or social activities	2.96	0.732
5	Support for entertaining activities	2.94	0.846
	<i>Overall happiness</i>	2.80	0.672

The aspect of happiness that has the lowest score is “high income without overtime” (1.58). This showed that most of the workers have to work overtime for earning enough to cover their living cost. Therefore, they have no time for resting or entertaining, and they only feel happy in working.

4.3. Cross-tabular analysis

In order to know more about the quality of life of Vietnamese workers in EPZ/IPs, cross-tabular analysis will be used for deep understanding of their situation, especially in financial aspects, such as: income, living cost, savings, allowances...

Table 8. Cross tabulation of Current income and Suitable job for living earning

		Suitable job for living earning				Total
		Disagree	No idea	Agree	Strongly agree	
Income < 3 mil. VND per month	Count	1	2	0	0	3
	% of Total	0.4%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
3-6 mil. VND	Count	43	119	0	0	162
	% of Total	17.2%	47.6%	0.0%	0.0%	64.8%
6-10 mil. VND	Count	2	45	25	0	72
	% of Total	0.8%	18.0%	10.0%	0.0%	28.8%
> 10 mil. VND	Count	0	0	0	13	13
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	5.2%
Total	Count	46	166	25	13	250
	% of Total	18.4%	66.4%	10.0%	5.2%	100.0%

Based on the table above, there are only 15.2% of the respondents thought that their job is a suitable job for living earning, and most of them had income greater than 6 million VND.

The result showed that the possibility to live on income of less than 3 million VND. is almost 0. For the group of income from 3 to 6 million VND. (the majority – 64.8%), the most answer is “No idea”, which means it is difficult for them to live with current job. For the group of income from 6 to 10 million VND., only 1/3 of them agree that their job suitable for living earning, while 2/3 of them have no idea of disagree. For the group of income higher than 10 million VND. (the minority – 5.2%), their job is completely suitable for living earning.

Another issue to be considered is that workers appreciate the support programs, such as: paid absence, holidays, social insurance, and full allowances..., but most of the support programs are regulated by law. Only the “full allowances/bonuses” is supported by business voluntarily. However, these allowances/bonuses often depend on the working years and age of workers. The cross tabular analysis of allowances/bonuses by working years and age are summarized in following tables.

Table 9. Cross tabulation of Working years and Get full allowances/ bonuses

			Get full allowances/bonuses				Total
			Disagree	No idea	Agree	Strongly agree	
Working years	< 1 year	Count	23	1	2	0	26
		% of Total	9.2%	.4%	.8%	.0%	10.4%
	1-3 years	Count	0	68	23	0	91
		% of Total	.0%	27.2%	9.2%	.0%	36.4%
	3-5 years	Count	0	0	74	0	74
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	29.6%	.0%	29.6%
	> 5 years	Count	0	26	20	13	59
		% of Total	.0%	10.4%	8.0%	5.2%	23.6%
	Total	Count	23	95	119	13	250
		% of Total	9.2%	38.0%	47.6%	5.2%	100.0%

Table 10. Cross tabulation of Age and Get full allowances/ bonuses

			Get full allowances/bonuses				Total
			Disagree	No idea	Agree	Strongly agree	
Age	18 - 20	Count	23	1	2	0	26
		% of Total	9.2%	.4%	.8%	.0%	10.4%
	21 - 25	Count	0	24	27	0	51
		% of Total	.0%	9.6%	10.8%	.0%	20.4%
	26 - 29	Count	0	45	21	0	66
		% of Total	.0%	18.0%	8.4%	.0%	26.4%
	> 30	Count	0	25	69	13	107
		% of Total	.0%	10.0%	27.6%	5.2%	42.8%
	Total	Count	23	95	119	13	250
		% of Total	9.2%	38.0%	47.6%	5.2%	100.0%

According to the two tables above, the longer years of the laborers work, the more possibility they get the full allowances/bonuses from the company. Similarly, the older of the workers, the higher of the possibility of getting full allowances/bonuses. However, the allowance policy is designed by business; therefore, it could be cut or decreased arbitrarily. Beside, the current value of allowances is low (100,000 VND. - 500,000 VND.), but there are a lot of requirements to get full allowances/bonuses.

Table 11. Cross tabulation of Working years and Enough savings for future security

			Enough savings for future security				Total
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	No idea	Agree	
Working years	< 1 year	Count	23	3	0	0	26
		% of Total	9.2%	1.2%	.0%	.0%	10.4%
	1-3 years	Count	0	91	0	0	91
		% of Total	.0%	36.4%	.0%	.0%	36.4%
	3-5 years	Count	0	25	49	0	74
		% of Total	.0%	10.0%	19.6%	.0%	29.6%
	> 5 years	Count	0	46	0	13	59
		% of Total	.0%	18.4%	.0%	5.2%	23.6%
	Total	Count	23	165	49	13	250
		% of Total	9.2%	66.0%	19.6%	5.2%	100.0%

According to the table above, only 5.2% of respondents agreed that they got enough savings for future security and all of them worked more than 5 years. Besides, more than 70% of respondents (all group

of working years) said that they didn't get enough savings for future security. For the younger group (less than 3 working years), there is no possibility that they can save enough for future security. This is the most challenged problem for managers of businesses in EPZ/IPs.

5. MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Based on above analysis, some management implications for improving the quality of life of workers in EPZ/IPs in HCMC could be suggested for several stakeholders, such as: government agencies, trade union, and businesses. These suggestions could be summarized as follows.

5.1. For government agencies

Ho Chi Minh city Export Processing and Industrial Zones Authority (HEPZA) is the public agency, who take responsibility for managing workers in EPZ/IPs in HCMC. Therefore, HEPZA has to make some recommendations to other governmental departments/ agencies for creating suitable policy for improving the quality of life of workers in this area. Some management implications for HEPZA based on this research could be summarized as follows.

- Tax reduction for building workers' dormitory: this policy helps to stabilize the living of workers and to reduce their living cost. Besides, developing of related infrastructure facilities, such as: cultural center, supermarket, kindergarten, sport center..., is also necessary.
- Accommodation price stabilizing: this policy focuses on encouraging house/apartment owners to keep a reasonable rent price and to follow common regulations of government agency to get some preferences from the local government.
- Minimum level of salary raise: the government agency should set a minimum level of salary raise each year, which must be higher than the inflation rate or the consumer price index.
- Frequently checking of industrial meal for workers: the quality of industrial meal should be checked frequently to avoid the health problems of workers.
- Training for business managers: to ensure that the businesses' managers in EPZ/IPs know well of governmental policies and regulations, some training courses should be organized, especially when there are new regulations or new policies.

Worker Support Fund (WSF) is a member of HEPZA. This fund aims at supporting education, and enhancing spiritual and cultural life for workers in EPZ/IPs. The annual programs and activities of WSF include: celebrating of Tet holidays, giving scholarships for poor workers, giving school loan with an interest rate of 0%, raising the workers' spiritual life (equipped with radio, TV, bookcase, karaoke...). Hence, WSF plays an important role in improving the quality of life of workers. Therefore, HEPZA should increase the financial support for WSF to strengthen and to diversify their supporting programs, such as: Spring fair for workers on Tet holidays (not going home), frequently organizing the workers' fair, free tickets for workers to return home on Tet holidays...

5.2. For the trade union

Currently, there is no independent trade union in Vietnam. By joining TPP, Vietnam is going to allow other trade unions to be established and competed with the public national trade union. This is the good opportunity for Vietnamese workers in general in having a stronger trade union for protecting workers' benefits.

Based on above analysis, some recommendations for the national trade union are as follows:

- Giving feedbacks from workers to businesses' owners and vice versa: the local union representative should listen to the workers' need and feedback to the businesses' owners, so that conflicting could be understood and solved shortly. For example, the workers' irritation of the policy of camera installation or checking workers' belongings; the bad effects of overtime working for a long time on the workers' health.
- Training workers about their rights and responsibilities: organizing seminars or training courses for helping workers to understand their rights and responsibilities, such as: general labor regulations, holiday policy, social security, health security, job security...
- Keep 1-2% of members' fee for local union activities: for strengthening the local unions and reducing their dependency on businesses' support, national trade union should let local union keep a part of compulsory payment (1-2%) for supporting their own plans and activities.

- Dealing the minimum spending on workers' meal: the national trade union should have a regulation on the minimum spending on workers' meal to ensure the quality of industrial meal and to prevent the bad effects of low quality meal on the workers' health.

5.3. For business managers

Based on above analysis, some recommendations for business managers are summarized as follows:

- Changing current monitoring methods (the company should not checking the workers' belongings after each working session).
- Building a salary scale and strictly following the salary raise regulations of the government.
- Paying social, health insurance for workers according to regulations of the labor law.
- Ensuring the quality of industrial meal for workers for ensuring their health conditions.
- Checking working environment and machines frequently for ensuring the laborers' safety.
- Creating a friendly organizational culture by some methods, such as: cultural exchange event, music plays, skill tests, sport games..., for increasing spiritual quality of life of workers.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the research model, a survey had been conducted for understanding the quality of life of workers in EPZ/IPs in HCMC, Vietnam. The analysis results showed that the current quality of life of workers is at the average level (3.01/ 5). In 7 factors of the quality of life, "satisfaction of support program" got the highest score (3.23/ 5), and "satisfaction of life" got the lowest score (2.63/ 5). Other factors are ranking in descending order as follows: satisfaction of working environment (3.18), organizational commitment (3.15), satisfaction of job requirement (3.12), satisfaction of monitoring behavior (2.81), and happiness (2.80).

Therefore, in order to increase the quality of life of Vietnamese workers in EPZ/IPs, some solutions should be done for improving the weak aspects, such as: satisfaction of personal life, happiness, and monitoring methods. In details, some measures of these 3 factors which got the lowest mean score that could be improved, including: High salary without overtime (1.58), Acceptable living cost (2.16), and Checking personal belongings by security officers (2.18).

However, the overall quality of life of workers is mostly affected by their salary, income, allowances/ bonuses, living cost... Therefore, the business managers as well as the government agencies should have some policies for increasing their total income. At least, the annual salary raise must be greater than or equal the inflation rate.

Currently, the minimum income per month must be higher than 6 million VND. for covering all living expenses of an individual worker. If the workers' income is lower than this thread, they have to work overtime and their savings are not enough for future security. As a result, the quality of life of the workers with low salary (> 65%) could not be high.

Based on above analysis, some recommendations for improving the quality of life of the workers in EPZ/IPs in HCMC are suggested for HEPZA, the trade union, and the businesses' managers. Especially, some urgent solutions that help to improve working conditions and to solve the conflicts between workers and managers should be applied, such as: changing monitoring methods, raising salary to an acceptable level, empowering the trade union, improving the nearby infrastructure...

However, there are still some limitations of this research, including: (1) the small sample size (250) and limited in HCMC area, (2) the analysis method only focused on mean comparison, which could not understand the causal effects on the quality of life of workers. These limitations reduce the ability to generalize the managerial implications for other areas in practice.

Some directions for future research include: (1) increase the sample size and extend the research scope to other areas, such as: workers in private companies, state owned enterprises, in other EPZ/IPs in other provinces in Vietnam..., (2) use other analysis methods, such as: linear regression analysis, structural equation method... for better understanding of causal relationship between factors.

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