

THE SCHOLARLY INVESTIGATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT IN EVALUATING WORK LIFE QUALITY AMONG THE THAI WORKING POPULATION IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

Tipvarin Benjanirat ¹, Sukanya Chalo ², Jatuporn Ounprasertsuk ³,
Phanee Rojanabenjakun ⁴ and Pongsak Jaroengarmsamer ⁵

¹ PhD (Buddhism and Philosophy), Registered Nurse is a Lecturer, Public Health Secretary, Allied Health Sciences, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Samut Songkhram, Thailand.

^{2, 3, 4, 5} Allied Health Sciences, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Samut Songkram Province, Thailand.

Email: ¹ tipvarin.be@ssru.ac.th, ² Sukanya.chalo@gmail.com, ³ jatuporn.ou@ssru.ac.th, ⁴ phanee.ro@ssru.ac.th, ⁵ pongsak.ja@ssru.ac.th

Abstracts

This survey research explores the intricate relationship between the QWL and the overall quality of life among the working-age population in Samut Songkram province, with a particular focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study utilizes a questionnaire-based approach and involves a sample of 399 individuals. The analysis reveals that prior to the pandemic, the participants reported an excellent quality of working life, with notable strengths in areas such as a proper and safe work environment and substantial development potential. However, the onset of COVID-19 saw a shift, with the overall QWL dropping to a moderate level. Notably, factors such as nutritional responsibility, physical activity, and stress management showed significant correlations with the quality of working life, emphasizing the importance of holistic well-being in the workplace. The findings highlight the need for interventions and support mechanisms, including activities and counseling services, to enhance the working quality and ultimately contribute to a better quality of life for the working-age population, especially in the post-COVID-19 era. Further research is recommended to investigate the long-term effects and extend the study to other populations.

Keywords: Psychological, Quality of working life; QWL, Nutritional.

BACKGROUND

The Quality of Work Life (QWL) concept has gained prominence as a multidimensional framework that assesses the overall well-being of employees within their work environments. In recent years, the global workforce has undergone unprecedented changes due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has introduced substantial disruptions to work patterns, organizational structures, and employee well-being. As countries around the world, including Thailand, navigate the post-pandemic landscape, understanding the psychological perspective on assessing the QWL become a critical area of inquiry. Before the emergence of the pandemic, the Thai working population experienced a variety of challenges and opportunities related to work life quality. Factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and career development played pivotal roles in shaping employees' perceptions of their work environments. The unique blend of cultural values, economic conditions, and social norms influenced the dynamics of the workplace, providing a foundation for understanding the subsequent changes wrought by the pandemic. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an unprecedented transformation in work dynamics globally. Governments and organizations in Thailand swiftly implemented measures such as lockdowns, remote work arrangements, and digital communication tools to mitigate the spread of the virus. These changes, while necessary, brought about new challenges. Remote work, once considered an exception, became the norm for many employees, blurring the boundaries between professional and personal life. As a

result, the psychological well-being of employees faced new stressors, including isolation, technology-related challenges, and the need to juggle multiple responsibilities. The QWL framework acknowledges that the QWL is not solely determined by external factors such as job security or financial compensation, but is deeply intertwined with employees' psychological well-being. Factors such as autonomy, job satisfaction, work engagement, and interpersonal relationships significantly influence how individuals perceive the overall quality of their work life. These psychological dimensions take on renewed importance in the post-COVID-19 era, as employees seek to navigate the new work landscape while maintaining their mental and emotional equilibrium. This scholarly investigation aims to bridge this gap by focusing on the Thai working population's post-COVID-19 work experiences. By examining the psychological dimensions influencing QWL, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into how these factors interplay and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of work life quality. Through this exploration, the research aims to offer recommendations for organizations and policymakers to enhance employees' psychological well-being and overall work quality.

In light of the pandemic's lasting impact, there is a pressing need to assess how the psychological dimensions of work life quality among the Thai working population have evolved. This academic exploration seeks to address this gap by investigating the factors influencing work life quality from a psychological perspective and understanding how these factors have been reshaped by the pandemic. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys, this study aims to offer a holistic understanding of the complex interplay between psychological well-being and work life quality in the post-COVID-19 context. As organizations in Thailand strive to foster resilient and thriving work environments, a nuanced understanding of the psychological aspects of work life quality will enable informed decisions in implementing strategies that prioritize employees' well-being. This exploration endeavors to contribute to the knowledge base that will guide policymakers, organizational leaders, and individuals toward crafting adaptive and supportive work environments that uphold both the professional and psychological needs of the Thai working population.

METHODS

Study Design

This research encompasses a survey study conducted through a carefully crafted questionnaire, drawing inspiration from the life pathway concept proposed by Pender (2002) and the QWL framework outlined by Richard E. Walton (1973). Prior to its implementation, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous validation process guided by the insights of three esteemed professors. This validation procedure ensured the content's accuracy and alignment with the research's objectives. Subsequently, the questionnaire underwent a trial phase, during which its reliability was established with a satisfactory relative confidence level of .70 and an impressive Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of .92. These findings collectively affirm the questionnaire's efficacy and suitability for integration into this research endeavor

Sample and Data Collection

The target population for this study comprised individuals in Samut Songkram province, totaling 101,807 individuals as reported by the Department of Statistics (Samut Songkram province, 2022). Employing Taro Yamane's methodology (1973), the sample size was determined, considering a confidence level of 95% and a permissible deviation of 5%. Consequently, the calculated sample size was 399 participants. The sampling process was executed using a probability-based approach, specifically employing stratified sampling techniques to ensure representation across different strata. Subsequently, data collection was undertaken. Data collection took place between the months of February and April in the year 2023. The mean duration for each data collection session spanned from 15 to 30 minutes per participant. Notably, participants were accorded the liberty to withdraw from the research at their discretion and convenience. Ultimately, a total of 399 complete datasets were successfully gathered.

RESULTS

The meticulous data analysis conducted in the context of this study unveiled participants' overall way of life to be remarkably elevated, evidenced by mean score of $3.47 \pm .47$. This observation carries significant relevance within the post-COVID-19 era, where individuals' well-being has been a central concern. Upon delving into specific dimensions, the assessment demonstrated the commendable state of spiritual development, achieving an impressive mean score of $3.72 \pm .66$, signifying an excellent level. Moreover, stress management, a topic closely tied to coping mechanisms during challenging times like the pandemic, garnered a similarly high assessment with mean score of $3.47 \pm .73$. While health exhibited a more moderate level with mean score of $3.36 \pm .72$, it remains a vital dimension in light of the global health crisis. Additionally, given the significance of maintaining interpersonal relationships amidst social disruptions, it's notable that this aspect achieved a moderate level, denoted by a mean score of $3.25 \pm .53$. Interestingly, physical activity, which is pivotal for holistic well-being, obtained the lowest mean score of $3.34 \pm .42$, positioning it within the Moderate level of evaluation. These findings, intricately related to the study's exploration of the psychological perspective on assessing the QWL among the Thai working population in the post-COVID-19 environment, underscore the multifaceted interplay between well-being dimensions and the evolving professional landscape, shedding light on areas of potential focus for enhancing the quality of working life.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of the QWL

Variable (n=399)	Mean	S.D.	Level
Personal responsibility for one's health	3.42	.78	Moderate
Nutrition	3.45	.90	Moderate
Physical exercise	3.40	.48	Moderate
Stress control	3.65	.89	Excellent
Interpersonal connection	3.31	.59	Moderate
Spiritual advancement	3.80	.72	Excellent
Mean	3.53	.53	Excellent

The QWL assessment included a thorough examination of participants' job experiences, reflecting the changing situation in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. Notable features, such as a right and safe workplace, possibilities for capacity development, social integration, and job description democracy, were rated

extremely favorably, earning "Excellent" ratings. However, the evaluation drew attention to areas that need focused improvements, such as fair and suitable compensation, advancement and stability, work-life balance, and relevance and benefits to society, all of which were rated "Moderate." These observations emphasize the crucial role of organizations in focusing on areas such as compensation, work-life balance, and societal contributions to cultivate improved working conditions and bolster employee job satisfaction. The analysis of the QWL further revealed mean score of $3.47 \pm .38$, reflecting a Moderate level. Upon scrutinizing specific facets, the results indicated commendable performance across various areas. Particularly notable was the "Healthy and Safe Environment" dimension, earning an encouraging assessment with mean score of $3.80 \pm .61$. Equally significant, the "Chance in Potential Development" aspect garnered an admirable mean score of $3.74 \pm .66$ within the excellent range. Additionally, both the "Social Integration" and "Working Democratic" dimensions achieved an excellent level, attaining mean scores of $3.72 \pm .62$ and $3.66 \pm .64$, respectively. Nonetheless, the "Balance of Working Life" dimension obtained a Moderate level rating, with mean score of $3.53 \pm .71$. Similarly, dimensions such as "Social Relationship" and "Adequate and Fair Income" were positioned within the Moderate range, registering mean scores of $3.44 \pm .84$ and $3.34 \pm .42$, respectively. Lastly, the "Advance and Firm" dimension exhibited the lowest score within the Moderate level, recording mean score of $3.24 \pm .47$, as outlined in Table 2. These insights reflect the ongoing influence of the pandemic, highlighting the need for adaptable strategies to improve the QWL amidst these changing dynamics.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation (s.d.) of the Quality of Life at Work

Variable (n=399)	Mean	S.D.	Level
Fair and adequate remuneration	3.34	.42	Moderate
Suitable and safe settings	3.71	.61	Excellent
Possibilities for capacity development	3.74	.66	Excellent
Progress and safety	3.24	.47	Moderate
Collaboration versus social inclusion	3.61	.62	Excellent
Workplace democracy versus. Job descriptions.	3.57	.33	Excellent
Work-life balance.	3.47	.71	Moderate
Sociocultural importance and benefits.	3.44	.84	Moderate
Mean	3.47	.38	Moderate

The findings of the lifestyle research are connected to the quality of life at work. It was shown that lifestyle has a statistically significant relationship with work life quality at .05. The correlation matrix depicted above shows the relationships between many factors such as health, nutrition, physical well-being, stress, relationship quality, and spirituality. Notably, the correlations are as follows: health and nutrition demonstrate a correlation coefficient of .665; nutrition and physical well-being are correlated at .379; health and physical well-being hold a correlation of .552; stress and health exhibit a correlation of .715; stress and nutrition correlate at .767; stress and physical well-being have a correlation coefficient of .499; relationship quality and health correlate at 1.054; relationship quality and nutrition are correlated at .470; relationship quality and physical well-being hold a correlation of .312; relationship quality and stress exhibit a correlation of .382; and finally, the correlation between spirituality and health, nutrition, physical well-being, stress, and relationship quality is .329, .598, .214, .494, and .404 respectively. The total mean correlation across all dimensions is .676. This matrix provides a comprehensive insight into the interrelationships among these dimensions within the scope of the study.

Table 3: Shows the Correlation Between Manner of Life And Working Life Quality (n=399)

	health	nutrition	physical	stress	relationship	spirituality
health	1					
nutrition	.665*	1				
physical	.552 *	.379 *	1			
stress	.715 *	.767 *	.499*	1		
relationship	1.054 *	.470 *	.312 *	.382 *	1	
spirituality	.329	.598 *	.214 *	.494 *	.404 *	1
Mean	.460 *	.588 *	.370 *	.280 *	.279 *	.676 *

*P < .05

Note

health as a way of life in relation to health responsibility

the relationship of nutrition to the aspect of lifestyle pertaining to dietary behaviors

Physical exercise as a feature of a healthy way of life

Stress in relation to a way of living that involves stress management

reference to the aspect of lifestyle that relates to interpersonal interactions

Spirituality is a style of living that considers spiritual growth

The examination of correlations between the "Way of Life" dimensions and the "Quality of Working Life" (QWL) revealed noteworthy patterns. Specifically, attributes such as health ($r = .40^*$), nutrition ($r = .48^*$), stress ($r = .55^*$), and spiritual development ($r = .61^*$) demonstrated low to Moderate positive correlations with QWL. Conversely, physical activity ($r = .26^*$) and interpersonal relationships ($r = .18^*$) exhibited relatively lower correlations. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of the relationship between individuals' way of life choices and their perceived quality of working life, highlighting the relevance of holistic well-being in shaping a positive professional experience as in table 4.

Table 4: Shows The Association Between Lifestyle And Job Satisfaction (n=399)

Variable	The relationship with the QWL		
	Pearson (r)	Sig.	Relationship
Health	.40*	.00	Low
Nutrition	.48*	.00	Low
Physical	.26*	.00	Low
Stress	.55*	.00	Low
Relationship	.18*	.00	Lowest point
Spiritual	.61*	.00	Moderate
Mean	.41	.00	Low

*P < .05

- Health is a way of life that emphasizes health responsibility.
- Nutrition is a way of life that revolves around food.
- Physical is a manner of life centered on physical exercise.

- Stress is a style of life that revolves around stress.
- Relationship is a style of life centered on relationships.
- Spirituality is a style of life centered on spiritual growth.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this survey study, "An Academic Exploration of the Psychological Perspective on Assessing the QWL Among the Thai Working Population in the Post-COVID-19," is to examine how people's quality of life and manner of life have changed in the years after the COVID-19 epidemic. A sample of 399 individuals in the research demonstrated a noticeably high degree of way of life quality. Our analysis presents a different scenario that may have been impacted by the timing of the pandemic and the dynamics of recovery, in contrast to the findings of Wirote et al. (2015), whose research focused on the idea of adequate economy and the economic circumstances of employees in Samut Sakorn province. The quality of working life, which was judged to be moderate, was also found to be moderate. Consistent with Visarut's (2014) study of workers at NY Food Co., Ltd. who fairly balanced work and life. Intriguingly, the study reveals a strong relationship between manner of life and working life quality, providing useful insights that may be used to better future research and development initiatives focused at improving working life quality. A closer look finds that dietary responsibility, physical exercise, and stress management are all connected to job satisfaction. However, there is no statistically significant association between spiritual growth and interpersonal interactions. Lalita's (2012) research supports these findings by stressing the influence of activities including eating, exercise, and relaxation on efficiency. Interpersonal ties and spiritual growth have less of an impact. The overall association between way of life and job quality is defined as poor, with spiritual growth exhibiting a Moderate level of correlation and interpersonal interactions demonstrating the least effect. These findings, derived from an academic investigation of the psychological viewpoint on judging the QWL among Thai workers in the post-COVID-19 period, might enlighten and enhance future research and development efforts targeted at improving working life quality.

CONCLUSION

The mean score of 3.47 for the analysis of the manner of life of the people under study indicated a noticeably high level, while the mean score of 3.47 for the analysis of the QWL indicated a moderate rating. In the time after COVID-19, new aspects of the work-life landscape have emerged as a result of the pandemic's lingering impacts. Especially noteworthy were the four categories of "Healthy and Safe Environment," "Chance in Potential Development," "Social Integration," and "Working Democratic," which all showed great levels. while the remaining four dimensions fell within the Moderate range. This juxtaposition highlights the importance for governmental bodies and policy stakeholders to contemplate targeted improvement measures aimed at elevating the QWL in this dynamically evolving context. The potential positive outcomes of such interventions are further emphasized by the statistically significant correlation between the QWL and productivity, a crucial finding underscored by this research. To facilitate these improvements, the establishment of dedicated consulting and activities centers is strongly recommended. Furthermore, extending the scope of this study to encompass diverse provinces, each characterized by unique economic

and cultural contexts, promises to yield additional insightful perspectives. Additionally, a comprehensive analysis considering the prolonged impact of the Covid-19 recovery phase would provide a more holistic understanding of the evolving dynamics. Indeed, a scholarly investigation delving into the psychological aspect of evaluating work life quality can significantly benefit individuals across various professional spheres. By shedding light on the intricate interplay between psychological well-being and work quality, such research offers valuable insights that can guide individuals, organizations, and policymakers towards fostering more conducive and fulfilling work environments. For individuals, this investigation can provide a deeper understanding of the psychological factors that contribute to their overall work satisfaction and well-being. Armed with this knowledge, they can make informed decisions about their career paths, work-life balance strategies, and approaches to managing stress and engagement.

Such insights empower individuals to proactively take charge of their work experiences and optimize their mental and emotional states. Organizations, on the other hand, can use the findings from this investigation to cultivate work environments that prioritize employees' psychological well-being. By recognizing the significance of aspects like autonomy, job satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships, organizations can tailor their policies, practices, and resources to create supportive ecosystems. This, in turn, can lead to higher employee morale, improved productivity, and reduced turnover rates. Policymakers and industry leaders can also benefit from the insights generated by this research. As they shape labor regulations, industry standards, and economic policies, a deep understanding of the psychological dimensions impacting work quality can help ensure that these frameworks promote positive and sustainable work experiences. This can contribute to societal well-being, economic growth, and overall human development. In essence, a scholarly investigation into the psychological facet of work life quality can serve as a guiding beacon, illuminating pathways for individuals, organizations, and policymakers to collaborate in creating work environments that prioritize psychological well-being and elevate overall work experiences.

Ethical Consideration

The Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee authorized the study proposal, which was given the certification number COE. 2- 033/2023.

References

- 1) Pender, N.J. (2002). **Health promotion in Nursing Paractice**. 2nd ed. Stamford, CT: Appleton & Lange
- 2) Reimer. (1995). **Youth and Modern Lifestyle in Youth Culture in Late Modernity**. London: Saga Pubication.124-135
- 3) Walton, Richard E. (1974). *Improving Quality of Work Life*. **Harvard Business Review**, 15(5): 12-16.
- 4) Yamane, T. (1973). *Statistic: An Introductory Analysis* (3rd ed). New York: Harper & Row.
- 5) Ministry of public health. (2022). **Plan and Management to Concert the Covid-19 pandemic to be local disease**. Search online on July 25, 2022.
<https://www.pyomoph.go.th/backoffice/files/42148.pdf>
- 6) Kiettiphum W. (2022). **Following the Situation of Covid-19**. Search online on August 25, 2022.
<https://covid-19.kapook.com>

- 7) Thippawan S. (1999). **Quality of Working Life and the Organization Relationship: Case study of Asset Management Firm.** Thesis in Master of Art, Kasetsart University.
- 8) Lalita P. (2012). **The Behavioral Effect Relationship with the Working Life in Bangkok.** Search online on August 25, 2022. <http://www.repository.rmutt.ac.th/dspace/bitstream>
- 9) Wirote J, Chananchida J and Hataichanok T. (2015). **The Relationship of the Quality of Working Life and the Sufficient Economic Theory in Samut Sakorn Province. Veridian E-Journal, Silpakorn University.** ISSN 1906 -3431, Thai version, Vol 2, May-Aug 2015. pp. 1090-1101. Search online on August 25, 2022. <https://he02.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/Veridian-E-Journal/article/view/40289/33245>
- 10) Visarut P. (2014). **Quality of Working Life Effect on the Organization, NY Food Co., Ltd. Nakorn Pathom Province.** Search online on August 25, 2022.
- 11) http://www.thapra.lib.su.ac.th/objects/thesis/fulltext/snamcn/Wisarut_Piamsiri
- 12) Covid-19 Management Center. (2022). **Covid-19 Report of September 30, 2022.** Search online on September 30, 2022. <https://covid19.nrct.go.th/daily-report-30sep2022/>
- 13) Samut Songkram Statistic Division. (2022). **Samut Songkram Statistic Report 2021.** Search online on September 30, 2022. <http://samutsongkhram.nso.go.th/pdf>