



MIMBAR PENDIDIKAN

Jurnal Indonesia untuk Kajian Pendidikan

Journal homepage: <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/mimbardik>



Quality of Life Among Secondary School Teachers in Kwara State: Implication for Counselling

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are one of the most valuable human resources in a school system. The strengths and quality of any educational system are heavily reliant on the efforts of its teachers. It is commonly known that teaching is one of the most stressful jobs in the world. Teachers tend to view aspects of their profession that are hazardous to their health. The school system in Kwara State has lately experienced significant modifications. Nonetheless, despite numerous reforms and advances over the years, Kwara teachers continue to face stressful working conditions when compared to other jobs. Numerous studies have demonstrated that teachers' physical and mental health might suffer as a result of excessive stress. It has been claimed that teachers who have a lower quality of life live shorter lives. School teachers must have a high quality of life to train good students. Any fault or flaw in teachers' quality of life might have an impact on their job performance. As a result, the purpose of this study is to look at teachers' quality of life in Kwara State secondary schools, as well as the consequences for counselling. As a result, the report proposed instructors be provided additional assistance in improving their quality of life and well-being.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 05 Jun 22

First Revised 18 Jun 22

Accepted 31 Jul 23

First Available online 15 Ags 23

Publication Date 01 Sep 23

Keyword:

Quality of life;

Secondary school;

Teachers and Counselling.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most fundamental aspirations of every person on the planet is a high quality of life. No matter what their upbringing is, everyone has this intrinsic need to be content with their lives. In general, human beings have always had unending requirements. Because teachers are so crucial to the overall success of a country's educational goals, their level of life satisfaction is extremely significant. They have a lot to live up to in terms of efficiently delivering education for every child in society. Most life skills and abilities are established during adolescence when individuals are in secondary school, so the roles teachers play during this period cannot be overstated. Teachers are the major players in every nation's educational sector; hence their level of happiness or dissatisfaction with their lives is critical. This is understandable because the quality of their lives can have a favourable or negative impact on the lives of the learners whom they teach. A teacher who is unsatisfied with his or her life is more likely to hurt the lives of the learners whom he or she teaches. The opposite is true for a teacher who is happy with his or her life. Teachers' happiness is critical since it determines how well they function in their careers (Weber, 2015).

Teachers maintain frequent connections with their students, spending most of their time with them at school and serving as the primary source of educational support for their students during the school day. It is critical to recognize that teachers play a caring role in their careers. Teachers must attend to the student completely; furthermore, current research suggests that teachers' interactions with their students may be important in addressing student social-emotional functioning. These responsibilities are in addition to the daily work-related responsibilities teachers have, which include: preparing lessons based on curriculum guidelines; preparation of lesson materials; marking, and report cards; supervision duties; extra help for students outside of class time; communication with parents and learners; and attending meetings and consulting with administration, support staff, and co-workers. Recent changes in the education system, as well as the use of new education technology, have increased the responsibilities of teachers, necessitating attempts to absorb the most recent knowledge to improve their competence and keep up with societal advancements. This may contribute to breakdown as a result of increased work pressures and dwindling resources, lowering their quality of life (Muraina & Kamaldeen, 2022).

As a result, teachers face unique challenges that no other occupation does. Most jobs allow employees to leave their work at the office. Instructors, on the other hand, are required to care for their students by giving emotional support in the same way that a family does, in addition to accomplishing their scholastic objectives. This distinct obligation contained within the profession of teacher emphasizes the distinct work-life balance challenges that teachers face. Teachers have tremendous demands in terms of both quantity and quality of work, which can result in psychological strain and tiredness. These pressures not only have a detrimental impact on teachers' attitudes about their job, anxiety, and ability to deal with issues, but they also cause inattention, withdrawal or aggression, concerns about physical health, and an increased risk of sleep disorders and depression.

Teachers may encounter psychological or emotional problems as a result of the high demands of their employment. As a result, teachers frequently argue with family members or coworkers and rely excessively on them. In summary, occupational stress can have an impact on one's quality of life by altering one's impression of health and well-being, as well as by contributing to physical or mental illness.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Quality of Life Concept

A. C. Pigou coined the term "quality of life" in his book on economic well-being in 1920. There was no reply, and it was ignored until the end of the Second World War. The World Health Organization (WHO) broadened the definition of health at the time to include physical, psychological, and social well-being. Quality of life (QoL) is defined by the WHO as an individual purpose-aligned cultural and value system through which a person lives, about their ambitions, hopes, living standards, and interests. This is a comprehensive term that includes people's physical and psychological health, their level of independence, their social connections, and how they interact with their surroundings.

According to the World Health Organization (2016), quality of life is defined as an individual's beliefs about his life the value system and culture where he lives, as well as the relationship between these interpretations and the person's intended priorities, norms, expectations, and objectives. Weber (2015) defines quality of life as being satisfied or unhappy with aspects of one's personal life that are significant to them.

Hattie, Myers, and Sweeney (2019) offer wellness as a natural aspect of Quality of Life and propose a global wellness factor as well as five supplemental composite variables. Physical (exercise and nutrition), essential (gender/cultural identity, spirituality), social (relationships), creative (emotion, control, humour, work), and coping (beliefs, leisure, stress, and self-worth) are examples of wellness components.

According to Haas (2009), the following five factors can most properly measure the quality of life (taken from Merkys et al., 2018).

- i. Quality of life is the assessment of the current circumstances of an individual's life.
- ii. Quality of life in its essence (content) is multifaceted.
- iii. Quality of life is based on individual values and is variable.
- iv. Quality of life encompasses objective indicators as well as subjective evaluations.
- v. Quality of life can be most accurately evaluated by individuals who are capable of conducting subjective self-assessment.

External variables also influence life quality. High quality of life is determined by good living environments or circumstances, but when these conditions change, so does the individual's contentment with his or her quality of life. Accommodation, employment, income, material welfare, moral attitudes, personal and family life, social support, stress and crises, health-related quality of life, health care service, working conditions, nourishment, education opportunities, relationships with the environment, eco-factors, and others all have an impact on quality of life.

Components of Life Quality

The quality of life has many components that improve an individual's quality of life, which include the following components (Schalock, 2019).

- i. **Schooling:** A clever and educated person can deal with situations appropriately. Schooling allows for subsequent entry to higher education and gives a person knowledge that allows him or her to contribute to society.
- ii. **Security:** In general, security and protection are required for every member of society for the society to be happy and prosperous. When there is no security, individuals get conceited in their material possessions, and life becomes of poor quality.
- iii. **Health:** Healthy people are assets to the country since they can be an active population with income-generating talents. It is no longer a surprise that society members who are not physically and intellectually fit would suffer and have difficulty maintaining their quality of life. When people's health deteriorates, they are deprived of mental and spiritual fulfilment, which leads to a dreadful quality of life.
- iv. **Saving:** Another key aspect of life quality is saving. After making necessary expenditures from income, the surplus money must be saved regularly. Nobody knows when calamity will strike, and funds can be utilized for domestic and temporary work due to unexpected challenges that can be managed by verifying within the family.
- v. **Sanitation:** People's lifestyles will be healthier if their homes and surrounding environments are kept nice and clean. Sanitation keeps the surroundings nice, clean, and green, and it encourages family members to be healthy and active. As a result, there is an improvement in quality of life.

3.2 Dimensions and Models of Life Quality

A model of quality of life that incorporates objective and subjective indicators, a wide range of life domains, and individual values is offered. It takes into account concerns that externally determined norms should not be implemented in isolation from individual differences. It also enables objective comparisons to be made between the situations of different groups and what is considered normative. There is widespread consensus that quality of life is multifaceted. Physical well-being, psychological well-being, social relationships, and spiritual well-being are the four dimensions of quality of life (W.H.O, 2016).

The major issue is that there is no uniform measure of quality of life. The physical and mental health of an individual, the degree of independence, the social relationship with the environment, and other factors all influence the quality of life (Rueviius, 2017). Quality of life could be defined as an individual's satisfaction with his or her life dimensions compared with his or her ideal life. The individual's value system and the cultural milieu in which he lives influence how he evaluates his quality of life. However, when examining quality of life, it is important to remember that this notion encompasses more than only health difficulties.

Browne (2004) observes that, from both a political and philosophical standpoint, the impression of the quality of life might be based on one of the three points of view listed below (derived from Diener 2022). The qualities of a good life can derive from normative norms based on religious, philosophical, or other systems. The fulfilment of the individual's priority demands is the essence of quality of life. People favour goods that improve the quality of their lives since resources are limited. As a result, people plan their lives based on the resources available to them as well as their particular requirements.

3.3 Needs to Improve Teachers' Quality of Life

In the Nigerian educational system, there is an urgent need to improve teachers' quality of life. As indicated by the documentation in the National Policy on Education, a great value has been placed on teacher education. In that document, the [Federal Republic of Nigeria \(2018\)](#) said that no educational system could climb above the quality of its teachers; how could this be achieved without increasing the teachers' welfare and well-being?

[Daluba \(2015\)](#) reasoned that teacher education will continue to be given a high priority in the Nigerian educational system for it to be meaningful because a country's educational system could hardly be relevant if the quality of life of the teachers who operate it is poor. [Muraina and Kamalden \(2022\)](#) agreed that the goal of functional education could not be accomplished without high-quality teachers. According to them, the quality of life of teachers had a substantial association with educational production, which was dependent on the teacher's professional knowledge and pedagogical skills.

A few suggestions for improving the quality of life of secondary school teachers in Kwara State include:

- i. **Improving Teacher Morale:** Improving teacher morale would considerably improve teachers' ability, well-being, and performance. Teachers' morale, according to [Perumal \(2021\)](#), had a direct impact on educational delivery, teacher effectiveness, and leadership. This viewpoint is based on the notion that when instructors' morale is low, they acquire apathy and indifference toward service delivery. When teacher morale is high, the opposite is usually true. To boost teacher morale, the government could revise teachers' compensation upward to reflect current socioeconomic realities, since this would encourage teachers' positive attitude about their employment.
- ii. **Teachers' quality can be improved by fostering a happy work environment.** [Rapti \(2022\)](#) agreed that a better school climate corresponds positively with instructor output. She believes that when the school environment is friendly and welcoming, instructors are more likely to push themselves to achieve their objectives. [Rapti](#) believes that school administrators and pioneers must ensure, among other things, that adequate structures are put in place to reduce the incidence of overcrowded classes; that students' discipline is a focal point of school policy; and that adequate teaching aids are provided to ensure that the teacher is fully equipped to carry out his/her duties.
- iii. **Motivation:** No one can give their all if they are not properly motivated. Even if a person feels inspired to teach, a lack of motivation on the job will always be damaging to his or her capacity to offer his or her all as a teacher. According to [Durosaro \(2016\)](#), as cited in [Akindutire and Ekundayo \(2022\)](#), incentive in the teaching profession includes increased compensation packages, improved working conditions, and the granting of bursary and scholarship awards to education students at all levels of education. It is no secret that teachers in Kwara State earn far less than their counterparts in other states, and there is even a pay gap between senior and junior secondary school instructors, therefore, they should be motivated.

3.4 Quality of Life among Secondary School Teachers in Kwara State: Counselling Implications

Counsellors are well placed to help clients transition from negative numbers to zero and far into the positive area on the quality of life scale. Professional School Counsellors are available to detect low quality of life among teachers and may use one or more of the following techniques to help a depressed teacher with low quality of life: quality of life therapy (QoLT), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), and Self-Determination Theory.

3.5 Quality of Life Therapy

Frisch (2016) proposes 16 quality-of-life aspects that should be addressed in Quality of Life Therapy processes to promote life satisfaction and happiness. Happiness and satisfaction lead to higher life achievement, better health, and more fulfilling relationships. QoLT advocates a life satisfaction approach, one of many positive psychology approaches to enhancing human happiness and quality of life, in which clients are taught a theory, tenets, and skills aimed at assisting them in identifying, pursuing, and fulfilling their most cherished needs, goals, and wishes in valued areas of life. QoLT can be used with both clinical and non-clinical clients (such as teachers). He places a new emphasis on increasing clients' overall quality of life as the major goal of interventions.

3.6 Theory of Self-Determination

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a wide theory of human personality and motivation that focuses on how an individual interacts and is influenced by his or her social environment. The theory of self-determination identifies intrinsic and many types of extrinsic motivation and explains how these motives influence situational reactions in several domains, as well as social and cognitive development and personality. The core psychological demands of autonomy, competence, relatedness, well-being, and growth are central to self-determination theory (Ryan, & Deci 2018).

Self-determination theory overlaps strongly with the four variables outlined by Schallock (2019) that contribute to quality of life: social belonging/community integration, empowerment/independence, competence, and satisfaction. Autonomous (intrinsic) incentives that may be present in one's work life (e.g., self-fulfilling employment, supportive work environments), according to self-determination theory, may nurture greater well-being. Thus, finding meaning in one's vocation as a teacher may help to improve one's quality of life and may buffer against the negative impacts of work-related pressures.

3.7 Cognitive behavioural therapy

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a type of psychotherapy that alters thought patterns to alter moods and behaviours. It is predicated on the notion that bad acts or sentiments are the consequence of current incorrect beliefs or thoughts, rather than unconscious forces from the past. CBT is a combination of cognitive and behavioural treatment. Cognitive therapy is concerned with feelings and thoughts. Behavioural therapy focuses on specific activities and behaviours. Depression, anxiety, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), insomnia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), bipolar disorder, phobias, chronic pain, and panic attacks are all popular diagnoses and treatments for this sort of therapy (Diener, 2022).

Treatment usually includes learning more balanced and helpful methods to deal with stress. These new solutions should help people manage or recover from difficult mental

health disorders or undesired behaviours. CBT principles can be implemented outside of the therapist's office, offering coping techniques to assist in navigating life's obstacles. CBT trains you to recognize and alter negative patterns, which can help you reframe your thinking during times of stress or anxiety. It can also teach new coping strategies, such as meditation or journaling, to people who are dealing with a stressful work environment that leads to depression, which reduces one's quality of life.

Muraina and Kamaldeen (2022), who conducted research on psychological capital and quality of life among secondary tutors in Kwara State, postulated that high quality of life is very important in job performance because tutors are more likely to perform their jobs more efficiently when they are happy with their lives. Teachers who are content with their lives are more useful and productive to their employers. In contrast, some teachers are dissatisfied with their lives. The government will thus benefit both themselves and the teachers if they endeavour to improve the teachers' lives by motivating and encouraging them.

Shakirat and Ibrahim (2020) assessed the quality of life and risk variables for HIV/AIDS patients at Sobi Specialist Hospital in Alagbado Ilorin, Nigeria. The World Health Organization Quality of Life Questionnaire-Short Version was used to examine the patients. The study found that married HIV/AIDS patients had a higher quality of life than unmarried individuals. The physical, emotional, and social assistance that married women receive from their partners is thought to have improved their quality of life.

Adekanye (2018), who investigated information behaviour and crop farmer quality of life in Ilorin, Kwara State, concurred that farmers' quality of life will increase if they have the proper views on their information requirements, seeking, and uses. Information will put rural farmers on a path to financial security, improving their quality of life. Information is a valuable resource for personal development and survival; it aids in informing people, improving their standard of living, engaging in decision-making processes, and making educated decisions.

4. CONCLUSION

Nowadays, when our society's basic human requirements are nearly met, problems with the overall quality of life occur frequently. The primary challenge in such a case is determining what the notion is, and it is also unclear how to evaluate it in the best possible way. The integrated assessment of quality of life must cover all areas and components, including working-life quality. An individual's physical and mental health, level of independence, social relationship with the environment, and other elements all influence their quality of life. The evaluation of the quality of life is dependent on one's value system, as well as work conditions and organizational efficiency because the concept of quality of working life comprises factors such as job satisfaction, involvement in work performance, motivations, efficiency, productivity, health, safety, and welfare at work, stress, workload, and burn-out.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

1. Educational leaders should assist and support teachers in improving their overall well-being and quality of life.
2. Counsellors should increase their efforts to organize conferences for all educational stakeholders on strategies to improve secondary school teachers' good quality of life to achieve educational goals.
3. It would be beneficial for school administrators to invest in improving teachers' quality of life if they want them to develop good attitudes and be less vulnerable to the negative consequences of unpleasant job experiences.

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