

Examining the Key Determinants of Quality of Work Life Among Cambodian High School Teachers: A Multivariate Analysis Using Ilgan et al.'s Framework

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Keywords

Quality of work life;
Cambodian High school;
Teacher;
Determinants;
Framework.

ABSTRACT

The quality of teachers' work life (QWL) is a critical determinant of educational effectiveness, particularly in developing contexts where teacher retention and motivation remain pressing concerns. In Cambodia, high school teachers face challenges related to working conditions, compensation, and professional support, which may influence their overall well-being and teaching performance. This research examines the key determinants of QWL among Cambodian high school teachers using Ilgan et al.'s multidimensional framework. A quantitative survey was administered to 760 teachers, and multiple regression analysis was employed to analyze the data. The results indicate that all five dimensions administrative support and career development, a healthy work environment, fair and adequate salary and benefits, workplace opportunities, and collegial relationships and school belonging are significant predictors of QWL. Collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school ($\beta = .297$) and fair and adequate salary and benefits ($\beta = .284$) emerged as the strongest determinants. These findings suggest that improving interpersonal school culture and ensuring equitable compensation should be prioritized in policy interventions. The study offers practical recommendations for school administrators and policymakers, including investing in collaborative school climates, enhancing professional support systems, and reviewing salary structures to align with teachers' needs. These insights are particularly relevant for the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport, as well as development partners working to strengthen the teaching workforce in Cambodia.

INTRODUCTION

The quality of teachers' work life is the backbone of the education system. The quality of teachers' work life is the basis of the quality of education because when teachers have a good life, good physical and mental health, and receive appropriate support, their teaching practice will be more effective and efficient. Therefore, the quality of life of teachers is not only beneficial for the teachers themselves, but also an important factor in improving the overall quality of education (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2020). In the previous times, many researchers and scholars have identified various components for studying quality of work life, such as Walton (1973), Sirgy et al. (2001), and Ilgan et al. (2014), who showed that quality of work life is a multidimensional concept that includes work environment, organizational support, work relationships, and professional development opportunities. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), pointed

that jurisdictions such as Singapore, Finland, and Shanghai achieve superior outcomes by integrating rigorous recruitment, comprehensive preparation, and continuous professional development into national frameworks. Key success factors include: (1) Systemic Infrastructure: Embedding mentoring and career advancement into the organizational culture; (2) Collaborative Professionalism: Providing structured time for reflective practice, shared learning, and collaborative planning; and (3) Equitable Conditions including fostering school environments that enhance motivation and professional commitment.

Administrative support and career development move beyond mere supervision to encompass the relational and procedural health of an organization. According to Casio (1998) contends that QWL is largely determined by “Supportive Supervision,” where leadership acts as a facilitator providing both technical guidance and emotional support. The effectiveness of this support is often measured by information transparency, and Rusfian (2017) also notes that clear, timely communication regarding institutional shifts mitigates workplace anxiety. Moreover, Sirgy et al. (2001) highlighted the importance of procedural justice, noting that employees tend to experience higher quality of work life when organizational policies are implemented fairly and when effective channels exist for addressing complaints and concerns.

The foundation of healthy and decent work conditions is rooted in Walton’s (1973) seminal model, which asserts that the workplace must not pose physical or psychological risks to the employee. This concept aligns with Herzberg’s (1986) dual-factor theory, where “hygiene factors” such as lighting, acoustics, and spatial density serve as fundamental predictors of work life satisfaction (Akinwale & George, 2021). Beyond basic safety, Fong (2021) identifies “Environmental Control” as a prerequisite for sustainable performance. Specifically, Swamy et al. (2015) demonstrate that an employee’s autonomy over their immediate physical climate including temperature and noise is critical; a lack of such control often results in “sick building syndrome” and a marked decline in QWL. The “Opportunity for Continued Growth and Security” remains a pillar of the Walton (1973) model, focusing on the continuous expansion of employee capabilities (Zulkarnain et al., 2024). Building on this, Weng et al. (2010) identified four pivotal dimensions: career goal realization, professional skill development, promotion opportunities, and compensation. In the modern academic landscape, Timotheou et al. (2022) argue that development is no longer just technical training but a holistic transformation of institutional capacity. Zhang and Wu (2025) further posit that in the digital age, career development is a systematic necessity for maintaining professional standards and fostering broader social impact.

Modern QWL models require an integrated focus on the material and technical environment. According to Fong (2021) notes that high-quality resources, such as digital databases and library access, are essential for research-intensive positions; however, the consistent reliability of technical infrastructure is now considered a critical priority for maintaining organizational standards. Carayon (1997) warns that outdated hardware or inadequate connectivity leads to “task-technology misalignment,” a state that severely hampers productivity and erodes organizational morale.

The cornerstone of Walton’s (1973) framework is “Adequate and Fair Compensation,” which stipulates that salary must reflect social standards and provide a dignified standard of living (Zulkarnain, 2024). Adams (1963) suggests that when compensation is perceived as equitable, it functions as a baseline that allows workers to focus on productivity rather than financial stress. Conversely, De Schouwer et al. (2025) observe that if employees feel undercompensated for work

that generates significant value for others, their willingness to provide effort diminishes. Ultimately, fair wages must empower employees to sustain their own well-being and the educational requirements of their families (Carrefour Group, 2022).

In the context of high schools, understanding the factors that contribute to teachers' job satisfaction is important for improving teaching quality. This study uses the model of Ilgan et al. (2014) to analyze the influence of teachers' environmental factors on their professional well-being.

In this study, there are two main purposes: (1) to assess the perceived levels of the five dimensions of quality of work life (Work Conditions, Administrative Support, Facilities, Developmental Opportunities, and Wages) among Cambodian high school teachers; and (2) to determine the predictive power of these five dimensions in influencing the overall quality of teacher work life through a multivariate regression model. This research makes an important contribution to the development of teachers' QWL literature in developing countries while offering concrete recommendations for principals and education managers to improve the work climate, collegial relations, and administrative support. These findings are also a strategic input for the Cambodian Ministry of Education and development partners in developing policies to improve teacher welfare, such as salary reviews, provision of facilities, and ongoing training. Ultimately, improving teacher QWL has a direct impact on the quality of education and strengthening Cambodia's overall human resources, so this research not only fills the academic gap but also provides a direction for measurable and contextual improvement of the education system.

To response the purposes of the study above, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) what is the status of quality of work life among high school teachers when evaluated across the sub-dimensions of the Ilgan et al.'s (2014) framework? and (2) which dimensions of the Ilgan et al.'s framework significantly predicts the overall quality of teacher work life, and which dimension has the greatest relative influence

In this study, researcher identified five components based on the model of Ilgan et al. (2014), as shown in Figure 1 below:

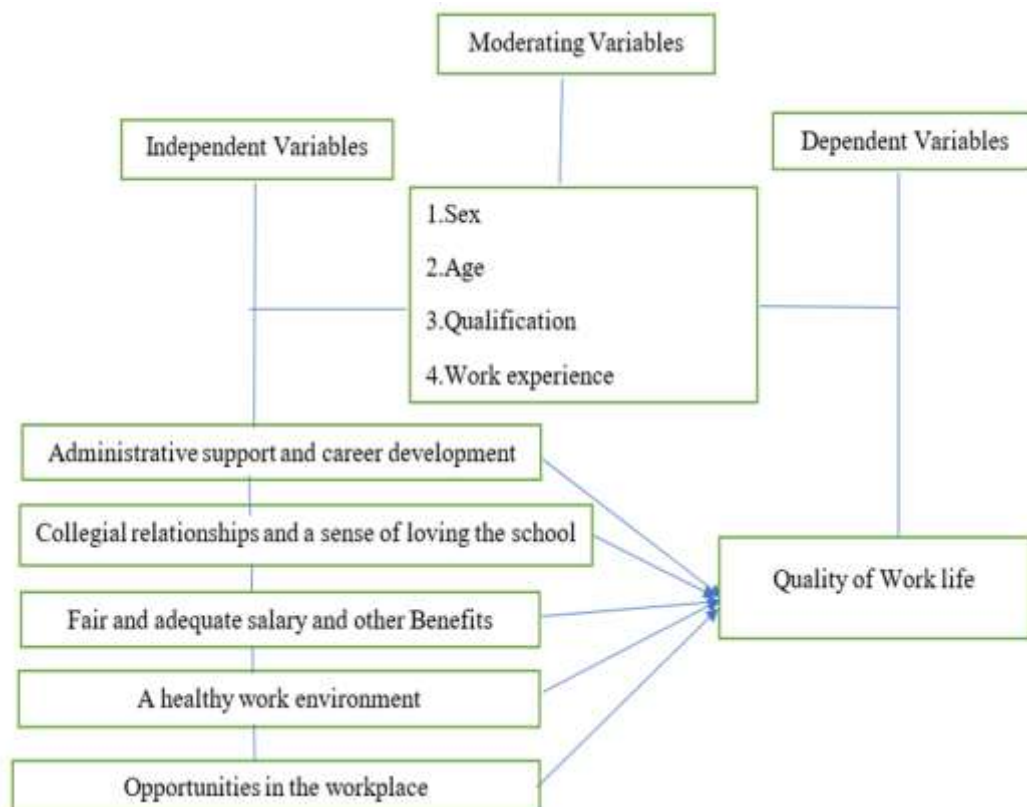


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Quality of Work Life Dimensions
Source: Adapted from Ilgan et al 's Model

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine the determinants of quality of work life (QWL) among Cambodian high school teachers. The cross-sectional approach was chosen to capture teachers' perceptions at a single point in time, allowing for the identification of associations between predictor variables and the overall QWL construct. To evaluate the predictive power of the Ilgan et al. framework (Ilgan et al., 2014) on the quality of work life of Cambodian High School teachers, a multiple regression analysis was conducted using both stepwise and bootstrap specifications to ensure maximum statistical accuracy. The research instrument consisted of a 28-item questionnaire measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Prior to the primary analysis, collinearity diagnostics were performed to validate the data; results from the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Condition Index confirmed the absence of multicollinearity issues, ensuring the integrity of the regression model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results based on Research Question 1: *What is the status of Quality of Work Life among high school teachers when evaluated across the sub-dimensions of the Ilgan et al. 's (2014) framework?*

The important results of research question 1 as table 1 following:

Table 1. The Level of Dimensions of the Quality of Work Life (N=760)

Descriptive Statistics				
Dimension	M	S.D.	Interpretation	Rank
Administrative support and career development (TQWL1)	3.53	0.55	High	1
Collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school (TQWL2)	3.09	0.77	Moderate	5
Fair and adequate salary and other Benefits (TQWL3)	3.37	0.73	Moderate	3
A healthy work environment (TQWL4)	3.44	0.59	Moderate	2
Opportunities in the workplace (TQWL5)	3.29	0.69	Moderate	4
Total	3.34	0.50		

Source: Field survey data, 2026

According to Table 1 above, the results show that the overall quality of work-life for high school teachers is at a moderate level ($M = 3.34$, $S.D. = 0.50$). For considering each individual dimension, it was found that the dimension of “Administrative support and career development” was at the first rank ($M = 3.53$, $S.D. = 0.55$), follows by the dimension of “A healthy work environment” was at the second rank ($M = 3.44$, $S.D. = 0.59$), dimension of “Fair and adequate salary and other Benefits” ($M = 3.37$, $S.D. = 0.73$), the dimension of “Opportunities in the workplace” ($M = 3.29$, $S.D. = 0.69$), and the dimension of “Collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school” ($M = 3.09$, $S.D. = 0.77$), respectively. The results above illustrate the perspective of high school teachers regarding their overall quality of work-life (comprising all 5 dimensions).

These findings suggest that although teachers perceive their working conditions positively in certain aspects, there are still areas requiring improvement to enhance their professional well-being. Among the five dimensions, administrative support and career development obtained the highest mean score, indicating that teachers highly value supportive leadership, professional guidance, and opportunities for professional advancement. Additionally, these findings are consistent with the concept proposed by Walton (1973), who identified organizational support and growth opportunities as fundamental components of quality of work life. Similarly, Sirgy et al. (2001) emphasized that employees experience higher work-life quality when their professional and developmental needs are fulfilled. In addition, the relatively high mean score for a healthy work environment suggests that teachers perceive their schools as reasonably safe, supportive, and conducive to teaching and learning. Nevertheless, collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school received the lowest mean score among all dimensions. This may imply limitations in interpersonal collaboration, teamwork, or emotional attachment within the school community. Such findings indicate that social and relational aspects of the workplace remain a challenge for some teachers and may negatively influence their morale and long-term commitment to the profession.

Research Results based on Research Question 2: *Which dimensions of the Ilgan et al. Framework significantly predict the overall quality of teacher work life, and which dimension has the greatest relative influence?*

The important results of research question 2 as table 2 following:

Table2. The Multivariate Analysis of Dimensions of the Quality of Work Life (N=760)

Predictors	Unstandardized B	Standardized Beta(β)	t-value	Sig,	Effect Level
Collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school (TQWL2)	.200	.297	377754401.1	.000	Strong1
Fair and adequate salary and other Benefits (TQWL3)	.200	.284	368968718.5	.000	Strong2
Opportunities in the workplace (TQWL5)	.200	.268	323724505.8	.000	Strong3
Administrative support and career development (TQWL1)	.200	.250	296412477.2	.000	Strong4
A healthy work environment (TQWL4)	.200	.245	285402914.6	.000	Strong5

Note: $R^2 = 1.000$, $F=40.789$, $p<.001$

Source: Multiple regression analysis results from field survey data, 2026

According to Table 2 above, the results show that Multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the predictive power of the Ilgan et al. framework dimensions. The results indicate that all five dimensions are significant predictors ($p < .001$). Among these, Collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school emerged as the most influential factor ($\beta = .297$), indicating it has the strongest relative impact on the overall Quality of Teacher Work Life compared to the other dimensions in the model. Notably, collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school emerged as the strongest predictor of overall quality of work life. Although this dimension received the lowest descriptive mean score, its strong predictive power indicates that interpersonal relationships and emotional belongingness are critical factors influencing teachers' professional well-being. This finding supports the study by Ilgan et al. (2014), who reported that positive social relationships and supportive school culture significantly contribute to teachers' psychological well-being and work satisfaction. Furthermore, the result aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which emphasizes that belongingness and social connection are essential human needs that influence motivation and satisfaction (Maslow,1943). Therefore, school administrators should prioritize not only administrative and professional support but also the development of positive collegial relationships, collaborative school culture, and teachers' emotional attachment to their schools in order to improve the overall quality of teachers' work life.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the overall quality of work life among high school teachers was at a moderate level, indicating that teachers experienced a satisfactory but improvable working environment. Among the five dimensions, administrative support and career development received the highest level of agreement, suggesting that supportive leadership and opportunities for professional growth are important contributors to teachers' perceptions of work-life quality.

This finding is consistent with the framework of Walton, who emphasized that organizational support and opportunities for personal development are essential elements of quality of work life. This work's worth goes beyond its scholarly achievements. The study's conclusions offer educational institutions a useful road map for enhancing staff engagement and retention through evidence-based tactics. These results operate as a catalyst for change, compelling policymakers to implement procedures and regulations that take into account both the structural and emotional aspects of job satisfaction. Additionally, the paper establishes the framework for further investigations into these dynamics, especially using mixed-methods and longitudinal approaches. Furthermore, the regression analysis demonstrated that all five dimensions significantly predicted Cambodian high school teachers' quality of work life, with collegial relationships and a sense of loving the school emerging as the strongest predictor. This indicates that positive interpersonal relationships, collaboration among colleagues, and emotional attachment to the school play a critical role in enhancing teachers' professional well-being and job satisfaction. The finding supports the work of Ilgan et al. (2014, 2015), who highlighted the importance of supportive school relationships in improving teachers' psychological well-being and work satisfaction. In line with Maslow's theory (1943) of human motivation, the need for belongingness and social connection appears to be a fundamental factor influencing teachers' perceptions of their work life. Therefore, educational administrators and policymakers should focus on strengthening supportive leadership, promoting healthy workplace environments, and fostering positive collegial relationships to improve the overall quality of teachers' work life and enhance educational effectiveness. Future studies should concentrate on examining the long-term impacts of QWL on educational teachers' job satisfaction. Longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into how these relationships changed over time, particularly in response to changes in workplace conditions, organizational culture, or external factors like economic fluctuations crises, even though this study used a cross-sectional design to evaluate the relationships between these variables. In order to further understand the dynamic nature of these interactions, future research could also look at whether the effect on QWL fluctuates depending on professional tenure, age, or job within the educational industry.

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