

A QUALITY OF WORK LIFE FOR LECTUERES AT THE NATIONAL SPORTS UNIVERSITY. (CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK)

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 5 March 2026

Revised: 13 March 2026

Published: 27 March 2026

ABSTRACT

University lecturers are regarded as a fundamental form of human capital that plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, research, and academic services. This study aims to examine the conceptual framework of Quality of Work Life (QWL) among lecturers at the National Sports University, a specialized higher education institution with a mission to develop human capital through sports and with an educational management context that differs from that of general higher education institutions. The findings of this study are expected to systematically explain the conceptual framework of lecturers' quality of work life within the context of the National Sports University and to accurately reflect the distinctive characteristics of lecturers' professional quality. The knowledge generated from this research can be utilized as a guideline for policy formulation, human capital development planning, the design of management systems, and the enhancement of higher education quality in alignment with the university's strategic objectives.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life, University Lecturers, National Sports University

CITATION INFORMATION: Panjatawee, S., Netpradit, N., & Awirothananon, T. (2026). A Quality of Work Life for Lecturers at the National Sports University. (Conceptual Framework). *Procedia of Multidisciplinary Research*, 4(3), 43.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the knowledge society and the innovation-driven economy, human capital has been widely recognized as a critical resource for enhancing national competitiveness and achieving sustainable development. This is particularly evident in the higher education sector, which plays a pivotal role in generating knowledge, developing human resources, and fostering innovation to respond to ongoing economic, social, and technological transformations (Becker, 1993; OECD, 2021). Within this context, university lecturers are regarded as strategic human capital whose contributions directly influence the quality of students, academic outputs, and the reputation of higher education institutions. However, rapid changes in the external environment—such as advancements in digital technologies, increasing expectations from stakeholders, and intensified competition among higher education institutions—have placed greater demands on lecturers, requiring them to manage increasingly diverse and complex responsibilities. These responsibilities encompass teaching and learning, research, academic services, and internal administrative duties, all of which significantly influence lecturers' Quality of Work Life (QWL) across multiple dimensions (Dessler, 2020; Robbins & Judge, 2022). From both theoretical and empirical perspectives, previous studies indicate that lecturers' quality of work life does not arise from a single factor alone; rather, it results from causal relationships among personal factors, managerial factors, and workplace environmental factors (Campbell et al., 1993). In particular, leadership plays a crucial role in determining organizational direction, motivating personnel, and facilitating the development of employees' potential (Bass & Riggio, 2021). Furthermore, numerous studies have demonstrated that these factors are interrelated as latent variables, exerting both direct and indirect effects on lecturers' quality of work life. Traditional analytical approaches may not adequately capture the complexity of these relationships. Therefore, the application of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is considered an appropriate method for examining the goodness-of-fit of causal models and for systematically testing the relationships among variables at a comprehensive level (Kline, 2016; Hair et al., 2022). For the National Sports University, a specialized higher education institution with the mission of producing and developing human resources in sports and health at the national level, lecturers operate within a context that differs from that of general universities. Their responsibilities include practice-oriented teaching in sports disciplines, conducting sports-related research, and supporting the national sports system. Nevertheless, empirical research investigating the conceptual framework of lecturers' quality of work life within this specific context remains limited, and existing studies often lack the integration of key variables within a comprehensive structural model. Therefore, this study aims to propose a conceptual framework for examining the quality of work life of lecturers at the National Sports University by integrating relevant theories and concepts into a research framework. The findings of this study are expected to fill existing academic gaps, provide a systematic explanation of the relationships among factors influencing lecturers' quality of work life, and serve as an evidence-based foundation for policy formulation in human resource management and the sustainable enhancement of higher education quality in the field of sports.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality of Work Life

Quality of Work Life (QWL) has been widely recognized as an important concept in the fields of management and organizational behavior because it reflects employees' overall well-being, job satisfaction, and the balance between work and personal life. QWL represents a multidimensional construct that integrates economic, psychological, and social aspects of the work environment. Bruce and Blackburn (1992) suggested that QWL encompasses several key elements, including fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunities for competence development, career advancement and job security, social integration in the workplace, equality

in organizational practices, leisure opportunities, and social recognition. These elements collectively reflect the extent to which organizations provide supportive environments that promote employees' well-being and professional growth. Similarly, Walton (1974) conceptualized QWL as a framework consisting of eight major dimensions: adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, opportunities to develop human capacities, future growth and security, social integration, constitutionalism in the organization, work–life balance, and social relevance of work. This framework highlights that employees' well-being is closely related to both organizational practices and broader societal values. Furthermore, Herzberg (1966) explained the concept through the two-factor theory, which distinguishes between motivator factors that enhance job satisfaction and hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction. These factors play a significant role in shaping employees' motivation, attitudes, and overall work experiences. Later studies expanded the concept of quality of life beyond the workplace. Flanagan (1978) and Zhan (1992) proposed that quality of life includes broader dimensions such as happiness, social relationships, health, self-concept, and socioeconomic status. These perspectives indicate that QWL should be understood as part of a holistic life experience rather than a purely organizational phenomenon.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to a leadership approach in which leaders inspire and motivate followers to transcend their personal interests in order to achieve collective organizational goals. The concept was systematically developed by Bass and Avolio (1990), who identified four core components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence refers to leaders' ability to serve as ethical role models who demonstrate integrity, credibility, and strong values, thereby gaining the trust and respect of their followers (Northouse, 2018). Through such behaviors, leaders can exert a positive influence on employees' attitudes and behaviors. Inspirational motivation involves leaders' capacity to articulate a compelling vision and communicate challenging goals that encourage enthusiasm, commitment, and a sense of shared purpose among followers (Shamir et al., 1993). Intellectual stimulation refers to leaders' efforts to encourage creativity and critical thinking by challenging existing assumptions and promoting innovative approaches to problem-solving (Yukl, 2013). This leadership behavior supports continuous learning and improvement within organizations. Individualized consideration emphasizes leaders' attention to followers' individual needs and differences. Leaders act as mentors or coaches who support employees' professional development and personal growth, thereby enhancing organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that transformational leadership has a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee retention (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Additionally, it contributes to improved employee performance and organizational effectiveness while reducing turnover intentions (Walumbwa et al., 2008). These findings suggest that transformational leadership plays a crucial strategic role in promoting sustainable organizational development.

Human Capital Management

Human Capital Management (HCM) has become a fundamental approach to organizational management because human capital is considered a strategic resource that significantly influences organizational competitiveness and sustainability. Effective management of human capital enables organizations to enhance employees' competencies and ultimately improve organizational performance. Human capital generally consists of employees' knowledge, abilities, and skills, which represent the core elements of workforce capability. The development of these competencies enables employees to perform their tasks effectively and respond to dynamic organizational environments. Prawatcharoenwit et al. (2020) found that human capital

has a significant positive influence on organizational innovation capability. Employees with higher levels of knowledge and competence contribute to enhanced organizational competitiveness and improved organizational performance. Similarly, Sriboon and Wattanasin (2022) examined structural relationships among factors affecting job performance and found that employees' knowledge and abilities serve as important indicators of human capital that effectively explain variations in job performance. Furthermore, Santos-Rodrigues et al. (2010) described human capital as a combination of employee competencies and commitment. Competencies include knowledge, skills, and abilities, whereas commitment reflects employees' willingness to dedicate their efforts toward organizational success. This perspective highlights that human capital involves not only intellectual resources but also behavioral and attitudinal attributes that contribute to value creation within organizations. Theoretical perspectives proposed by Huselid (1995) and Boxall (1996) further emphasize that the strategic development of human capital through human resource management practices strengthens employee competencies and enhances organizational performance.

Technology in Organizational Context

Technological advancement has become a key driver of organizational transformation in the twenty-first century. Modern technology extends beyond artificial intelligence (AI) and includes communication systems, digital networks, and data management infrastructures that collectively enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Cascio (2010) suggested that technological developments have transformed organizational structures from traditional hierarchical systems into more flexible, network-based structures that emphasize collaboration and participation in decision-making processes. Modern communication technologies have also created data-rich work environments that support more informed decision-making and innovation. However, such environments may also increase work-related stress due to information overload and constant connectivity (McDermott & Archibald, 2010). Organizations that effectively utilize digital platforms and social media for problem-solving and innovation are better able to integrate formal and informal organizational structures (Shah & Cappella, 2012). Furthermore, internet technology has become a critical driver of economic development and labor market transformation, requiring organizations to invest significantly in technological infrastructure and digital capabilities (Ignatius, 2012). Research in the Thai context also indicates that technological infrastructure support and continuous development of employees' technological competencies are important factors that enhance work efficiency and organizational performance (Ponpai, 2014; Intasaro, 2015; Chanthararo et al., 2015).

Conceptual Framework Development

Based on the literature reviewed, Quality of Work Life (QWL) has been widely recognized as a multidimensional construct influenced by various organizational and individual factors. Previous studies suggest that leadership style, human capital development, and technological support are among the key determinants that shape employees' work experiences and overall well-being within organizations. Transformational leadership has been identified as a critical leadership style that enhances employees' motivation, commitment, and work satisfaction. Leaders who demonstrate transformational behaviors are able to create supportive organizational environments that encourage professional development and psychological well-being among employees (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In higher education institutions, transformational leadership plays an important role in fostering academic excellence, promoting collaboration, and supporting faculty members in fulfilling their diverse roles in teaching, research, and academic services. Human capital also represents an essential factor influencing employees' work performance and organizational outcomes. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees contribute significantly to organizational effectiveness and innovation capability (Santos-Rodrigues et al., 2010). In the context of higher education, lecturers with strong human capital are better equipped to perform

academic duties, adapt to institutional changes, and maintain high levels of professional competence, which may positively influence their quality of work life. In addition, technological advancement has increasingly influenced work environments in modern organizations. Digital technologies, communication platforms, and information systems facilitate knowledge sharing, improve work efficiency, and support flexible work arrangements (Cascio, 2010). In higher education institutions, the integration of technology into teaching, research, and administrative processes has become essential for improving productivity and academic performance. Therefore, this study proposes a conceptual framework that integrates transformational leadership, human capital, and technology as key determinants influencing lecturers' quality of work life. These factors are conceptualized as latent variables that may exert both direct and indirect effects on QWL. The proposed framework is examined using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in order to investigate the causal relationships among these constructs in a comprehensive manner.

CONCLUSION

In the context of a knowledge-based society and an innovation-driven economy, human capital has become a crucial factor in enhancing organizational performance and national competitiveness. Higher education institutions play a vital role in developing human resources, generating knowledge, and fostering innovation to respond to the dynamic changes in economic, social, and technological environments. Within this context, university lecturers represent a strategic form of human capital whose contributions directly influence teaching quality, research productivity, and the overall reputation of higher education institutions. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence lecturers' quality of work life has become an important issue in educational management and human resource development. This study aimed to develop a conceptual framework for examining the quality of work life of lecturers at the National Sports University by integrating key theoretical perspectives related to quality of work life, transformational leadership, human capital, and technology. The literature review highlighted that quality of work life is a multidimensional construct that encompasses physical, psychological, and social aspects of employees' work experiences. Previous studies have emphasized that employees' well-being is influenced not only by working conditions but also by leadership practices, professional competence, and organizational support systems. The review of transformational leadership theory suggests that leaders who demonstrate inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration can create supportive and motivating work environments that enhance employees' commitment, job satisfaction, and professional development. In higher education institutions, transformational leadership is particularly important because lecturers often perform multiple roles, including teaching, research, academic services, and administrative responsibilities. Effective leadership can therefore play a critical role in fostering a positive work environment that supports lecturers' professional growth and well-being. Human capital was also identified as an essential factor influencing employees' work experiences and organizational outcomes. Lecturers' knowledge, abilities, and skills represent key resources that contribute to academic performance and institutional competitiveness. Organizations that invest in developing human capital can enhance employees' capabilities, innovation potential, and job satisfaction. In the context of higher education, strengthening lecturers' human capital can improve teaching quality, research productivity, and academic excellence, which ultimately contribute to the sustainable development of educational institutions. In addition, technological advancement has become a significant driver of organizational transformation in the twenty-first century. The integration of digital technologies into teaching, research, and administrative processes has created new opportunities for improving efficiency, collaboration, and knowledge sharing within higher education institutions. However, technological changes may also introduce new challenges, such

as increased workload and information overload. Therefore, effective technological infrastructure and support systems are essential for enabling lecturers to adapt to changing work environments and maintain a balanced quality of work life. Based on these theoretical perspectives, this study proposed a conceptual framework in which transformational leadership, human capital, and technology are considered key factors influencing lecturers' quality of work life. The proposed framework integrates these variables within a structural model to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among leadership, human resource development, technological support, and employees' well-being in higher education institutions. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing a systematic explanation of the factors affecting lecturers' quality of work life, particularly in the context of the National Sports University, which has a unique mission in developing sports and health professionals. Furthermore, the results of this study may provide valuable implications for policy development and organizational management in higher education institutions. University administrators can utilize the findings as a guideline for designing effective leadership practices, strengthening human capital development programs, and improving technological infrastructure to enhance lecturers' work environments. Ultimately, improving lecturers' quality of work life can contribute to better academic performance, stronger institutional reputation, and the sustainable development of higher education in the field of sports.

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Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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