

## Investigating the Antecedents of Work Life Quality among Secondary School Teachers in Sirjan City

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The current research endeavor sought to elucidate the precursors of work life quality among secondary school teachers in Sirjan City.

**Methods:** The methodological approach employed in this investigation was descriptive correlational in nature. The target population for this study comprised all secondary school educators in Sirjan City in the year 2024, from which the statistical sample was derived utilizing a non-probability sampling technique. The instruments utilized for data collection included the Teachers' Work Life Quality Questionnaire, the Emotional Commitment Questionnaire, and the Job Security Questionnaire. To assess the research hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was conducted. Furthermore, the statistical software utilized for this analysis was SPSS version 26.

**Results:** The findings from the statistical analysis indicated that emotional commitment and job security serve as significant predictors ( $P < 0.05$ ) of the quality of work life.

**Conclusions:** Consequently, it can be inferred that secondary school teachers are likely to attain a favorable quality of work life when they possess elevated levels of job security and emotional commitment to their professional roles.

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## Introduction

The teaching profession is one of the most critical and sensitive occupations in society, significantly influencing its present and future conditions. Numerous studies in various countries have addressed how to improve the quality of life for teachers ([Abbas et al., 2021](#); [Alwi & Mumtahana, 2023](#); [Gabriela et al., 2022](#)). The mission that teachers hold in guiding and shaping the future of society is undeniable. However, every year, the number of teachers seeking to transition to other professions or retire early increases ([Esen & Ökdemir, 2021](#)).

Quality of work life (QWL) is a construct influenced by a wide range of professional and personal factors among teachers ([Habibzade et al., 2021](#); [Riyono et al., 2022](#)). For educational theorists and organizational psychologists, teachers' QWL is a crucial topic. Dissatisfaction with QWL is a fundamental issue affecting teachers regardless of their position or rank ([Dibaei Saber & Mirarab Razi, 2019](#)). One of the pitfalls of management is neglecting employees' QWL, which reduces organizational effectiveness and efficiency. QWL is one of the most interesting motivational strategies and a key factor in job enrichment, rooted in the attitudes of employees and managers toward motivation. The necessity of paying attention to QWL and its improvement is logical, as 65% of a person's productive life is spent in the workplace ([Kotobi et al., 2021](#)). Based on empirical and research evidence, this study examines the role of affective commitment and job security in predicting teachers' QWL.

According to Allen and Meyer's definition, affective commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment to an organization, which increases when employees' expectations and needs are met ([Allen & Meyer, 1990](#)). Affective commitment reflects employees' emotional connection, identification, and involvement with the organization. Employees with strong emotional ties to their organization align themselves with its goals and desire to remain in it. Such employees remain committed to the organization voluntarily ([Yue et al., 2022](#)). Another issue occupying employees' minds and consuming part of their psychological and mental energy—while also influencing productivity and quality—is job security ([Jamaati Ardakani, 2017](#)). Thus, teachers with high affective commitment are likely to experience a better QWL.

Another antecedent examined in this study is job security, which has a subjective and psychological dimension, depending partly on an individual's perception of the work environment ([Aman-Ullah et al., 2022](#)). Job security is the feeling of relative freedom from danger or a state in

which personal needs and desires are fulfilled. It entails the ability to retain what one has and assurance of future livelihood. In other words, job security is the right to job continuity, typically until retirement, where employees feel confident, they will not lose their jobs ([Balverdi et al., 2015](#)). Job insecurity is a negative variable in the workplace, and its perception leads to occupational stress ([Sohrabi et al., 2021](#)). The feeling of job insecurity disrupts individuals' mental and emotional state and can even drive them to suicide, as a percentage of suicide statistics involve unemployed men ([Naderi et al., 2023](#)).

Given the importance of improving QWL among teachers—who play a vital role in shaping a better future—this study seeks to answer whether affective commitment and job security can predict the QWL of secondary school teachers in Sirjan.

## Material and Methods

This study is descriptive-correlational in terms of data collection. Based on its purpose, it is applied research, and in terms of execution, it falls under field studies. The statistical population included all secondary school teachers (first and second levels) in Sirjan during the 2023-2024 academic year. Based on Klein's (2011) suggested model, a minimum sample size of 200 was determined. Participants were selected through voluntary sampling from among secondary school teachers in Sirjan, making the sampling method convenience-based.

To measure QWL, the Quality of School Work Life (QSWL) ([Ilgan et al., 2014](#)) was used. This 24-item tool assesses five components: work opportunities, fair pay, healthy work environment, colleague relationships, and organizational support/development. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (e.g., *"I do not have enough opportunity to keep up with changes and stay updated in my profession."*). Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 11 were reverse-scored. [Najafi et al. \(2018\)](#) confirmed its validity (CVI = 0.87) and reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.97$ , test-retest  $r = 0.65$ – $0.85$ ). In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was 0.71.

Affective commitment was measured using the Edigözel et al. (2020) questionnaire, containing four Likert-scale items (e.g., *"I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization."*). Vazini Afshar (2021) reported acceptable content, face, and criterion validity, with Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.70$ . In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was 0.76.

Job security was assessed via the Nisi Job Security Questionnaire (JSQ) (2000), a 30-item tool measuring nine dimensions (job focus, low job mobility, suitable job choice, job satisfaction, economic satisfaction, emotional work environment, workplace calmness, organizational dependence, and organizational defense). Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale, with items 5 and 27 reverse-scored. Higher scores indicate greater job security. Ghananian et al. (2018) reported Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.86$ , indicating good reliability. In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was 0.77.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, SD), Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression in SPSS 26.

## Results

Of the total of 200 teachers who participated in the study, 115 were male and 85 were female. The average age of male participants was 36.53 and the average age of female participants was 34.78. Table 1 describes the descriptive indicators related to the variables included in the study.

**Table 1.** Descriptive indicators of research variables

Variable	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Quality of work life	44	103	73.81	5.34	1.11	0.81
Emotional commitment	7	15	14.89	4.11	0.41	-0.44
Job security	36	118	90.22	9.54	0.53	0.56

In the present study, the variables of emotional commitment and job security are considered as predictor variables and the variable of quality of work life is considered as criterion variable. In order to use the regression analysis test, it is necessary to examine and confirm its underlying assumptions, which are discussed below.

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to show the normality of the data. The value of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the variables of emotional commitment ( $w=0.903$ ), job security ( $w=0.909$ ), and for the variable of quality of work life ( $w=0.914$ ) was not at the significant level ( $p>.05$ ). Accordingly, the hypothesis of normality of the data was confirmed for all variables. This issue can also be confirmed in the descriptive statistics section and in the topic of skewness and kurtosis of scores because the values of skewness (skewness) and kurtosis of all variables are in the range of 2 to -2. Therefore, the use of parametric tests is not prohibited in the analysis of research hypotheses.

Pearson's moment correlation matrix was used to show the significance of the relationship between all research variables. The results of this test showed that there is a direct relationship between all three research variables.

The present study was conducted over a limited period of time and its data were collected from a statistical sample over a certain period of time. Since the possibility of the time factor being involved is weak for cross-sectional data, the assumption of independence is valid and time factors cannot have significant effects on increasing or decreasing relationships and predictions. In addition, the value of the Durbin-Watson statistic was obtained as 1.916, which was far from the assumed points of 0 and 4, and accordingly, the assumption of independence of the residuals was confirmed. Accordingly, it is permissible to conduct regression analysis.

To examine the assumption of multiple non-collinearities, the variance inflation index was used. The value of this statistic for the emotional commitment variable is 1.804 and for the job security variable is 1.074. Given their large distance with a numerical value of 5, the assumption of multiple non-collinearities for the predictor variables is valid and there is no need to remove any of the variables from the regression model.

Considering the confirmation of the existing assumptions, multiple regression analysis (which indicates the existence of several predictor variables and one criterion variable) was performed. In this analysis, the predictor variables were entered into the analysis simultaneously. This method seemed appropriate because the researcher was looking to examine a general model of predictor variables and the interactive and simultaneous examination of the variables was considered. Table 2 reports the standard and non-standard regression weights, standard error, T-statistic and the probability of type I error related to the predictor variables.

**Table 2.** Results of regression analysis for predicting quality of work life

Predictors	B	B	SE	T	P
Emotional commitment	0.81	0.76	0.06	13.50	0.001
Job security	0.79	0.75	0.07	11.28	0.001

Table 3 shows the results of the analysis of variance related to the regression model.

**Table 3.** Results of the analysis of variance related to the regression model

Sources	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regression	16746.04	2	8373.02	13.54	0.001
Residual	121765.50	197	618.09		
Total	27899.77	199			

The  $R^2$  coefficient of this model was 0.60. Based on the findings, it was determined that the regression model used in this study is at a desirable level. The value of  $R^2$  indicates that 60 percent of the changes in the quality of work life variable (criterion variable) are explained by the variables of emotional commitment and job security (predictor variables). Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed.

## Discussion

The findings of the present study indicate that emotional commitment and job security are key antecedents influencing teachers' quality of work life (QWL). These findings align with previous research conducted by [Jofreh et al. \(2013\)](#), [Alibakhshi et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Naderlou and Yaghmaei \(2014\)](#). Historically, scholarly focus was primarily directed toward non-work life factors; however, in contemporary contexts, QWL is recognized as a comprehensive strategy aimed at increasing employee satisfaction, facilitating adaptability to organizational changes, and enhancing employee retention. Dissatisfaction with QWL presents a significant organizational concern, impacting staff across all levels and roles ([Kermansaravi et al., 2014](#)).

Particularly in critical sectors like education, improving QWL is essential for realizing institutional goals and fostering broader societal advancement. Reduced dissatisfaction and disengagement among educators can lead to enhanced creativity, motivation, and commitment, contributing to the overall performance and effectiveness of educational systems. Given that the responsibility for shaping the future generation rests with educational institutions, prioritizing the well-being, motivation, and satisfaction of teachers is imperative. When teachers' needs are met in the workplace, their ability to engage and educate students effectively increases, ultimately contributing to national development ([Kotobi et al., 2021](#)).

Emotional commitment, as a psychological bond to the organization, plays a vital role in enhancing QWL. When educators perceive that their compensation, professional development opportunities, and working conditions meet acceptable standards—and when they sense fairness in both intra- and inter-organizational comparisons—they are more likely to develop loyalty and remain within the organization ([Mahanta & Goswami, 2020](#)). Further, research suggests that organizations that invest in developing both individual and organizational capacities are more likely to cultivate a highly committed workforce. Employees who feel that organizational membership supports their personal values and goals are more inclined to display commitment, reducing tendencies toward absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover ([Hatam et al., 2015](#)).

Therefore, nurturing a sense of professional attachment and commitment is particularly crucial for teachers, who must engage with young learners despite various occupational challenges. A strong emotional commitment can facilitate favorable working conditions, ultimately enhancing the quality of their professional lives.

Another key conclusion drawn from this study is the centrality of QWL in enhancing motivation and job satisfaction. Various dimensions of job satisfaction are intricately linked to QWL, and improvements in QWL can significantly bolster employee morale. The overarching aim of QWL initiatives is to foster employee contentment while enabling organizations to effectively recruit and retain skilled personnel. In essence, QWL comprises a series of interventions designed to enhance working conditions, fulfill employee needs, and ultimately improve organizational performance and long-term sustainability ([Jamaati Ardakani, 2017](#)).

Today, elevating QWL among educators—across all educational tiers—is a top priority for educational authorities. When teachers perceive improvements in their working conditions, their energy, enthusiasm, and engagement levels tend to rise. This creates a vibrant and collaborative workplace culture, often leading to higher-than-expected productivity, and subsequently, improved QWL.

As a result, many organizations grapple with challenges such as increased turnover intentions, higher recruitment costs, diminished organizational commitment, and reduced organizational citizenship behaviors—all contributing to lower productivity. Job insecurity, therefore, imposes psychological strain, diminishing overall life satisfaction and quality. Conversely, genuine job security can fulfill both material and psychological needs, promoting higher satisfaction and well-

being. This issue is particularly pertinent for educators, many of whom face precarious employment conditions, such as part-time contracts or hourly wages. Lack of job stability results in heightened stress, prevents long-term career planning, and diminishes hope for professional progression—factors that directly influence teaching quality and classroom dynamics.

#### **Data availability statement**

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

#### **Ethics statement**

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the ethics committee of Islamic Azad University. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

#### **Author contributions**

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection, and analysis. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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#### **Conflict 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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