

REVIEW ARTICLE

Quality of Work-Life among Lecturers during Online Learning in COVID-19 Pandemic Period: A Scoping Review

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the quality of work-life among lecturers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The process involved in reviewing relevant literature from the PubMed and Google Scholar databases were based on the criteria that they are written in English, published in 2020, and peer-reviewed. This was achieved using Boolean search with “lecturer or academic or nurse lecturer AND e-learning or online learning or web-based learning or remote learning or distance learning related with the quality of work-life”. The electronic searches identified 53 citations and 5 retained citations. The results showed online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic caused a decline in the quality of work-life among lecturers and the causative factors were found to include poor psychological well-being, stress on IT usage, and reduced work-life balance.

Keywords: COVID-19, Distance, Education, Lecturers, Work-life balance

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INTRODUCTION

Social restrictions were imposed globally to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Such arrangements are necessary considering the contaminable nature of the disease which has the ability to cause mild to severe symptoms (1). This pandemic has affected educational institutions as is evident from the change from face-to-face learning to online learning methods (2). The intention was to reduce the spread of the virus. But the adoption of this online method has the potential to create several obstacles associated with a decrease in learning quality for both educators and students. Oducado and Estoque (3) reported that there was an increase in stress for students due to online learning methods which also affect their academic performance. The work-life balance of the lecturers was also observed to be affected as indicated by stress which indirectly reduced the quality of learning for the students.

Several studies have indicated the influence of online learning adaptations on work-life balance (WLB). A case study of Peking University showed that the adoption of online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic caused several challenges for the lecturers based on the lack of experience in online learning management as well as insufficient preparation and support from the IT team (4). Several cases in Indonesia where

distance learning has been implemented, in 98% of the universities also showed a similar trend (5-6). The “Work from Home (WFH)” policy implemented by the government also affected the teaching staff of higher educational institutions and this further influences their job satisfaction and their involvement in their work and families. This also has the potential to reduce their quality of work-life (QWL).

QWL is defined as the situation where individuals feel satisfied with their personal and work needs through their involvement in their working environment (7). Improved quality of worklife has the ability to ensure a balance between professional, personal, and social life and this further enhances job satisfaction and work commitment. It is, therefore, necessary to assess the quality of work-life of educators in adapting online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study is expected to serve as the foundation for further research to improve the QWL of lecturers in higher institutions of learning.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Review method adopted in this research was done using keywords adapted to the MeSH terms such as “faculty member” OR “lecturer” OR “Staff” AND “online learning” OR “e-learning” AND “quality of work-life” OR “QWL” OR “work-life balance”. The articles used were qualitative and quantitative research with full text, peer-reviewed, and from the PubMed and Google Scholar databases. They are also expected to be relevant to the 2020-2021 PEO (Population, Exposure, and Outcome) framework as indicated in Table I. The

articles were extracted manually and analyzed using a descriptive approach.

Table I: PEO framework related to QWL among college lecturers while implementing online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

PEO Framework	Inclusion	Exclusion
Population	The population of lecturers in university	The population of educators at elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and non-formal education or outside educators in tertiary institutions
Exposure	Studies that review online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic	Studies that review face-to-face learning and review online learning outside of the COVID-19 pandemic
Outcome	Studies that review the quality of work-life	Studies that do not review the quality of work-life

RESULTS

The search results showed 53 articles based on the keywords and 5 were retained, 3 articles were also observed to be related to QWL descriptions, and 5 on factors affecting QWL during the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 1). The studies were found to be conducted using literature review, qualitative descriptive analysis, and case studies and the participants were lecturers. They were found to be conducted mostly in Jamaica, United States, and India with the publication year ranging between 2020 and 2021. The analysis of these articles showed that the online learning that was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic reduced the QWL among educators at higher levels of education (6–8). The details of the search results are, however, presented in Table II.

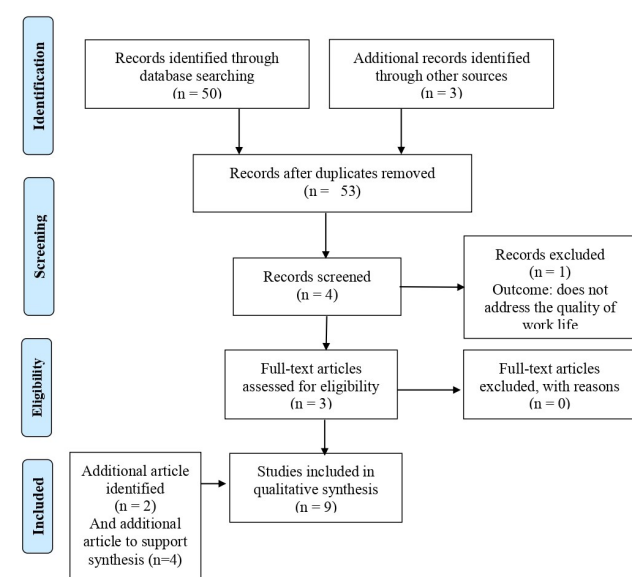


Figure 1: The PRISMA Flow Diagram

Table II: Results of literature review

Author, Year	Location	Study design	Finding
Overview of Quality of Work-Life			
Sahu, 2020 (9)	Jamaika	Literature review	Lecturers are unsure of the ongoing assignments, projects, and assessments being carried out
Anwar, 2020 (10)	United state	Descriptive	The quality of work life is poor, as evidenced by the low academic productivity of lecturers, especially women
Thomas <i>et al.</i> , 2020 (8)	India	Descriptive	The quality of lecturers' work life has decreased due to the decline in their welfare status due to stress during work from home
Factors affecting Quality of Work-Life			
Bao <i>et al.</i> , 2020 (4)	China	Case study	Mastery of technology
Thomas <i>et al.</i> , 2020 (8)	India	Descriptive	Psychology status
Sahrah, 2020 (11)	Indonesia	Literature review	Work life balance

DISCUSSION

To the best of knowledge of the author, this study is the first to review the QWL of lecturers due to the online learning adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The main findings showed that (i) online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak reduced the quality of work-life of lecturers, (ii) the causative factors include poor psychological well-being, frustration on the IT use, and reduced work-life balance, and (iii) a cyclical approach to disaster emergencies needs to be implemented through preparation, response, coping, and restoration.

The quality of work-life (QWL) (Figure 2) of lecturers was observed to be poor during the COVID-19 pandemic due to valiant learning adaptations (8–10). QWL is defined as the environmental conditions required to support satisfaction (10). It has, however, been reported that individuals feel satisfied with their personal and work needs through the interactions in appropriate working environment (7). Moreover, Sahu *et al.* (10) showed that lecturers are not sure of what they are doing during the learning process. The distrust in the work due to reduced quality of worklife was also reported to have caused a reduction in productivity such as publications with the women gender found to be most affected (9). Another study showed that the poor QWL was caused by the stress associated with studying from home (8), psychological factors, and unpreparedness towards the use of technology.

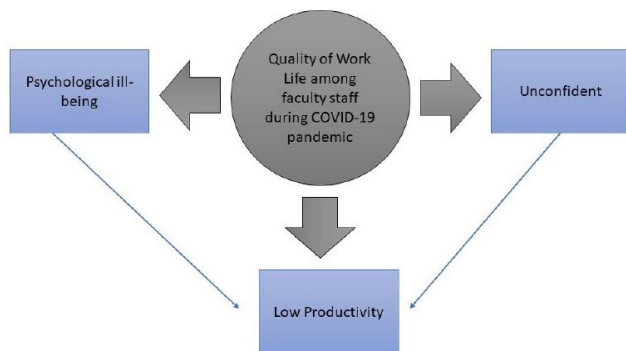


Figure 2: The Theme of Quality of Work-life among lecturers during COVID-19 pandemic

The poor QWL during the pandemic was also found to be influenced by several other factors such as the challenges faced by the lecturers in managing learning activities through IT (4). The transition from conventional to online learning methods also created problems for the faculty based on the ability to handle existing technology and effectively facilitate online teaching (8). Moreover, Sahrah (11) discovered a link between harmonizing satisfaction and performing responsibilities at work and home for the lecturers through the concept of work-life balance (WLB). This WLB was observed to be significantly lower during the pandemic. This indicates the absence of role conflict between job demands and family life before the adoption of the online learning method. Therefore, working from home (WFH) during the period requires high flexibility (11), and the stresses experienced with this condition were observed to have led to an inadequate psychological status for the lecturers (10). This further worsens the QWL for the lecturers when compared to the period before the pandemic.

Several studies have been conducted on QWL among educators or lecturers in several countries in the world and Indonesia before the pandemic. For example, Kermansaravi et al. (12) studied the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction among 202 educators at the Faculty of Medicine, Zahedan University, Iran using Walton's questionnaire and the results showed a significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and QWL (12). Secapramana and Nugroho (13) also found QWL to be in the moderate category among 99 lecturers using the European Foundation instrument for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EWON, 2001).

These findings are relevant for almost all faculties in the university including Nursing. Moreover, the COVID-19 task force mandated a cyclical approach to disaster emergencies and this, according to Agu et al. (14) includes preparing, responding, coping, and restoring. The preparation aspect includes faculty requirements and supporting modalities provided for online learning such as the standardized videos. The response aspect involves the allocation of funds for several devices such

as personal protective equipment. The coping aspect is highly dependent on previous steps such that proper preparation has the ability to reduce crises such as QWL problems. The coping, in this case, is not only to ensure a smooth learning process but also to have psychological well-being through the provision of mental health counseling and sessions. Meanwhile, the restoration aspect focuses on implementing policies and actions to make up for the lagging hours and experiences to ensure timely and effective responses.

This research was limited to some identifiable literature due to its focus on the QWL during the pandemic. Kanten and Sadullah (15) also showed that literature on QWL is currently limited and this is considered to be the limitation of this study. However, an overview of the lecturers' QWL during the pandemic is provided in the present study and these findings can be used as the foundation for the efforts directed towards improving the QWL of lecturers to achieve a quality and sustainable education or teaching system, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The quality of work-life for lecturers was observed to be reduced during the pandemic due to the adaptation of online learning systems and this led to the reduction of their productivity. Some of the causative factors include psychological stress, increased work flexibility which affects work-life balance, and lack of preparation for IT required to implement online learning from home. Therefore, a cyclical approach to disaster emergencies is recommended to be implemented at the university and ministerial levels. It was also discovered that studies related to QWL and its intervention among lecturers are very limited and this means further research needs to be conducted to improve QWL among lecturers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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