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# Life Quality of Foreign Workers in Thailand

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## Abstract

Life quality means good living conditions responding to wants of body and mind, society, and environment. It is a satisfaction to live and feel safe. There are four components: 1. completion of body and intelligence, 2. completion of mentality and emotion, 3. completion of society and environment, and 4. completion of living factors. Factors impacting on the life quality are: 1. completion of body and intelligence, 2. completion of mind and emotion, 3. completion of society and environment, and 4. completion of essences for living. Besides, foreign workers are persons without Thai citizen, coming to work and live in Kingdom of Thailand legally. Then, the foreign workers must relocate their housings. Migration is persons' or groups' relocations. The migration factors are 1. immigration (high opportunity to obtain employment, job choices for consideration, stability for oneself and his/her family, good environment, attraction, comfort for living); and 2. emigration (scarcity of natural resources, unemployment, etc.). The life quality of foreign workers in Thailand is: 1. housing, 2. health, 3. working conditions and safety, and 4. compensations and benefits.

**Keywords:** life quality; foreign workers; Thailand

## 1. Introduction

Since the COVID-19 pandemic happened nationwide, there were many cumulative patients from the COVID-19. Besides, there were foreign workers immigrating legally and illegally in Thailand; also, they were infected with this disease. Consequently, the COVID-19 infection was spreading. Life quality of people's in societies was that they were lacking of knowledge: understanding the pandemic infection prevention, interest in healthcare, and health problems. Then, the life quality of the foreign workers was worsened. People were fearful of life quality of themselves and families regarding health, mentality, social situations, environments, and factors of daily living. Thus, the life quality of the foreign workers in Thailand should be considered. What can be used for measuring the good life quality of the foreign workers in Thailand?

## 2. Content

### 2.1 Definition of Life Quality

Various scholars give a definition of life quality differently. For example, Royal Academy (2003) defined that "life quality" consists of two words: "quality", characteristics of goodness, attributes of person or thing; "life", livelihood. Then, "life quality" is characteristics of good livelihood, or that human beings are able to live with happiness, quality, good life, self-dependence, and live together with others happily. When they grow up, they must find jobs which they also desire for the quality of work life. People are happy to work and they are able to see its career path in the future.

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## **2.2 Life Quality Components**

In the current society, other than four requisites (food, clothes, housing, medicine) as the fundamentals for living, people must have other factors which Nisarath Sinlapadech (1997, pp.66-67) identifies according to the components of the life quality.

1. Completion of body and intelligence is that human beings with the good life quality must have normal body and intelligence as basics: healthy body, ability for doing activities as other people, studying, thinking in variety of reasoning, and also solve encountering problems.

2. Completion of mind and emotion is that people are with good mind, stable emotion, not whimsical and easily angry, moral, optimism, and altruism. The quality of the good mind will help make the people happy and calm in living.

3. Completion of society and environment is that people are accepted by others due to the good human relationship; they can adjust themselves. They can accept others' capability and importance; then, they value persons and environments. They think to improve and develop the environments for sustainable values and benefits. The completion of society and environment will help people live appropriately in the society and environment.

4. Completion of living factors is that capability to obtain essences for living properly their status, including socioeconomic conditions and in fashion. These essences are: food, cloths, housing, and medicine.

## **2.3 Factors Effecting the Life Quality**

Many scholars attempted to study the factors effecting the life quality. For example, Manich Narongphet (2005, pp.25-27) stated that development of the life quality needed improving components of mind, society, and economy so that people lived in an appropriate level of necessity: career, income, health and sanitation, family, self-dependence, and contribution for others and country. Thus, people with the good life quality should have good education, thought, behaviors, and mind, other than the four requisites. It also corresponds to Padthong, C, Panjan, W, Na Wichian, S, Saengsook, N and Rodjam, C. (2020: 59-71), saying that a good quality of life is part of human resource development in the organization.

## **2.4 Measurement of Life Quality**

Suwat Mahatnirunkul and others. (1997, p.11-12) translated and developed an abridged measurement of life quality in Thai version (WHOQOL-BREF-THAI, 1997). From the WHO's abridge measurement of life quality, there are 26 indicators classified into 4 issues (WHOQOL-BREF, 1996).

### **1. Body**

People's body conditions effect daily lives: freedom from depending on others, working capabilities, living without medicine and medical treatments. There are 7 indicators: (1) suffering and illness, (2) strength and fatigue, (3) sleeping and resting, (4) motion, (5) daily life, (6) medicine use or remedy, and (7) working capabilities.

### **2. Mind**

People have mindfulness: feeling positive in themselves and their images, self-pride, self-confidence, thought, memory, concentration on thinking, and learning capabilities in various situations effecting their lives and overcoming the difficulties. There are 6 indicators: (1) positive feeling, (2) learning, (3) self-esteem, (4) images and appearances, (5) negative feeling, (6) spirit.

### **3. Social Relations**

People have relations between themselves and others: receiving assistances from others in societies, providing others with assistances, and sexual interactions. There are 3 indicators: (1) social relationship, (2) social supports, and (3) sexual activities.

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#### 4.Environment

People have a perception of environments effecting the lifestyles: living in good physical surroundings, having recreational activities, and leisure. There are 8 indicators: (1) safety for body and stability in life, (2) house surroundings, (3) financial sources, (4) healthcare and social services, (5) information receiving and constant upskilling, (6) participations in recreations and leisure, (7) environmental conditions, and (8) transportations.

### 3. Definition of Foreign Workers

Department of Labor Protection and Welfare (2008) defines foreign workers that general workers without Thai citizenship or persons without Thai citizenship. However, there are people giving different definitions in legal and academic dimensions. Office of Work Permit (2010) is using a concept of migration from scholars, such as Voravidh Charoenloet and Bandit Thanachaisethawuti (1997, pp.2-6) that the migration is that population from one place relocate to settle in another. When distance, time, and purpose are considered mainly, the migration may be classified in three types below.

1. Local movement: housing relocation within communities and near communities
2. Internal migration: housing relocation from a community to another within a country, ex. migrating across subdistricts, districts, or provinces

3. International migration: housing relocation from a country to another

Also, Chaiwat Panjapong and team (cited in Panadda Sinarpha (1994, pp.20-21) detailed factors impacting the migrations and factors causing the immigration as below.

1. Opportunity to get jobs and more choices to select
2. Opportunity in building stabilities for oneself and his/her family
3. Opportunity for educational enhancement
4. Good environments: attraction, convenience, weather, transportation, housing, and public health
5. Accompanying husbands, wives, mother-fathers or children
6. New constructions of industries

### 4. Factors for Emigration

1. Decreases and scarcities of natural resources makes higher capital costs of production. A shortage of production equipment.

2. Unemployment, oversupply of workers, or machine replacement for workers
3. natural disasters such as flood, earthquake, climate change, and pandemics
4. Suppression or eradication by political system, religions, and ethnicity
5. Bored of community

Then, for the concept of the life quality of the foreign workers in Thailand, they are living in the good conditions: responding their wants in body and mind, society, and environment. It is satisfying to live. They feel safe and are able to live in the society sufficiently and properly. Also, they are happy. It may be said that making the foreign workers' life quality better and improved needs responding to their wants in these aspects: 1) housing condition, 2) health, 3) working condition and safety, and 4) compensation and welfare. Then, the life quality of the foreign workers in Thailand consists of the following.

1. Housing condition means body sensations and mind feeling about impact of surrounding occurrences near the housing.

2. Health means that body and mentality indicate health status, such as illness and stress, or anxiety of events and conditions.

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3. Working condition and safety mean satisfaction with job which they are working at present. They are working happily. Also, they are satisfied with its coverages. For examples, job stability, income, safety, relationship with coworkers or job-related persons, and willing to keep working.

4. Compensation and welfare means that satisfaction with public services (education, transportation, public health, infrastructures, and safety in life and property. Inclusively, there are satisfactions with consumption expenses, and expenses for the public infrastructures.

## **5. Conclusion**

The life quality means good living conditions responding to wants of body and mind, society, and environment. It is a satisfaction to live and feel safe. People can live in a society sufficiently, properly, and happily. Besides, there are four components: 1. completion of body and intelligence, 2. completion of mentality and emotion, 3. completion of society and environment, and 4. completion of living factors. Therefore, the good life quality is important not only for individuals but also for countries. The good life quality includes body, mentality, and intelligence.

Then, factors impacting the life quality should consist of these elements: 1. completion of body and intelligence, 2. completion of mind and emotion, 3. completion of society and environment, and 4. completion of essences for living. These factor elements have to be composed harmoniously for properness in each person, place, time and social changes; obviously, the life quality of each person and society is different. Also, a measurement of life quality shows significance in various aspects which can be grouped mainly as followings: 1. body (general health, daily living), 2. mind (emotionality, satisfaction), 3. working (relationship of staff in organizations, organizational culture), 4. economics (income, debts, finance management, living condition), 5. family (happiness in family, relationships of family members), 6. society (role, rights, duty in society, social participation), and 7. environment (housing, commuting, life safety). Besides, the foreign workers must relocate their housings. Migration is persons' or groups' relocations, or it means housing changes from the old places to other new ones. Also, it may mean social and location changes of persons. Migration does not mean a commute between house and workplace, traveling, visiting or tours. Whether it is a migration depends on regulations or laws which each country determines, such as time length of the migration or relocations based on demarcations of the administrative districts. The migration factors are: 1. immigration (high opportunity to obtain employment, job choices for consideration, stability for oneself and his/her family, education, good environment, attraction, comfort for living, good weather, convenient transportation, good housing, good public health system, accompanying husbands, wives, father-mother or children, new and various industries); and 2. emigration (decrease and scarcity of natural resources, higher cost for production, equipment scarcity, unemployment, excessive labor supplies, or machine replacing the human labors, natural disasters—flood, earthquake, climate change, and epidemic). The foreign workers were suppressed or eliminated by political beliefs, religions, and ethnic groups, or bored of the protests. Then, the life quality of the foreign workers in Thailand includes: 1. housing, 2. health, 3. working conditions and safety, and 4. compensations and benefits.

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