

# A CAUSAL MODEL OF QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG SOCIAL WORKERS

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## Abstract

This quantitative, non-experimental research aimed to establish a model for the quality of life of social workers. The study focused on determining the levels of work resilience, job engagement, and political skills among social workers and their impact on their quality of life. Four hundred social workers in CARAGA region were the samples of this research. Moreover, the research utilized a survey tool to gather data and applied descriptive-correlational techniques, regression analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for data analysis. The findings revealed significant relationships between work resilience, job engagement, political skills, and the quality of life of social workers. The results also highlighted that while these factors positively influenced the quality of life, other variables not included in the study also had a significant impact, suggesting the need for further research. The study culminated in the establishment of a structural model for the quality of life of social workers, emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach in enhancing their well-being. This includes fostering authentic living, building social connections, managing stress, promoting physical, emotional, cognitive engagement at work, and harnessing political skill. The findings provide actionable insights for interventions aimed at improving the quality of life among social workers.

**Keywords:** Social Workers, CARAGA Region, Resilience at Work, Job Performance, Political Skill, Quality of Life, SEM, Philippines.

## INTRODUCTION

Social Work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (Nnama-Okechukwu et al., 2023).

Social Workers strive to release human power so that individuals can actualize their potentials and contribute to the well-being of society. Moreover, social workers initiate activities that release the social power that creates changes in society that in turn in social policies, social institutions, and other social structures in society (Smalley, 2021).

Psychological distress pervades social workers' lives, causing compassion fatigue, burnout, and sense of coherence issues, especially for those who encountered work-related violence given their years of professional practice (Dima et al. 2021; Kagan & Itzick, 2019).

Because of these and the compounding negative interpersonal interaction, social workers are experiencing negative life satisfaction and intend to leave and abandon their workplace (Robinson-Perez et al., 2020; Shier et al., 2021).

Given their considerable roles of social workers work in a wide range of settings, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), hospitals, schools, community centers, and correctional facilities. They address issues such as poverty, child welfare, domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse, disaster response and community development. Social Workers' quality of life is worth studying to become effective.

However, social workers tend to be absorbed in supporting people to cope with life's challenges, forgetting themselves and affecting their quality of life and their profession (Collins, 2021; Waite, 2023).

Research shows that resilience at work moderates burnout and stress among social workers, making them cope with the high demands of their jobs (Knight & Gotterman, 2022; Stanley et al., 2022; Thompson & McGowan, 2023). Moreover, the job engagement of social workers can affect their quality of life (Geisler et al., 2019). In addition, political skills are essential to thriving in social positions, affecting the quality of life (Cullen et al., 2018).

The quality of life of social workers has been the subject of studies and investigations but using other factors. This study wants to find a model for the quality of life of social workers using resilience at work, job engagement, and political skills as the exogenous variables, filling in the gap in the literature on this topic in the Philippines. The findings of this study would have implications for social work practice.

This research holds substantial importance for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the causal relationships between resilience at work, job engagement, political skills, and Quality of Life (QoL) among social workers. While these variables have been studied individually in various contexts, their collective impact on QoL, particularly among social workers, is not been extensively explored.

Secondly, the study focuses on social workers in the Caraga Region assigned to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), a demographic that might face unique challenges given their specific geographical and professional context. By focusing on this group, the study can provide insights relevant to improving their working conditions and overall well-being.

Thirdly, the findings of this study could have practical implications for policy-making and program development within the DSWD and other similar organizations. By understanding how resilience at work, job engagement, and political skills influence QoL, the DSWD can devise strategies to enhance these factors, thereby improving the QoL of their social workers. This could include interventions to boost resilience, improve job engagement, or enhance political skills.

Finally, this study could also have broader implications for the field of social work. The findings could inform education and training programs for social workers, helping them better prepare for the demands of their role and enhance their QoL. It could also stimulate further

research into the factors influencing QoL among social workers, contributing to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of this critical issue.

This study underpinned by a combination of theories that provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the Quality of Life (QoL) among social workers. These theories include the Resilience Theory, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, the Political Skill Theory, and the World Health Organization's (WHO) Quality of Life (QoL) framework.

*The Resilience Theory.* The concept of resilience at work is central to this study and is grounded in resilience theory. Resilience is maintaining psychological stability and focus when faced with adversity or stressors (Garmezy, 1991). In social work, resilience can influence how practitioners cope with occupational stressors, subsequently impacting their overall QoL.

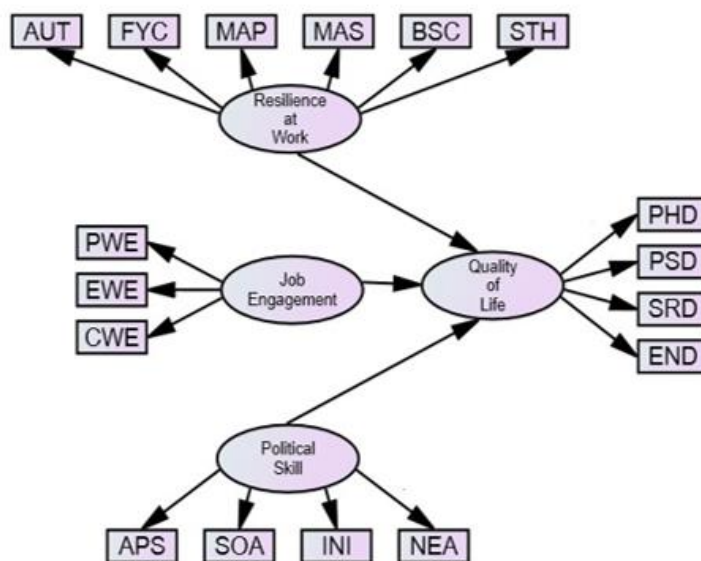
*Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model.* This model posits that job engagement is influenced by two sets of factors: job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort, while job resources are aspects that aid in achieving work goals, reducing job demands, or stimulating personal growth (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Understanding these dynamics provides insights into how job engagement can affect a social worker's QoL.

*Political Skill Theory.* Political skill in the workplace refers to an individual's ability to effectively understand others at work and use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal or organizational objectives (McAllister et al., 2015; McAllister et al., 2018). Applying this theory allows us to explore how political skill influences social workers' job engagement and QoL.

*WHO's Quality of Life Framework.* The WHO's QoL framework provides a comprehensive measure of QoL. It considers physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environmental factors (Ferris et al., 2007). This framework serves as the basis for assessing and understanding the QoL of social workers in this study.

The theoretical framework integrates these theories to provide a comprehensive understanding of how resilience at work, job engagement, and political skill influence the QoL of social workers. This integrated approach allows the researcher to explore the complex interactions among these variables and their impact on QoL, providing valuable insights for improving social workers' working conditions and overall well-being.

The conceptual framework of this study delineates the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables. The exogenous variables in this context are Resilience at Work, Job Engagement, and Political Skills. These are considered 'outside' variables that can influence the study's outcome. Conversely, the endogenous variable, influenced by other variables in the model, is the quality of Life.



**Figure 1: The Hypothesized Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Legend:

**Resilience at Work**

*AUT-Authentic Living*

*FYC-Finding your Calling*

*MAP-Maintaining Perspective*

*MAS-Managing Stress*

*BSC- Building Social Connections*

*STH-Staying Healthy*

**Job Engagement**

*PWE-Physical Work Engagement*

*EWE-Emotional Work Engagement*

*CWE-Cognitive Work Engagement*

**Political Skill**

*APS-Apparent Sincerity*

*SOA-Social Astuteness*

*INI-Interpersonal Influence*

*NEA-Networking Ability*

**Quality of Life**

*PHD-Physical Dimension*

*PSD-Psychological Dimension*

*SRD- Social Relationships Dimension*

*END-Environmental Dimension*

This study explicitly targets social workers from the Caraga Region currently assigned to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Local Government Units, Government Agencies and Non-Government Organization as its sample population. The framework aims to explore and understand how these exogenous variables interact and collectively impact the Quality of Life among these social workers.

This study aimed to establish a model for the quality of life of social workers, thus having these objectives:

1. To ascertain the level of work resilience among social workers in terms of:
  - a. Authentic Living
  - b. Finding a Calling
  - c. Maintaining Perspective
  - d. Managing Stress
  - e. Building Social Connections
  - f. Staying Healthy
2. To describe the level of job engagement among social workers in terms of:
  - a. Cognitive Work Engagement
  - b. Emotional Work Engagement
  - c. Physical Work Engagement
3. To assess the level of political skills among social workers in terms of:
  - a. Social Astuteness
  - b. Interpersonal Influence
  - c. Networking Ability
  - d. Apparent Sincerity
4. To measure the level of the quality of life among social workers in terms of:
  - a. Physical Dimension
  - b. Psychological Dimension
  - c. Social Relationships Dimension
  - d. Environment Dimension
5. To determine the significance of the relationship between:
  - a. Resilience at work and quality of life
  - b. Job engagement and quality of life
  - c. Political skills and quality of life
6. To determine the significance of the Influence of resilience at work, job engagement, and political skills on the quality of life among social workers.
7. To establish a model for the quality of life among social workers using structural equation modeling.

## Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypothesis with a 0.05 percent degree of error and a 95 percent level of confidence.

1. There is no significant relationship between resilience at work and Quality of life, job engagement and Quality of life, and political skills and quality of life.
2. There is no significant influence of resilience at work, job engagement, and political skills on the quality of life among social workers.
3. There is no best-fit structural model for the quality of life of social workers.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, non-experimental research design to address the study objectives. Data were not derived from laboratory experiments but from a survey tool. The study was quantitative as the data dealt with numbers, logic, and an objective stance (Bhandari, 2023). Moreover, a descriptive-correlational technique was used to decode the relationship or association between the exogenous and endogenous variables without manipulating them (Lau, 2017).

In addition, regression analysis was used to determine the variables that could influence the performance of social workers. Lastly, the study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to establish the best-fit model of social workers' quality of life. The SEM determined the structural relationship between the latent variables.

The data processing underwent a three-step process: model delineation, model identification and estimation, and model testing. The model passed all criterion indices (Collier 2020; Hair et al. 2021; Korstanje 2021). All these operations helped achieve the objectives of this study.

### Population and Sample

The respondents of this study were the social workers in the Caraga Region assigned with DSWD, LGUs, NGAs, and NGOs. These registered social workers are currently employed and directly engage in service delivery within the region. Either they are permanent or a contract of service status. Social Workers outside caraga are not qualified to participate the survey. Quota sampling was utilized to obtain the sample population. Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method where researchers obtain a representative sample of the larger population, accurately ensuring the correct proportions to represent the population (Simkus, 2022). There are various perspectives among statisticians regarding the appropriate sample size for SEM, indicating no exact number for a sample population (Kline, 2023). For instance, Deng et al. (2018) suggested that the sample size in SEM is relative to the number of variables. Kim (2004) has proposed that a sample size that falls within the range of 200 to 400 can be considered sufficient for structural equation modeling. Therefore, the 400 samples used in this study were appropriate to yield meaningful results.

## Research Instrument

The survey comprised four parts: resilience at work, job engagement, political skills, and a quality of life survey instrument. Experts validated the questionnaire. Validation of the research instrument is critical to information gathering because it makes the data reliable and credible (San Jose, 2023). In addition, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing to establish the consistency and reliability of the items. Respondents answered the questionnaire by selecting a number with a corresponding meaning. For instance, 5 meant strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree. Furthermore, the interpretations for the mean scores were as follows:

Range of Means	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very High	It denotes that respondents always manifest the behavior stipulated in the survey item.
3.40 - 4.19	High	It denotes that respondents often manifest the behavior stipulated in the survey item.
2.60 - 3.30	Moderate	It denotes that respondents sometimes manifest the behavior stipulated in the survey item.
1.80 - 2.59	Low	It denotes that respondents rarely manifest the behavior stipulated in the survey item.
1.00 - 1.79	Very Low	It denotes that respondents never manifest the behavior stipulated in the survey item.

## Data Collection

The researcher adhered to the standard procedures of the Professional Schools while conducting the study. Initially, endorsement letters were procured from the Dean's office. Following receiving these endorsement letters, emails were dispatched to the relevant individuals seeking permission to conduct the study, with the endorsement letters attached. Upon obtaining the requisite permissions, the researcher submitted several documents to the University of Mindanao Ethics Research Committee (UMERC). These documents included approved letters, the protocol, validation sheets, the validated questionnaire, an informed consent form, and UMEREC Forms. Following the approval from UMEREC, the survey was initiated.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Resilience at Work

Table 1 provides a statistical analysis of social workers' resilience level at work, evaluated across six indicators: Authenticity, Finding Calling, Maintaining Perspectives, Managing Stress, Building Social Connections, and Staying Healthy. Each indicator's standard deviation (SD) and mean score are provided, along with a descriptive level that interprets the mean score.

*Authenticity* has a mean score of 4.57 with a standard deviation of 0.38, indicating a very high level of resilience. This suggests that social workers are highly authentic in their roles, with slight variance in their responses. *Finding Calling* also shows a very high level of resilience, with a mean score of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.52. This suggests that social workers feel strongly that they have found their calling, although there is slightly more variance in responses than in Authenticity. *Maintaining Perspectives* has a high level of resilience with a mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 0.64. This indicates that while social workers are generally good at maintaining perspective, there is more variability in this area compared to the first two indicators. *Managing stress* has a high resilience level with a mean score of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.52. This implies that social workers are generally effective at managing stress, but there's a moderate level of variance in responses. *Building Social Connections* shows a high level of resilience with a mean of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.50, suggesting that social workers are proficient at building social connections, with moderate consistency in their responses. *Staying Healthy* has a high level of resilience with a mean score of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 0.70, indicating that while social workers generally prioritize staying healthy, there is substantial variation in responses for this indicator.

The overall resilience level is very high, with a mean score of 4.20 and the smallest standard deviation (0.32), indicating consistent responses across all indicators. The data suggests that social workers exhibit high to very high levels of resilience across all evaluated areas, with the most consistency observed in Authenticity and the least in Staying Healthy. The results suggest that social workers demonstrate high to very high resilience levels across various work-related aspects. This resilience may be particularly crucial in their roles, as their work often involves managing stress, maintaining perspective, and building social connections under challenging circumstances.

**Table 1: Level of Resilience at Work among Social Workers**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Authentic	0.38	4.57	Very High
Finding Calling	0.52	4.44	Very High
Maintaining Perspectives	0.64	3.70	High
Managing Stress	0.52	4.17	High
Building Social Connections	0.50	4.34	Very High
Staying Healthy	0.70	3.73	High
Overall	0.32	4.20	Very High

The high resilience level in 'Authenticity' and 'Finding your Calling' suggests a strong sense of purpose and genuine engagement among social workers, which aligns with the concept of resilience as a positive adaptation to the challenges of the social work role, enabling workers to thrive rather than merely survive (Rose & Palattiyil, 2020). The high scores in 'Managing Stress' and 'Maintaining Perspectives' indicate effective coping mechanisms among social workers, which is critical given the increased risk of burnout and secondary trauma due to their exposure to varied populations in need, especially during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic (Ratzon et al., 2022). The 'Building Social Connections' score indicates that social workers are proficient at establishing supportive networks, which can enhance emotional



resilience (Rose & Palattiyil, 2020). However, the substantial variation in the 'Staying Healthy' score suggests that self-care practices may vary among social workers, emphasizing the need for a more consistent focus on self-care in the profession (Stander, 2023). The results indicate that social workers display high to very high resilience in their roles, particularly in aspects of authenticity and finding their calling. This suggests they are genuinely engaged and find purpose in their work. Effective stress management and maintaining perspective are also areas of strength, crucial for avoiding burnout. Building social connections is another area where high resilience is vital for emotional support. However, the results vary more widely in staying healthy, indicating that self-care practices may need more consistent attention within the profession.

### Job Engagement

Table 2 analyzes job engagement levels among social workers, evaluated across three dimensions: Cognitive, Emotional, and Physical Work Engagement. *Cognitive Work Engagement* shows a high level with a mean score of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.51. This suggests that social workers are highly mentally involved and invested in their work. *Emotional Work Engagement* scores the highest with a mean of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.51, indicating a very high level of emotional involvement and commitment in their work. *Physical Work Engagement* presents a high level with a mean of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 0.61, suggesting that social workers are physically engaged in their work, although there is slightly more variation in this area compared to the first two indicators. The overall job engagement level is high, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.44, indicating consistent engagement across all dimensions. The data suggests that social workers are highly engaged in their work, particularly in the emotional aspect, with moderate to high engagement in cognitive and physical aspects.

**Table 2: Level of Job Engagement among Social Workers**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Cognitive Work Engagement	0.51	3.98	High
Emotional Work Engagement	0.51	4.21	Very High
Physical Work Engagement	0.61	3.81	High
Overall	0.44	4.00	High

The high levels of engagement across all three dimensions - Cognitive, Emotional, and Physical - suggest that social workers are highly committed to their work. The highest score in Emotional Work Engagement suggests that social workers invest emotionally in their work, potentially reflecting the profession's relationship-oriented nature and a strong sense of purpose. However, high emotional engagement may also pose risks, such as emotional exhaustion or burnout, particularly if coupled with inadequate support systems or self-care practices. Therefore, it might be essential to ensure that social workers access effective coping mechanisms and support systems (Kim & Stoner, 2008). The high Cognitive and Physical Work Engagement scores indicate that social workers are mentally and physically involved in their work. While this is generally positive, it could lead to cognitive overload or physical exhaustion without adequate rest and recovery (Grant & Kinman, 2014). These findings underscore the

need for organizations to provide supportive environments that promote balanced engagement in all dimensions to prevent burnout and promote sustainable performance (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). The overall high job engagement level suggests that social workers are generally satisfied with their work, which could have positive implications for job retention and quality of service delivery (Hölscher et al., 2023; Mor Barak et al., 2001; Siddiqui et al., 2023).

### Political Skill

Table 3 evaluates the level of political skill among social workers, measured across four indicators: Networking Ability, Interpersonal Influence, Social Astuteness, and Apparent Sincerity. *Networking Ability* is ranked high, with a mean score of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 0.68. This implies that social workers possess a significant ability to develop and maintain professional relationships. *Interpersonal Influence* also registers a high level with a mean score of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.61. This means that social workers are adept at influencing others through their interactions. *Social astuteness* scores a high mean of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 0.57, indicating that social workers are skilled at understanding and navigating social situations. *Apparent Sincerity* stands out with a very high mean score of 4.53 and a standard deviation of 0.55. This suggests that Sincerity is a prominent trait among social workers, as perceived by others. The overall political skill level is high, with a mean score of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 0.50, showing consistent performance across all indicators. The data reveals that social workers demonstrate high political skills, particularly apparent sincerity, integral to their profession's effectiveness. They also show notable strengths in interpersonal Influence, social astuteness, and networking ability.

**Table 3: Level of Political Skill among Social Workers**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Networking Ability	0.68	3.82	High
Interpersonal Influence	0.61	4.14	High
Social Astuteness	0.57	4.05	High
Apparent Sincerity	0.55	4.53	Very High
Overall	0.50	4.13	High

The high scores across all four indicators of political skills suggest that social workers are highly skilled in navigating professional relationships and social situations. The highest score in Apparent Sincerity indicates that social workers are perceived as genuinely caring and honest in their interactions, which is crucial in building trust with clients and colleagues (Farnese et al., 2022; Jacobs et al., 2021). High scores in Interpersonal Influence and Social Astuteness suggest that social workers are adept at influencing others and understanding social situations. This could be particularly beneficial in advocating for clients and navigating complex social systems (Cole, 2023; Heggstad et al., 2023; Schwepker & Good, 2021). The high score in Networking Ability indicates that social workers are effective at building and maintaining professional relationships, which could enhance collaboration and resource sharing within and across organizations (Kalisch et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2020; Wenger, 2021). These findings underscore the importance of political skills in social work, particularly in building trust, influencing others, understanding social situations, and networking.

## Quality of Life (QoL)

Table 4 presents an evaluation of the quality of life among social workers, assessed across four domains: Physical, Psychological, Social Relationship, and Environmental. The *Physical Domain* has a high level with a mean score of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.45. This suggests that social workers perceive their physical health and well-being as high, indicating good physical condition and satisfaction with their physical abilities. The high score in the Physical Domain suggests that social workers are generally in good health and satisfied with their physical abilities. This could be linked to their ability to manage their work's physical demands effectively. However, the physically demanding nature of social work could lead to physical health issues over time, emphasizing the importance of maintaining physical well-being through regular exercise and proper rest (Pedersen et al., 2023). The Psychological Domain scores the highest with a mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.47. This indicates a high level of psychological well-being among social workers, suggesting that they are generally satisfied with their mental health and cognitive functioning. The high score in the Psychological Domain indicates a high level of mental well-being among social workers. This could be due to effective coping strategies and mental health support. However, given the emotionally demanding nature of social work, there could be risks of psychological distress or burnout if not managed effectively (Carnes, 2023; Cooke & Hastings, 2023; Mack, 2022).

**Table 4: Level of Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Physical Domain	0.45	3.98	High
Psychological Domain	0.47	4.15	High
Social Relationship Domain	0.71	3.97	High
Environmental Domain	0.44	4.10	High
Overall	0.42	4.05	High

The Social Relationship Domain presents a high level with a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.71. This suggests that social workers have satisfactory interpersonal relationships and are content with their social roles. The slightly higher standard deviation in this domain than others might indicate some variability in social relationships among social workers. The high score in the Social Relationship Domain suggests that social workers have satisfactory interpersonal relationships. This could be linked to their skills in building and maintaining relationships, which are crucial in their work. However, the slightly higher variability in this domain might indicate that some social workers face challenges balancing their professional and personal lives. The high score in the Social Relationship Domain suggests that social workers have satisfactory interpersonal relationships. This could be linked to their skills in building and maintaining relationships, which are crucial in their work. However, the slightly higher variability in this domain might indicate that some social workers face challenges balancing their professional and personal lives (Brown et al., 2019; Scanlan et al., 2020; Scanlan et al., 2021). The Environmental Domain also exhibits a high level with a mean of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.44. This suggests that social workers are generally satisfied with their living environment, including safety, financial resources, and access to services.

The high score in the Environmental Domain indicates that social workers are generally satisfied with their living environment. This could be linked to adequate financial resources and access to services. However, social workers in challenging environments might face stressors that could impact their quality of life (Hitchcock et al., 2022; Long et al., 2023; van Heugten, 2023).

The overall quality of life level is high, with a mean score of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.42, indicating consistent satisfaction across all domains. The data suggests that social workers perceive their quality of life as high across the physical, psychological, social relationship, and environmental domains. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of maintaining balance across all domains of quality of life to ensure the well-being and effectiveness of social workers.

### Relationship between Resilience at Work and Quality of Life among Social Workers

Table 5 presents the significance of the relationship between Resilience at Work and Quality of Life among Social Workers across various domains: Physical, Psychological, Social Relationships, and Environment. The relationships are presented as correlation coefficients, with values closer to 1 indicating a stronger relationship. The asterisks denote the significance level of the relationship (\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ ), with lower values indicating a more statistically significant relationship.

*Authenticity* shows a significant positive relationship with all domains except the Social Relationship domain ( $r=.122$ ;  $p=.015$ ). This suggests that social workers who are more authentic tend to have a higher quality of life, particularly in the physical, psychological, and environmental domains.

**Table 5: Significance of the Relationship between Resilience at Work and Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Resilience at Work	Quality of Life				
	Physical Domain	Psychological Domain	Social Relationship Domain	Environment Domain	Overall
Authentic	.118*	.116*	.055	.129**	.122*
	.018	.020	.276	.010	.015
Finding a Calling	.080	.008	.064	.031	.060
	.112	.874	.199	.535	.235
Maintaining Perspectives	.209**	.197**	.049	.168**	.176**
	.000	.000	.327	.001	.000
Managing Stress	.181**	.169**	.144**	.226**	.218**
	.000	.001	.004	.000	.000
Building Social Connections	.111*	.056	.182**	.073	.142**
	.027	.262	.000	.146	.004
Staying Healthy	.178**	.122*	.153**	.151**	.187**
	.000	.015	.002	.003	.000
Overall	.245**	.198**	.143**	.223**	.241**
	.000	.000	.004	.000	.000

Finding Calling does not show a significant relationship with any of the Quality of Life domains ( $r=.060$ ;  $p=.235$ ), suggesting that this aspect of resilience may not be directly linked to social workers' quality of life.

*Maintaining Perspectives* shows a significant positive relationship with the Physical ( $r=.209$ ;  $p=.000$ ), Psychological ( $r=.197$ ;  $p=.000$ ) and Environmental domains ( $r=.168^{**}$ ;  $p=.001$ ), indicating that maintaining perspective contributes positively to these aspects of quality of life. *Managing stress* has a significant positive relationship with all Quality of Life domains ( $r=.218$ ;  $p=.000$ ).

This suggests that effective stress management can enhance all aspects of social workers' quality of life. *Building Social Connections* shows a significant positive relationship with the Physical ( $r=.111$ ;  $p=.027$ ) and Social Relationship ( $r=.182$ ;  $p=.000$ ) domains and the Overall score, indicating that building social connections can enhance these aspects of quality of life.

*Staying Healthy* has a significant positive relationship with all Quality of Life domains ( $r=.187$ ;  $p=.000$ ), suggesting that maintaining health can enhance all aspects of social workers' quality of life. Overall resilience at work shows a significant positive relationship with all Quality of Life domains ( $r=.241$ ;  $p=.000$ ), indicating that overall resilience can enhance social workers' quality of life.

The results imply that certain aspects of resilience at work (such as Authenticity, Maintaining Perspectives, Managing Stress, Building Social Connections, Staying Healthy) are positively related to the quality of life among social workers.

This aligns with literature suggesting that resilience can act as a protective factor against stress and burnout in social workers, thereby improving their overall well-being (Chakradhar et al., 2022; Hitchcock et al., 2023; Holmes et al., 2021; Rutter, 2023; Viverette et al., 2023).

### **Relationship between Job Engagement and Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Table 6 illustrates the significance of the relationship between Job Engagement and Quality of Life among Social Workers across different domains: Physical, Psychological, Social Relationship, and Environment. *Cognitive Work Engagement* shows a significant positive relationship with all Quality of Life domains ( $r=.197$ ;  $p<.01$ ).

This indicates that higher cognitive engagement in work is associated with better quality of life. *Emotional Work Engagement* shows a significant positive relationship with all domains except for the Social Relationship domain ( $r=.150$ ;  $p<.01$ ). This suggests that emotional engagement in work can enhance certain aspects of quality of life.

*Physical Work Engagement* shows a significant positive relationship with all domains except for the Social Relationship domain ( $r=.145$ ,  $p<.01$  for Physical;  $r=.169$ ,  $p<.01$  for Psychological;  $r=.172$ ,  $p<.01$  for Environment). The overall correlation coefficient is  $r=.156$ ;  $p<.01$ ).

This indicates that physical engagement in work can enhance certain aspects of quality of life. The data implies that higher levels of job engagement (cognitive, emotional, and physical) are associated with a better quality of life among social workers. This supports the literature suggesting that job engagement can protect against burnout and promote well-being among social workers (Ahmad et al., 2020; Bakker, 2022; Geisler et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2020).

**Table 6: Significance of the Relationship between Job Engagement and Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Job Engagement	Quality of Life				
	Physical Domain	Psychological Domain	Social Relationship Domain	Environment Domain	Overall
Cognitive Work Engagement	.183** .000	.223** .000	.102* .042	.157** .002	.197** .000
Emotional Work Engagement	.168** .001	.164** .001	.031 .540	.173** .000	.150** .003
Physical Work Engagement	.145** .004	.169** .001	.057 .257	.172** .001	.156** .002
Overall	.200** .000	.225** .000	.077 .126	.205** .000	.204** .000

The findings underscore the importance of fostering work engagement among social workers to enhance their overall quality of life. This could involve interventions to enhance job resources and reduce job demands, as outlined in the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti & Bakker, 2023).

The data supports the notion that work engagement significantly predicts quality of life among social workers, particularly in the physical and psychological domains. This highlights the need for organizations and policymakers to focus on strategies that enhance job engagement to improve the overall well-being of workers.

### Relationship between Political Skill and Quality of Life among Social Workers

Table 7 showcases the significance of the relationship between Political Skill and Quality of Life among Social Workers across various domains: Physical, Psychological, Social Relationships, and Environment. *Networking Ability* correlates positively with all Quality of Life domains ( $r=.187$ ;  $p< .01$ ).

This suggests that social workers with better networking abilities tend to have a higher quality of life. The significant positive relationship with all Quality of Life domains implies that social workers adept at networking may have a higher quality of life.

This could be due to networking abilities potentially leading to better job opportunities, professional growth, and support systems, enhancing their well-being (Nikku & Rafique, 2019; Pawar, 2019).

**Table 7: Significance of the Relationship between Political Skill and Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Political Skill	Quality of Life				
	Physical Domain	Psychological Domain	Social Relationship Domain	Environment Domain	Overall
Networking Ability	.130**	.174**	.120*	.201**	.187**
Interpersonal Influence	.086	.103*	.083	.115*	.118*
Social Astuteness	.097	.097	.011	.122*	.090
Apparent Sincerity	.076	.107*	.069	.146**	.118*
Overall	.123*	.151**	.086	.182**	.160**
	.014	.002	.087	.000	.001

*Interpersonal Influence* shows a significant positive relationship with the Psychological ( $r=.103$ ;  $p<.05$ ) and Environment ( $r=.115$ ;  $p<.05$ ) domains. The overall relationship is significant at  $r=.118$ ;  $p<.05$ , indicating that interpersonal influence can enhance quality of life. The significant positive relationship between the psychological and environmental domains suggests that social workers who can effectively influence others may have better psychological well-being and overall quality of life. This aligns with research indicating that social workers who are skilled at influencing others are more likely to achieve their objectives, which may lead to a higher sense of job satisfaction and well-being (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Donnison et al., 2021; Smith, 2022).

*Social Astuteness* shows a significant positive relationship only with the Environment domain ( $r=.122$ ;  $p<.05$ ), suggesting that social astuteness can enhance the environmental aspect of quality of life. The significant positive relationship with the Environment domain suggests that being socially astute can enhance the environmental aspect of quality of life. Socially astute social workers may be more aware of their surroundings and able to navigate their work environment more effectively, which could lead to a better work-life balance and higher job satisfaction (Bhattarai, 2022; Kwon, 2020; Xu et al., 2019).

*Apparent Sincerity* shows a significant positive relationship with the Psychological ( $r=.107$ ;  $p<.05$ ) and Environment ( $r=.146$ ;  $p<.010$ ) domains. The overall score ( $r=.118$ ;  $p<.05$ ) indicates that apparent sincerity can enhance quality of life. The significant positive relationship between the Psychological and Environment domains suggests that social workers who display apparent sincerity may have better psychological well-being, a better work environment, and a higher overall quality of life. This could be due to sincerity fostering trust and positive relationships in the workplace, which can contribute to a better work environment and psychological well-being (Guo et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2019; Maher et al., 2021; Wihler et al., 2018).

The overall political skill shows a significant positive relationship with the quality of life ( $r=.160$ ;  $p<.01$ ), suggesting that overall political skill can enhance these aspects of social workers' quality of life. The data implies that certain aspects of political skill (such as

Networking Ability, Interpersonal Influence, and Apparent Sincerity) are positively related to the quality of life among social workers. This aligns with literature suggesting that political skill can act as a protective factor against stress and burnout in social workers, thereby improving their overall well-being. Influence of the Resilience at Work, Job Engagement and Political Skill on the Quality of Life among Social Workers Table 8 illustrates the influence of Resilience at Work, Job Engagement, and Political Skill on Quality of Life among Social Workers. In the Constant (Intercept), the value 2.343 with a highly significant t-value (7.993) and p-value (.000) suggests that keeping all other variables at zero, the baseline level of quality of life is significantly different from zero.

As for *Resilience at Work*, this variable has a beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) of .182 and is statistically significant ( $p = .001$ ). This suggests a positive relationship between resilience at work and quality of life. For every one-unit increase in resilience at work, there is an estimated increase of .238 units in the quality of life, holding other variables constant. As for *Job Engagement*, with a  $\beta$  of .120 and p-value of .023, job engagement is also positively associated with quality of life. The effect size (.113) indicates a smaller impact than work resilience. For *Political Skill*, this variable has a  $\beta$  of .078 but is not statistically significant ( $p = .130$ ). This suggests that, based on this data, political skill does not significantly influence social workers' quality of life.

As for the Model Fit, the R-squared value of .081 suggests that these three variables combined explain approximately 8.1% of the variance in the quality of life. The change in R ( $\Delta R$ ) indicates a marginal increase in explanatory power when these variables are added to the model. The F-statistic is significant ( $p = .000$ ), suggesting the model fits well.

The positive relationship between resilience and quality of life is consistent with literature suggesting that resilience helps individuals to cope with stress and adversity, which is particularly relevant in the demanding field of social work (e.g., Grant & Kinman, 2014). The significance of job engagement echoes findings in occupational psychology, emphasizing the role of engagement in job satisfaction and overall well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The lack of significant impact of political skill might indicate that, in social work, other factors (like emotional intelligence or coping strategies) might be more pivotal in influencing quality of life.

**Table 8: Significance on the Influence of Resilience at Work, Job Engagement, and Political Skill on Quality of Life among Social Workers**

Quality of Life					
Exogenous Variables		<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Constant		2.343		7.993	.000
Resilience at Work		.238	.182	3.499	.001
Job Engagement		.113	.120	2.286	.023
Political Skill		.063	.078	1.516	.130
R	.284				
R <sup>2</sup>	.081				
$\Delta R$	.074				
F	11.591				
p	.000				



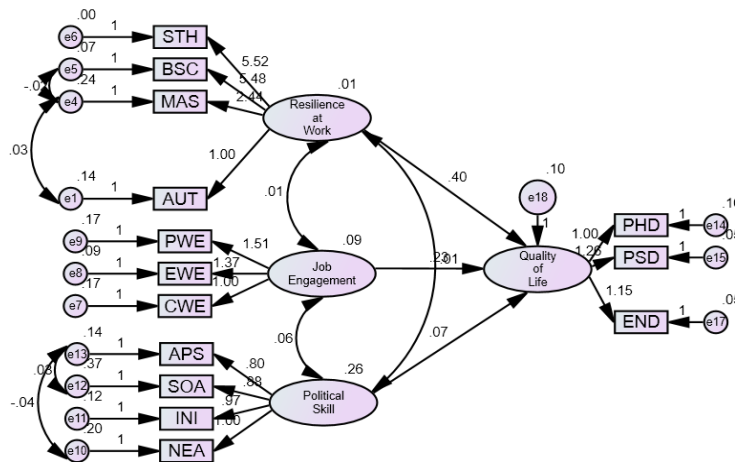
The findings underscore the importance of fostering resilience and engagement in social workers to improve their quality of life. It suggests that interventions aimed at increasing resilience and engagement could be beneficial. The relatively low R-squared value indicates that other factors not included in this model significantly influence social workers' quality of life. Future research could explore other variables like social support, organizational culture, or work-life balance. The specific context of social work (e.g., type of service, client demographics) might also influence these relationships and should be considered in further studies. This analysis highlights the importance of psychological and professional factors in shaping the quality of life among social workers. It aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of individual psychological attributes in occupational well-being and suggests areas for intervention and further research in social work.

#### Best Fit Structural Model of Job engagement

A meticulously constructed structural model delineating the quality of life among social workers is presented herein. This model, illustrated in Figure 2, is the product of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). It provides a comprehensive understanding of the drivers for quality of life, with social workers as the primary data source. Tables 9 to 10 offer a detailed analysis substantiating the findings. Each table corroborates the robustness of the model, providing empirical evidence that underpins the conclusions drawn.

Figure 2 is the Best-Fit Structural Model of Quality of Life. The "Best-Fit Structural Model" usually refers to the most statistically and theoretically sound representation of the relationships among variables under investigation. In the context of this study on Quality of Life, Model 5 has been designated as the best-fit model based on rigorous statistical validation and theoretical consistency. Models 1 to 4, relegated to the Appendices, serve as comparative or developmental stages that help demonstrate the iterative process of reaching Model 5. They provide insights into the alternative models considered during the research process.

Figure 2 presents the findings of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). However, it is noteworthy that two of the exogenous variables retained fewer observed variables. For instance, within the 'Resilience at Work' construct, only a subset of the observed variables were preserved. These include Authentic Living (AUT), Staying Healthy (STH), Building Social Connections (BSC), and Managing Stress (MAS). Two variables, namely Finding Calling (FYC) and Managing Stress (MAS), were eliminated during the SEM procedure. When it comes to 'Job Engagement,' all observed variables were retained, these encompass Physical Work Engagement (PWE), Emotional Work Engagement (EWE), and Cognitive Work Engagement (CWE). In a similar vein, the 'Political Skills' construct preserved all its observed variables: Apparent Sincerity (APS), Social Astuteness (SOA), Interpersonal Influence (INI), and Networking Ability (NEA). SEM omitted one observed variable for the 'Quality of Life' construct - the Social Relationships Dimension (SRD). The remaining variables include Physical Dimension (PHD), Psychological Dimension (PSD), and Environmental Dimension (END). This streamlined model allows for a more focused analysis of the relationships between these constructs.



**Figure 2: The Best-Fit Structural Model of Quality of Work-Life among Social Workers**

Legend:

**Resilience at Work**

- AUT-Authentic Living
- STH-Staying Healthy
- BSC- Building Social Connections
- MAS-Managing Stress

**Job Engagement**

- PWE-Physical Work Engagement
- EWE-Emotional Work Engagement
- CWE-Cognitive Work Engagement

**Political Skill**

- APS-Apparent Sincerity
- SOA-Social Astuteness
- INI-Interpersonal Influence
- NEA-Networking Ability

**Quality of Life**

- PHD-Physical Dimension
- PSD-Psychological Dimension
- END-Environmental Dimension

Table 9 showcases the Goodness of Fit Measures for the optimal structural model, each of which is instrumental in determining how well the model aligns with the observed data. Starting with the P-value, it stands at .084, surpassing the standard threshold of 0.05. This signifies a good fit, as a P-value above 0.05 implies no significant discrepancy between the observed and estimated data. The model's Normed Chi-Square (CMIN/DF) is 1.247, comfortably within the accepted range of 0 to 2, indicating a good fit. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) stands at .972, exceeding the benchmark of 0.95, thus suggesting a good fit with values closer to 1 being considered superior. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of .992 surpasses the 0.95 criterion, indicating a superb fit. Similarly, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) at .962 exceeds the 0.95 threshold, suggesting a good fit. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), with a value of .989, also surpasses the 0.95 standard, indicating an excellent fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is .025, less than the 0.05 benchmark, suggesting a good fit with lower values being better than the set value. Lastly, the P-Close value is .998, exceeding the 0.05 standard, indicating a good fit. In the decision, all indices meet or surpass their respective benchmarks, signifying that the model fits the observed data well.

**Table 9: The Goodness of Fit Measures of the Structural Best Fit Model**

Index	Criterion	Model fit value
P-value	> 0.05	.084
CMIN/DF	0 < value < 2	1.247
GFI	> 0.95	.972
CFI	> 0.95	.992
NFI	> 0.95	.962
TLI	> 0.95	.989
RMSEA	< 0.05	.025
P-Close	> 0.05	.998

Legend:

CMIN/DF	-	Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom
NFI	-	Normed Fit Index
TLI	-	Tucker-Lewis Index
CFI	-	Comparative Fit Index
GFI	-	Goodness of Fit Index
RMSEA	-	Root Means Square of Error Approximation
P-close	-	P of Close Fit

Table 10 provides a summary of the Goodness of Fit measures for five generated models. Each model is evaluated based on several indices, and the optimal model is the one that best meets the criteria for each index.

Model 1: The P-value is .000, which does not meet the criterion (>0.05), suggesting a poor fit. The CMIN/DF is 2.814, which exceeds the acceptable range (0<value<2), indicating a poor fit. The GFI (.903), CFI (.912), NFI (.871), and TLI (.897) are all below the recommended value of >0.95, suggesting a poor fit. The RMSEA is .067, higher than the acceptable value (<0.05), indicating a poor fit. The P-close value is .001, which does not meet the criterion (>0.05), suggesting a poor fit.

Model 2, Model 3, and Model 4: For these models, the P-value is .000, which does not meet the criterion (>0.05), suggesting a poor fit. The CMIN/DF values are all higher than 2, indicating a poor fit. The GFI, CFI, NFI, and TLI values are below the recommended value of >0.95, suggesting a suboptimal fit. The RMSEA values are higher than acceptable (<0.05), indicating a poor fit. The P-close values are also less than 0.05, suggesting a poor fit.

Model 5: This model meets all the criteria for a good fit. The P-value is .084, more significant than the criterion (>0.05). The CMIN/DF value is 1.247, within the acceptable range (0<value<2). The GFI (.972), CFI (.992), NFI (.962), and TLI (.989) values are all greater than the recommended value of >0.95. The RMSEA is .025, less than the acceptable value (<0.05). The P-close value is .998, more significant than the criterion (>0.05). In decision, Model 5 best fits the data among all the generated models based on these Goodness of Fit measures.

**Table 10: Summary of Goodness of Fit Measures of the Five Generated Models**

Model	P-value (>0.05)	CMIN / DF (0<value<2)	GFI (>0.95)	CFI (>0.95)	NFI (>0.95)	TLI (>0.95)	RMSEA (<0.05)	P-close (>0.05)
1	.000	2.814	.903	.912	.871	.897	.067	.001
2	.000	2.423	.919	.932	.891	.919	.060	.037
3	.000	2.483	.915	.929	.887	.916	.061	.021
4	.000	2.344	.921	.936	.895	.923	.058	.071
5	.084	1.247	.972	.992	.962	.989	.025	.998

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The analysis of resilience at work, job engagement, political skills, and quality of life among social workers in the CARAGA region reveals several key insights. Social workers exhibit high resilience, strong job engagement, proficient political skills, and a high quality of life, indicating their ability to effectively navigate job-related challenges, maintain a deep commitment to their work, and balance personal and professional demands. The positive relationships among these variables, although moderate, underscore their interconnectedness and the significant role each plays in enhancing the overall quality of life for social workers. However, the relatively low explained variance in quality of life suggests the presence of other influential factors not captured in this study. The findings emphasize the need for a holistic approach in improving social workers' quality of life, addressing both personal and professional dimensions through targeted interventions and supportive organizational practices. This comprehensive strategy is essential for sustaining job satisfaction, mental well-being, and overall effectiveness in social service delivery.

### Recommendations

Based on the results, the researcher recommends the following:

**For the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD):** Implement comprehensive training and support programs that focus on resilience, job engagement, and political skills while also providing mental health and wellness services to ensure social workers can effectively manage work-related challenges and maintain a high quality of life.

**For Faculty Members:** Integrate practical training on resilience, job engagement, and political skills into the social work curriculum, supported by mentorship programs that connect students with experienced social workers to enhance their professional development and preparedness for real-world challenges.

**For Future Researchers:** Conduct longitudinal and cross-regional studies to explore additional factors such as social support, organizational culture, and emotional intelligence that influence the quality of life among social workers, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods for a comprehensive understanding.

In summary, the model of quality of life for social workers suggests that a multi-pronged approach targeting individual resilience, political skill, job engagement, and environmental

factors is crucial to enhancing their overall quality of life. These findings provide valuable insights for policy-making and practice in social service organizations.

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