

Promoting Work-Life Balance: Managing Teacher Wellness In A School Setting

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Abstract. This study explored teachers' experiences promoting work-life balance and managing wellness in school. Specifically, it aimed to examine their perceptions of work-life balance and identify the coping mechanisms they employ in response to emerging challenges. The study adopted a phenomenological approach to understand teachers' lived experiences deeply. Participants participated in in-depth interviews with five (5) participants and in a focus group discussion with five (5) participants. Using a semi-structured online interview and coding technique for data analysis, the study surfaced essential themes. For the first objective, teachers' experiences and challenges in managing work-life balance, the themes included Improved Job Satisfaction and Personal Fulfillment, Enhanced Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness, and challenges such as Excessive Workload time Constraints and Lack of Institutional Support for Wellness Programs. Teachers also highlighted the value of a Supportive School Culture and Leadership in maintaining well-being. The second objective focused on coping mechanisms. The emergent themes included Commitment to Professional Responsibility, Resilience and Emotional Strength, and Efforts Toward Healthy Work-Life Integration. The study also generated significant insights in the context of educational management. Themes such as institutional support and leadership responsiveness, strategic implementation of wellness policies, and empowerment of teachers through professional autonomy and collaboration surfaced from the discussions. These findings point to the need for school leaders and policymakers to actively shape supportive environments that promote teacher wellness.

KEY WORDS

1. Life-Work Balance 2. Wellness 3. Coping Mechanisms 4. Supportive environment

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1. Introduction

Promoting work-life balance among teachers is essential for fostering wellness and ensuring high-quality education in schools. Teachers often face demanding workloads, long hours, and the emotional labor associated with their roles, which can lead to stress and burnout if not managed effectively. Schools can support teacher wellness by implementing policies that prioritize reasonable workloads, providing mental health resources, encouraging regular breaks, and creating a positive and supportive work environment. Additionally, professional development sessions focused on time management, stress reduction, and self-care strategies can empower teachers to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal

lives. Ultimately, a healthy and well-supported teaching staff not only enhances job satisfaction but also improves student outcomes, making work-life balance a crucial aspect of school success. In Thailand, Muhtar (2022) observed that work-life balance is recognized globally as the second most important aspect of the workplace. Bloom et al. (2022) argue that while work was once primarily about survival and necessity, it is now viewed not only as a necessity but also as a source of satisfaction. Fisher Layte (2023) identify three distinct measures of work-life balance: the proportion of free time, the overlap between work and other life dimensions, and the time spent with others. In India, Singh (2023) argues that work-life balance has gained popularity because it is essential for societal prosperity, as well as for the well-being and development of both individuals and organizations. However, Murphy and Doherty (2021) contend that it is not feasible to measure work-life balance in absolute terms. Work-life balance is shaped by various personal circumstances, leading to individual perceptions of balance or imbalance that reflect one's priorities. Employees need to differentiate between their professional and personal lives, ensuring that this boundary is clearly defined. Job satisfaction can be understood as the degree of contentment an individual feels regarding their work (Bloom et al., 2002). It embodies an emotionally positive response and attitude toward one's job, representing a general expression of workers' favorable perspectives about their roles (Celik, 2021). In Malaysia, Bradey (2021) notes that job satisfaction is an emotional response derived from the workplace, encompassing more than just salary. Factors such as treatment by colleagues and management's acknowledgment of employee contributions also play a significant role. When an effective balance between work and personal life is achieved, employees not only become more productive but also find greater enjoyment in their work (Akbar and

Hafeez, 2024). Many educators express dissatisfaction regarding their relationships with colleagues, the time allocated for planning and instruction, working conditions, and the overall school environment (Meyer and Turner, 2020). Unfortunately, in numerous developing countries, the issue of teachers' job satisfaction has not received the attention it warrants. This oversight has led to a significant number of teachers leaving the profession, an increase in absenteeism, a rise in student indiscipline, and overall teacher underperformance (Khan, 2024). For example, in Malawi, it was discovered that teachers were particularly unhappy with their compensation and the prevailing working conditions (Kadzamira, 2020). In the Philippines, the absence of wellness programs can significantly impact both teachers and students. This gap can adversely affect students' academic performance, as teachers may struggle to perform at their best in the teaching and learning process (Khan et al., 2022; Swathi Reddy, 2021). Consequently, implementing wellness programs is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education. A stress-free environment signifies freedom from sickness, illness, or disease. In this context, "wellness" refers to the absence of any health issues (Edlin Golanty, 2020). Promoting good health is the most effective way to enhance the quality of life within a community. Engaging in wellness practices can positively impact each individual's life. To achieve this, academic institutions should develop and implement wellness programs that can guide, support, and educate teachers, helping them to maintain physical fitness, emotional stability, spiritual engagement, and a fulfilling professional career (Harding Parsons, 2021). Despite the increasing awareness surrounding teacher burnout, many schools in the Philippines still lack structured wellness programs specifically aimed at supporting educators' physical, mental, and emotional health. Most existing initiatives, when they do exist, tend to be generic or short-

term solutions that fail to tackle the long-term stressors teachers encounter, such as excessive workloads, large class sizes, and administrative pressures. In the absence of institutionalized wellness frameworks, teachers are often left to navigate their stress independently, which can lead to decreased productivity, poor health outcomes, and elevated attrition rates. In Manila, mental health remains a sensitive topic in numerous Filipino communities, and this stigma permeates the education system. Teachers grappling with stress, anxiety, or depression often hesitate to seek professional help due to fears of judgment, misunderstanding, or being labeled as unfit for their roles. This culture of silence obstructs early intervention and fosters an environment where emotional struggles are concealed rather than addressed. Consequently, many educators endure their challenges in silence, further compromising their ability to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Teachers across the Philippines are frequently burdened with responsibilities beyond classroom instruction, including administrative tasks, community work, and extracurricular supervision, often without additional compensation or time allowances. This workload imbalance, coupled with limited resources and insufficient manpower support, results in unrealistic expectations that strain teachers' time and energy. The absence of supportive policies such as flexible scheduling, reduced clerical duties, or accessible counseling services worsens this issue, leaving educators with little room to focus on personal wellness or family life. Human resource offices in Philippine schools are encouraged to establish programs that track wellness and implement institutionalized incentives for employees who maintain their physical well-being (Lope, 2019). Stress is a significant factor that impacts individual health (Swathi Reddy, 2021). It can arise both at home and in the workplace. Stress is an unavoidable aspect of daily life, affecting individuals regardless of their social status. It can stem

from both internal and external environments, influencing personal balance. A notable gap in promoting work-life balance for teachers in the Davao Region is the limited implementation of structured wellness programs tailored to address the unique challenges faced by educators in remote or underserved areas. While research in neighboring divisions, such as Davao Oriental, reveals a positive correlation between quality of work life and job satisfaction among public elementary teachers, there is a dearth of comprehensive data and targeted initiatives that focus on the specific needs of teachers in isolated communities within the Davao Division. This lack of localized wellness programs may lead to increased stress levels and reduced job satisfaction among these educators, ultimately impacting their teaching effectiveness and overall well-being. (EPRA Journals) Moreover, the challenges encountered by teachers in remote areas—such as limited access to resources, professional development opportunities, and support systems—intensify the struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance. To address this issue, a concerted effort from educational authorities is essential to develop and implement wellness programs tailored to the specific circumstances of educators in these regions. By prioritizing the well-being of teachers through targeted support and resources, the Davao Division can enhance teacher satisfaction, reduce burnout, and ultimately improve the quality of education provided to students across all areas.

1.1. Purpose of the Study—The aim of this research is to investigate the experiences of educators in fostering a balance between work and personal life. This research also examines the strategies they employ to tackle these challenges.

1.2. Research Questions—The research sought to explore the difficulties faced by educators in fostering a work-life balance, along with the strategies they employ to manage these challenges. In particular, it aimed to address the

following inquiries:

- (1) What difficulties and experiences do educators face in fostering work- life balance and managing their own well-being?
- (2) How do educators handle the difficulties of maintaining work-life balance in an educational setting?
- (3) What insights related to Educational Management can be derived from the study's findings?

The highlights of this study were significant in the following: Teachers – Promoting work-life balance enhances teachers' physical and mental well-being, reduces burnout, and increases job satisfaction. When teachers are well-supported, they can perform their duties more effectively and maintain a healthier personal life, leading to long-term career sustainability and fulfillment.

Students – Students benefit from having teachers who are mentally present, energized, and emotionally balanced. This leads to improved teaching quality, more engaging classroom environments, and better academic outcomes. A well teacher is more patient, creative, and responsive to student needs. School

Administration – For administrators, supporting teacher wellness reduces absenteeism, turnover rates, and disciplinary issues. It fosters a positive school climate, strengthens staff morale, and contributes to a more stable and productive school environment that is conducive to learning and collaboration

Department of Education – DepEd benefits by achieving higher teacher retention and performance rates, leading to more consistent implementation of educational programs. Promoting work-life balance also aligns with the department's goals of delivering quality, inclusive, and equitable education nationwide.

Policy makers – Gain insights for crafting effective policies that support teacher well-being, helping to build a stronger education workforce. This leads to long-term improvements in national education outcomes and supports the sus-

tainable development of human resources in the country.

Future Researchers – Can explore diverse aspects of teacher wellness, such as its impact on student achievement, school culture, and education reforms. The topic opens up opportunities for interdisciplinary studies in education, psychology, and public policy, contributing to evidence-based solutions for teacher support.

Work-life – Defined as the amount of time you spend doing your job versus the amount of time you spend with loved ones or pursuing personal interests and hobbies

Balance life – Balanced living involves attaining the best health across all areas of your life: your relationships, career, physical fitness, overall health, and emotional well-being.

Wellness – Involves engaging in healthy behaviors on a daily basis to achieve improved physical and mental health results, allowing you to thrive rather than merely survive. To grasp the importance of wellness, it's essential to recognize how it relates to health.

1.3. Review of Significant Literature —

The teaching profession is considered noble, with teachers playing a vital role in shaping students' character and academic development. As Garrison notes, a teacher "activates the magnets of curiosity, knowledge, and wisdom"—highlighting their influence.

1.3.1. Work-Life Balance and Teacher Wellness—Achieving work-life balance (WLB) is critical for teachers' well-being, productivity, and job satisfaction. It affects stress levels, organizational loyalty, and perceptions of sup-

port (Harding Parsons, 2021; Madhurima Das, 2019). Encroachment of work into personal time increases emotional fatigue and burnout (Garcia Bernal et al., 2020; Sunderesan, 2024).

Work-life balance becomes more challenging in education, where teachers often bring work home, such as lesson planning and grading, especially with children at home (Valcour Hunter, 2020). The rise of remote work hasn't alleviated this, as the teaching profession requires physical presence and ongoing emotional engagement (Burke, 2020; Townsend et al., 2020).

Positive WLB is associated with satisfaction and alignment with personal values (Jyothi Jyothi, 2022; Strayhorn, 2019). However, imbalance leads to burnout and turnover, particularly among younger professionals (Grube et al., 2024, 2025; Kuther, 2023).

1.3.2. Psychological Well-Being—Psychological well-being (PWB) involves emotional regulation, personality traits, and resilience (Bradburn, 2019; Ryff, 2019). While technology allows some professionals flexibility (Friedman et al., 2019), this doesn't translate equally for teachers.

Studies show that music, personality, and health status affect well-being (Laukka et al., 2021), and excessive work demands hinder leisure, reducing both job and life satisfaction (Rice et al., 2019; Sheng Chang, 2020).

1.3.3. Teachers' Coping Strategies—Teachers face challenges such as high student-teacher ratios, gender disparity, and lack of resources, especially in low-income areas (UNESCO, 2021; Llyoth Jyoti, 2022). These fac-

1.4. Synthesis—Encouraging a balance between work and personal life in the teaching profession is vital for sustaining teacher well-being, job contentment, and overall efficacy within the school environment. Teachers face growing demands such as excessive workloads, administra-

tors compound the difficulty of achieving WLB. Teachers often work beyond school hours, leading to stress and reduced time for personal life (Harding Parsons, 2021; Akbar et al., 2024).

Research by Aeran Kumar (2019) and Hafeez Akbar (2025) suggests that job satisfaction is moderately affected by WLB, though external pressures like inflation and job scarcity also play roles (Bloom et al., 2022).

Demographic variables such as dependent care impact WLB more than professional experience or family structure (Brady Wilson, 2021; Sathiyamoorthy, 2019).

1.3.4. Work-Leisure Conflict—Work-leisure conflict manifests in time, strain, and behavior-based dimensions (Tsaur et al., 2022; Sauri et al., 2023), negatively impacting well-being, leisure satisfaction, and family life (Sheng Chang, 2020; Brady et al., 2020; Deng Gao, 2019).

1.3.5. Promoting Work-Life Balance in Schools—Effective leadership and supervisor support enhance WLB by offering empathy, flexibility, and wellness programs (Straub Hagiwara, 2021; Eisenberger Stinglhamber, 2021). Wellness programs reduce stress, improve health, and increase job satisfaction (Owen Celik, 2021; Travis, 2022; Kolbe-Alexander et al., 2022).

Such initiatives support a positive school climate and empower teachers to manage stress and role demands (Christensen, 2023; Harney, 2020). Supportive environments, especially for female professionals facing overlapping roles, are crucial for maintaining quality of life and performance (Wachira et al., 2019).

tive responsibilities, and emotional labor that, if unmanaged, can lead to stress and burnout. A balanced professional and personal life enables teachers to preserve their mental and physical health, allowing them to stay motivated and dedicated to their teaching roles. By creating

an environment that values teacher well-being, schools can foster a culture of care and sustainability within the education system. The absence of structured wellness programs, mental health stigma, and lack of institutional support are significant gaps that hinder the promotion of work-life balance among educators, particularly in the Philippines. Teachers in rural and underserved areas face even greater challenges due to limited access to support systems and resources. These conditions often result in a diminished teaching force, negatively affecting both instruction quality and student learning. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts from school administrators, the Department of Education, and policymakers to develop and imple-

ment responsive wellness strategies tailored to the realities of the teaching profession. Investing in teacher wellness benefits multiple stakeholders. Teachers become more productive and fulfilled, students experience improved instruction and emotional support, and schools enjoy greater staff stability and performance. At the policy level, supporting work-life balance contributes to a resilient and high-quality education system. It also provides future researchers with a foundation for further inquiry into effective wellness interventions. Therefore, promoting teacher work-life balance is not just an individual need it is a systemic priority that strengthens the entire educational landscape.

1.5. Theoretical Lens—This research is based on Wilensky’s Spillover Theory (1960). In recent years, much of the literature concerning work-life balance theories has concentrated on both positive and negative spillover (Zedeck, 1992). Initially introduced by Wilensky (1960), the spillover model suggests that experiences from the work environment can flow into non-work areas, creating a perception where the social experiences related to work and non-work for an individual are essentially limitless (Parker, 1971). Conceptually, spillover is often described as Positive Spillover and Negative Spillover. The Spillover Theory, proposed by Harold Wilensky in 1960, explores the interconnectedness of work and personal life, emphasizing how experiences in one domain can influence the other. According to Wilensky, the emotions, behaviors, and attitudes individuals develop in the workplace often “spill over” into their home lives and vice versa. This theory challenges the earlier belief that work and personal life are separate spheres, suggesting instead that they are closely linked and that one’s satisfaction or stress in one area may directly impact the other. Wilensky categorized

spillover into two types: positive and negative. Positive spillover occurs when satisfaction and skills from one domain enhance performance and well-being in the other. For instance, a person who is fulfilled at work may carry that positive energy into their personal relationships. On the other hand, negative spillover arises when stress or dissatisfaction in one area adversely affects the other. An overworked employee might bring irritability home, leading to strained family interactions. This dual nature of spillover underscores its significant role in shaping overall well-being. The theory also emphasizes the bidirectional nature of the spillover effect. While work can influence personal life, the reverse is also true—events at home can affect one’s performance at work. Family problems, for example, might cause distraction or emotional fatigue during working hours, which can reduce productivity. This perspective encourages a more holistic view of an individual’s experience by acknowledging how intertwined these domains are, rather than treating them as isolated compartments. In application, Wilensky’s Spillover Theory has greatly influenced fields such as organizational psychology, human re-

source management, and work-life balance studies. Employers have recognized the importance of managing employee well-being both inside and outside the workplace. Flexible work schedules, mental health programs, and family support policies are examples of practical responses influenced by the spillover concept, aiming to enhance both job satisfaction and life satisfaction. In conclusion, Wilensky's Spillover Theory provides a foundational understanding of how work and personal life interact. It offers a valuable framework for analyzing both the benefits and challenges that arise when boundaries between these areas blur. By highlighting the fluid nature of experiences across life domains, the theory advocates for more integrated and supportive approaches in both organizational practices and personal well-being strategies. Positive spillover is discussed in the literature under various terms such as extension, generalization, familiarity, identity, isomorphism, continuation, and congruence (Staines, 1980). Positive spillover indicates that beneficial experiences in one area can lead to fulfillment and success in another area (Travis, 2022). The negative perspective, also known as contrast, complementarity, opposition, regeneration heteromorphism, and others, suggests that the relationship between work and non-work domains is inverse and antagonistic (Thompson Porto, 2022). Additionally, spillover has been classified as Vertical and Horizontal Spillover. Horizontal spillover refers to the influence one life domain has on an adjacent one; for example, how job satisfaction can impact personal life. Vertical spillover is conceptualized in terms of domain hierarchy, representing the ranked organization of life domains such as job, family, leisure, and so on, according to Thornhill and Saunders (2020). Satisfaction or dissatisfaction in a lower-ranking domain spills over into a higher-ranking domain. Overall life, being the most dominant domain, tends to experience the most significant impact (Sirima Poipoi, 2020). Several re-

searchers have incorporated the spillover effect into measurement scales. The first empirical assessment of work-life balance can be traced back to Swathi and Reddy (2021), who created the Work Spillover Scale (WSS). Straub and Hagiwara (2022), acknowledging both positive and negative spillover effects, developed a 16-item scale to measure the ramifications of work-family spillover. This was succeeded by Singh (2023), who introduced a four-factor model evaluating negative work-to-family spillover, negative family-to-work spillover, positive work-to-family spillover, and positive family-to-work spillover. Additional measures and scales related to spillover assessment have been developed, including the interdomain conflict evaluation of positive and negative spillover by Swarbrick and D' Antonio (2021), which employs role enhancement theory to create metrics for positive, negative, and neutral effects of work-family spillover. Despite the substantial research on spillover, it has its critics. Subha (2023) critiques the spillover theory, arguing that as a proposition, it is presented too generally, providing little value and indicating the need for a thorough examination of causes, reasons, and effects. Table no. 3 includes some published studies on Spillover theory. Spillover theory describes the conditions under which the interaction between the work microsystem and the family microsystem can be positive or negative. Research shows that when work-family interactions are strictly organized in terms of time and space, the spillover regarding time, energy, and behavior is typically negative. The conceptual framework of the research is illustrated in Figure 1. As depicted in the figure, there are three connected variables. The challenges faced by teachers in achieving work-life balance, through a qualitative inquiry that enables researchers and educators to develop the essential skills, knowledge, and focus for engaging in meaningful exploration of their professional practices, would enhance these practices

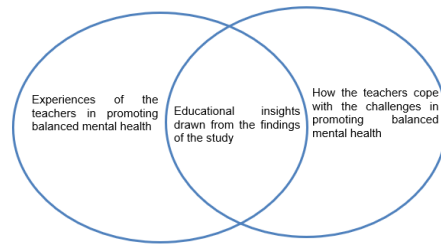


Fig. 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study

and their strategies for coping with challenges. the significance of examining the challenges
There is a genuine concern observable in the and coping strategies of special education teach-
first circle, which links to the second circle; ers for the enhancement of the teaching and
however, the center of the two circles highlights learning process.

2. Methodology

This chapter presents a description of the research design, philosophical assumptions, research participants and sampling methods, ethical considerations, research instruments, data collection, and data analysis. The three most common qualitative methods are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. Each method is particularly suited for obtaining specific types of data. Participant observation is effective for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviors within their natural contexts. In-depth interviews (IDIs) are optimal for gathering data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, especially when sensitive topics are being explored. Focus groups are useful for eliciting data about the cultural norms of a group and for generating broad overviews of issues relevant to the cultural groups or subgroups represented. Patton (2022) defined phenomenology as an inquiry that asks the question: "What is the structure and essence of the experience of this phenomenon for these people?" The goal of this research aligns well with this definition, as it seeks to understand the challenges faced by floating teachers. Giorgi (2019) cautioned researchers to be prepared for an investigation that may be deeper and broader than the initial description suggests. He advised that the information gathered should be seen as just the tip of the iceberg.

2.1. Philosophical Assumptions—The philosophical assumption serves as a framework for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data within a particular field of study. It sets the foundation for the conclusions and decisions that follow. Various types of philosophical assumptions are typically outlined, as described below. Effective research begins with the identification of a topic, problem, or area of interest, in addition to the paradigm. Stanage (2019) traces the origin of the term 'paradigm' back to its Greek (paradeigma) and Latin roots (paradigm), which translate to pattern, model, or example. A paradigm represents the way a person's thinking is patterned; it acts as a principal example to emulate, guiding the design of actions taken. In simpler terms, a paradigm involves adhering to a particular perspective (Stanage, 2019). This perspective is further supported by Denzin and Lincoln (2020), who characterize a research paradigm as a "basic set of beliefs that guide action," addressing foundational principles or the researcher's worldview or philosophy. In the process of developing research methodologies,

three categories of philosophical assumptions are employed. Epistemological assumptions focus on the subjective evidence gathered from field studies. Axiological assumptions consider the biases of the researcher and actively acknowledge them, helping to determine whether the behavior observed is a result of the environment or whether it shapes the behavior (Pring, 2014). Ontological assumptions pertain to the reality of the subject being researched. The latter assumption aligns best with my study as a qualitative researcher, as I believe these realities are perceived differently by individuals. I also hold that these realities are profoundly influenced by their experiences. This proposed study, utilizing phenomenology as a methodology, centers on teachers' perspectives, emotions, experiences, and thoughts regarding their acquired knowledge, values, and skills. It adopts a realistic ontology that acknowledges a physical world where I, as the researcher, assume the existence of causal relationships. However, rather than viewing it solely as mechanical cause-and-effect, this study proposes that certain realities exist in the world and may influence how teachers advance to the next level. Consequently, qualitative researchers who adopt a realistic ontology do so with the understanding of causal relationships.

Ontology – This segment of the research focuses on how the issue is connected to the nature of reality. Creswell (2020) suggests that reality is subjective and multifaceted as perceived by the participants in the study. The ontological concern addresses the nature of reality for the qualitative investigator. Reality is shaped by the individuals involved in the research context, resulting in multiple realisms—such as those of the researcher, the subjects being studied, and the readers or audiences interpreting the findings. In this research, the various realities associated with the implementation of online distance learning during the pandemic were explored, given the absence of face-to-face

classes. In this study, I drew from the voices and insights of the participants through comprehensive quotes and themes that mirrored their words and served as evidence of differing viewpoints. The participants' responses were coded and analyzed to identify both commonalities and discrepancies among their answers. I ensured meticulous coding of the participants' responses to maintain the reliability of the findings. The researcher upheld the authenticity of their responses while consciously avoiding personal biases throughout the study.

Epistemology – This concept refers to the understanding of how knowledge claims are validated by maintaining proximity to the participants during the study to gather firsthand information. Guba and Lincoln (2019), as referenced by Creswell (2019), assert that regarding epistemological assumptions, the researcher aims to minimize distance from the participants. They emphasize that as researchers, we should collaborate, spend time in the participant's environment, and assume the role of an "insider." Based on insights from Davidson (2020) and Jones (2021), I align phenomenology with thematic analysis as the most suitable approach for this study. Consequently, individual researchers "hold explicit beliefs." The objective of this research was to collect crucial information about the learners' experiences related to tardiness in the newly implemented face-to-face classes. I committed to fostering close interaction with the participants to gain direct insights that illuminate the underlying knowledge regarding the experiences of learners as they navigated their teaching activities during remote learning. Axiology pertains to the influence of values in research. Creswell (2019) asserts that values play a significant role in a study. The concept of axiology suggests that the researcher should transparently discuss the values that shape the narrative and incorporate their interpretations alongside those of the participants. I value and respect every detail of the information gathered

from the participants. The researcher acknowledges the personal and value-laden nature of the data collected from this study. Therefore, I have preserved the integrity of each participant's responses and carefully interpreted their answers in light of their personal viewpoints.

Rhetoric – This philosophical premise emphasizes that the researcher can write in a literary and informal style using a personal tone, employing qualitative terminology and limited definitions. Within the context of the study, the researcher utilized the first person to articulate the experiences and coping strategies of the learners and thoroughly examined their responses during the interviews. As a researcher, I align with the postmodern philosophy of Afzal-os Sadat Hossieni (2021). I believe that educational ob-

jectives include fostering critical thinking, generating knowledge, developing individual and social identities, and supporting self-creation. In a postmodern educational framework, teachers facilitate student discovery rather than direct their learning. They provide opportunities for exploring various subjects and encourage creative expression. In this scenario, students learn to listen to diverse perspectives, accept others' critiques, and engage in critical thinking. They develop respect for different cultures and nationalities and emphasize collaborative learning, independent study, and dialectical, critical, and communicative methods. It follows that postmodernism and creativity are inherently interconnected, a relationship evident in postmodern education

2.2. Qualitative Assumptions—The methodology adopted is a creative and adaptable approach to exploring questions and subject matter, while the method denotes the specific knowledge and procedures involved (Gerodias, 2019). This study revealed the experiences and coping mechanisms of physical education teachers through their personal narratives, particularly focusing on those from Imelda Elementary School, Tugbok B District, Davao City Division. The researcher's desire to uncover the deeper significance of the challenges faced by teachers served as the foundation for conducting qualitative research, which Kalof and Dietz (2019), as cited by Gerodias (2019), viewed as beneficial in seeking the "meanings and motivations underlying cultural symbols, personal experiences." Utilizing phenomenology, the aim was to address this need by narrating the experiences of the floating teachers in a way that, as David (2020) noted, reveals the themes, symbols, and meanings inherent in those expe-

riences. Phenomenological research is founded on two key principles. The first is that experience serves as a rich, valid, and rewarding source of knowledge. Becker (2019), as referenced in Morrissey Higgs (2019), states that experience informs knowledge and shapes individual behavior. From this definition, human experience is regarded as a fundamental basis for understanding human phenomena rather than being seen as an unreliable source. The second principle of phenomenological research is the notion that the everyday world provides a meaningful and productive source of knowledge, enabling us to gain significant insights into the nature of an event by examining how it manifests in our daily lives (Morrissey Higgs, 2019). Through phenomenology, which explores the "what" and the "how" (Moustakas, 1995), the researcher anticipated that the subjective experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of the teachers could be examined, leading to insights that might inform future research and policy analysis related to this study.

2.3. Design and Procedure—

This research adopts a qualitative research design that employs a phenomenological methodology. As stated by Hancock et al. (2019), qualitative research addresses questions pertaining to societal issues. It raises inquiries regarding the reasons behind people's behaviors, the possible opinions and attitudes shaped in various situations, how individuals are influenced by society in their actions, and the development of societal practices and culture. Phenomenology, as both a philosophy and method of inquiry, extends beyond a mere approach to knowledge; it represents an intellectual engagement focused on interpretations and meaning-making aimed at understanding the lived experiences of individuals on a conscious level. Within a phenomenological inquiry, the researcher can utilize interviews, observations, and discussions as methods of data collection; thus, phenomenology encompasses both philosophical and methodological dimensions (Qutoshi, 2018). Phenomenology serves as a qualitative research approach that empha-

sizes the shared nature of a lived experience within a specific group. The primary objective of this methodology is to articulate a description of the essence of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Generally, interviews are conducted with individuals who possess personal knowledge of a particular event, situation, or experience. The interviews seek to answer two broad questions (Moustakas, 1994): What have you encountered regarding this phenomenon? What contexts or circumstances have typically shaped your experiences of this phenomenon (Creswell, 2013)? Additional forms of data, such as documents, observations, and artistic expressions, may also be incorporated. The data is then analyzed through a process of repeated reading and identification of phrases and themes, which are subsequently organized into clusters of meaning (Creswell, 2013). Through this analytical process, the researcher aims to construct a universal understanding of the event, situation, or experience, thereby attaining a deeper comprehension of the phenomenon.

2.4. Ethical Considerations—In this section, I outlined the ethical principles that guided my research, ensuring the protection and well-being of the ten teacher participants from Imelda Elementary School, Tugbok B District, Davao City Division, as they shared their experiences and insights related to work-life balance and wellness in the school setting. These principles included my commitment to promoting social value by contributing to improved teacher support systems, obtaining informed consent to ensure participants' voluntary and well-understood involvement, and addressing any potential vulnerabilities of respondents due to their roles within the school system. I upheld privacy and confidentiality in all stages of data handling, carefully assessed and minimized risks while maximizing the benefits and safety for participants, and ensured justice by treat-

ing all respondents fairly and equitably. Transparency was maintained throughout the study, and I acknowledged my role and qualifications as the researcher. I also addressed any potential conflicts of interest, ensured that adequate resources were in place to conduct the research responsibly, and considered the community relevance of this study to support well-being and sustainable practices for educators.

Social Value – I recognized the significant social value of this research. By exploring teachers' experiences and perspectives on work-life balance and wellness at Kinamayan Integrated School, I aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of the support systems and policy interventions needed to enhance teacher well-being. The findings proved valuable not only for school-level improvements but also for informing the Department of Education, school ad-

ministrators, and policymakers in the Davao del Norte Division and beyond. Promoting teacher wellness was seen as a step toward a more sustainable teaching force, improved job satisfaction, and better learning environments for students.

Informed Consent – I ensured that each of the ten teacher participants from Imelda Elementary School, Tugbok B District, Davao City Division provided informed consent. Prior to their involvement, I clearly explained the purpose of the study, the data collection methods (such as interviews or focus group discussions), the estimated time required, and their full right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence. A comprehensive consent form was provided, and participation only proceeded after confirming that each participant fully understood the information and voluntarily agreed to take part.

Vulnerability of Research Respondents – I acknowledged that teachers might have felt cautious about discussing their wellness and work-life balance, particularly when it involved concerns about workload, administrative expectations, or burnout. Recognizing this potential vulnerability, I fostered an environment of trust and respect, where teachers felt safe to express their views. I emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and guaranteed that responses would remain confidential and anonymized. My aim was to ensure that their insights were shared honestly and safely, without any fear of professional repercussions.

Privacy and Confidentiality – The privacy and confidentiality of all participants were safeguarded throughout the research process. Teachers' identities and personal details were not disclosed. All data were stored securely and accessed only by me as the researcher. Participants were assigned codes, and all findings were presented in a generalized or grouped manner to ensure that no individual or school could be identified.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety – I carefully assessed the potential risks associated with this research, which were minimal and primarily involved the time required and the emotional reflection on their work-life challenges. However, the potential benefits were substantial. Teachers were given the opportunity to share their lived experiences, which informed future wellness initiatives and school policies. The study aimed to provide actionable insights that could improve teacher support systems, reduce stress, and enhance work satisfaction. All data collection activities were scheduled with consideration of their workload and well-being.

Justice – To ensure justice, participants were selected from diverse teaching roles within Imelda Elementary School, Tugbok B District, Davao City Division to reflect a broad range of experiences. The findings were shared with the school and the participants, providing them with access to information that could support wellness-focused improvements. This inclusive approach aimed to ensure that the benefits of the research were shared equitably among those involved.

Transparency – I maintained transparency throughout the research process by keeping participants informed about the study's purpose, methods, and how their input would be used. Open communication was prioritized, and participants had opportunities to ask questions or seek clarification at any point during the study. This promoted trust and ensured that participants felt respected and valued.

Qualification of the Researcher – As the researcher, I brought relevant academic and practical experience in educational research and teacher support systems. I possessed the necessary skills in qualitative methodologies, particularly in conducting interviews and thematic analysis, which allowed me to gather and interpret meaningful data. My understanding of ethical research practices ensured that the sensitive topic of teacher wellness was approached

with care, respect, and professionalism.

Conflict of Interest – I remained vigilant regarding any potential conflicts of interest that could have arisen from personal or professional relationships with Kinamayan Integrated School, the participating teachers, or the Department of Education. Should any conflict have been identified, I was prepared to disclose it transparently and take appropriate measures to maintain the integrity and objectivity of the research.

Adequacy of Resources – I ensured that the research was conducted with adequate planning and resources. All data collection activities were organized at times and locations convenient for the teacher participants, with minimal

disruption to their duties. I provided the necessary materials and support to ensure a smooth, respectful, and comfortable participation process.

Community Involvement – This research held strong relevance for the school community, particularly as it aimed to highlight teacher wellness and promote sustainable work practices. The findings served as a valuable resource for school and district administrators to design targeted interventions that support teacher well-being. Ultimately, supporting teachers' work-life balance helped foster a more nurturing school environment, benefiting both educators and learners.

2.5. Research Participants —In selecting the research participants, a purposive sampling method will be utilized. Purposive sampling is a technique where the researcher uses their judgment to select individuals from the population to take part in the study. This method is non-probability based, meaning that the elements chosen for the sample are based on the researcher's discretion. Researchers often believe that using informed judgment can lead to a representative sample, which ultimately saves time and resources (Black, 2020). In this investigation, appropriate samples include public school teachers, whether male or female, from Imelda Elementary School in the Tugbok B District, Davao City Division. The in-depth interview will consist of seven informants. Additionally, to ensure participant confidentiality, coding will be implemented. The coding scheme used for the informants in the in-depth interview will

range from IDI-FTA to IDI-FTJ. In this study, I played various roles to attain the success of the study. First, asked for permission to conduct the study, which will start with the Schools Division Superintendent and then with the participants of my study. As a researcher, if consented, I recorded the actual interview to meet the needs in this type of research. The interview's goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of teachers in the new normal way of teaching and learning. The interview would also include how the Department of Education should improve its programs. After the needed data had been gathered, everything had been transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. However, human instruments are more important to be studied in case that the quality of this research has to deal with biases and assumptions in dealing with the persons involved in the research (Greenbank, 2019).

2.6. Research Instrument —In this research, I employed an Interview Guide Question Tool featuring sub-questions for conducting virtual in-depth interviews and focus group discus-

sions, which can be executed either online or in person. This tool served as my reference during interviews with the chosen elementary teachers, who participated in the recorded virtual in-depth

interviews and focus group discussions. The purpose was to address the research questions and gather additional insights that could be utilized in my study. To address the validity issues of this design specifically on the method, I asked for help from the experts. My interview guide question tool was checked and validated by the experts. The sampling that I used for the selection of my participants followed the suggestions of the expert panels. In this study, I played various roles to attain the success of the study. First, asked for permission to conduct the study which will start with the Schools Division Superintendent and then with the participants of my study. As a researcher, if consented, I recorded the

actual interview to achieve the needs in this type of research. The interview's goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of teachers in the new normal way of teaching and learning. The interview would also include how the Department of Education should improve its programs. After the needed data had been gathered, everything had been transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. However, human instruments are more important to be studied in case the quality of this research has to deal with biases and assumptions in dealing with the persons involved in the research (Greenbank, 2019).

2.7. Role of the Researcher—In my study, “Promoting Work-Life Balance: Managing Teacher Wellness in a School Setting,” the role of the researcher was central to ensuring that the research process was conducted ethically, responsibly, and with sensitivity to the personal and professional realities of the teacher participants. My primary responsibility was to guide the research from its design to its conclusion while safeguarding the rights and well-being of the ten teacher participants from Imelda Elementary School.

Facilitator of Data Collection – As the researcher, I was responsible for designing the study and developing appropriate data collection tools such as interviews or focus group discussion guides. I provided clear, comprehensive explanations of the study's objectives and procedures to ensure participants fully understood their involvement. I also obtained informed consent and established a welcoming, respectful environment where teachers felt comfortable discussing their experiences with work-life bal-

ance and wellness. Sensitivity to their time and emotional well-being was prioritized throughout.

Ensuring Ethical Standards – Upholding ethical standards was an integral part of my role. I ensured that all participants voluntarily joined the study, with full assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. I respected their time and boundaries, minimizing any inconvenience or discomfort. This included securely handling all data and adhering strictly to institutional research ethics. My commitment to creating a safe and non-judgmental space empowered teachers to share their authentic experiences.

Neutral and Objective Observer – While collecting and analyzing data, I remained a neutral and objective observer, avoiding any influence on participants' responses. My role was to listen deeply, not to judge or shape their narratives. This impartiality was essential to ensure the credibility of the research findings and to accurately reflect the diverse experiences and perspectives of teachers regarding their wellness and work-life balance.

2.8. Data Analysis—

After data collection, I took on the task of analyzing the responses rigorously and ethically. I identified emerging themes related to stressors, coping strategies, institutional support, and the challenges teachers faced in balancing work and personal life. My analysis aimed to preserve the integrity of each participant's voice and draw out insights that could inform meaningful improvements in school wellness policies and practices.

Reflection and Self-Awareness – Throughout the research process, I engaged in continuous self-reflection to identify and mitigate any personal biases that might have influenced the study. Being aware of my assumptions and positionality was essential to ensure that I remained focused on amplifying the participants' voices rather than filtering them through my own perspectives. Ethical reflection guided my responses to any challenges encountered during the study.

Ensuring Transparency and Rigor – Transparency was maintained by keeping participants well-informed about the research process and their role in it. I documented the research steps thoroughly and ensured that findings were reported honestly, with adherence to qualitative research standards. My commitment to rigor

helped ensure that the results were not only academically sound but also practically useful to school administrators and policymakers aiming to improve teacher wellness.

Providing Feedback and Disseminating Results – Part of my ethical responsibility was to provide participants the option to be informed about the study's outcomes. I ensured that findings were presented in an accessible and respectful manner to stakeholders, including the school administration, Department of Education officials, and fellow educators. The dissemination of results honored the contributions of all participants while upholding their confidentiality. In summary, the role of the researcher in this study extended beyond simply gathering data—it involved cultivating trust, ensuring ethical integrity, analyzing data with care, and representing the lived realities of teachers with accuracy and respect. By promoting a research environment built on openness, empathy, and fairness, I aimed to produce findings that not only advanced academic understanding but also drove real-world improvements in teacher support systems. This commitment ensured that the study offered both scholarly value and practical insights into enhancing the wellness and work-life balance of educators.

2.9. Data Collection—The researcher obtained permission from the participants in the form of a letter. After receiving approval, the designated methods of data collection in the qualitative design were employed. For selecting research participants, purposive sampling was utilized. This sampling technique involved the researcher using their judgment to choose individuals from the population to take part in the study. It is a non-probability sampling approach, where elements selected for the sample are based on the researcher's discretion. The researcher believed that a representative sample could be achieved through careful judgment,

leading to time and resource efficiency (Black, 2020). In this research, appropriate samples included all teachers from Imelda Elementary School, Tugbok B District, in the Davao City Division. Seven participants were involved in the virtual in-depth interviews. Furthermore, to maintain the confidentiality of the participants, coding was implemented. Participants were labeled with IDI-1 to IDI-7 in the in-depth interview process. The researcher aimed to establish a subjective connection with the study's participants. Naturalistic techniques like interviewing and audio recording were primarily employed, and the interpretive paradigm was adopted. In-

terpretive approaches leaned significantly on naturalistic methods such as interviews, observations, and the examination of existing texts. These techniques facilitated meaningful interactions between the researcher and participants to collaboratively create a significant reality. Yin, as referenced by Aquilam (2019), proposed various forms of data collection, including documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. To gather authentic and reliable data regarding teachers' experiences with the new normal approach to teaching and learning, the researcher conducted both in-depth interviews

and focus group discussions. The purpose of these interviews was to collect insights on the feelings and experiences of Non-Special Education teachers in public schools. Participants were invited to respond in the manner they felt most at ease. The interviews conducted with participants were transcribed verbatim. Finally, the researcher utilized discourse analysis and thematic analysis to interpret the collected data. Creswell (2019) recommended that after conducting the study, data should be organized in such a way that it remains easily accessible and safeguarded against damage or loss.

2.10. Data Analysis —In examining the qualitative data, I employed both discourse analysis and thematic analysis. Discourse analysis emphasizes language usage and the patterns of language utilized by the study's informants as demonstrated in the comprehensive transcripts of recorded conversations (Bueno, 2019). The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions will undergo transcription and analysis. An aspect of the analysis involved identifying the

challenges, coping strategies, and leadership behaviors exhibited by female school leaders. Thematic analysis serves as a technique for discovering, examining, and documenting patterns within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2019). This method is commonly applied in qualitative research. Throughout this study, I searched for patterns and themes that emerged from the transcribed in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

2.11. Analytical Framework —The analytical framework utilized for this study was sufficiently adaptable, allowing the researcher to either collect all data before analyzing it or to assess it concurrently with data gathering. During the analysis phase, the collected data was sorted, organized into charts, and categorized according to key themes and topics. This approach included familiarization, coding, the creation of a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping, and interpretation (Ritchie Spencer, 2019). The initial step involved carefully reading and rereading all of the transcribed interviews. This step was vital as it enabled the researchers to immerse themselves in the data, ensuring complete comprehension of the content and context of the

participants' responses. Through repeated engagement with the transcripts, the researcher began to notice recurring themes, patterns, and nuances that might not have been obvious at first. This process established a solid foundation for further analysis. In the second step, the researcher identified significant statements from the transcribed interviews. These particular phrases or sentences were directly related to the phenomenon under investigation. The objective was to pinpoint the most pertinent and impactful sections of the data that would contribute to a richer understanding of the topic. By concentrating on these key statements, the researcher encapsulated the essence of the participants' experiences and insights. The third

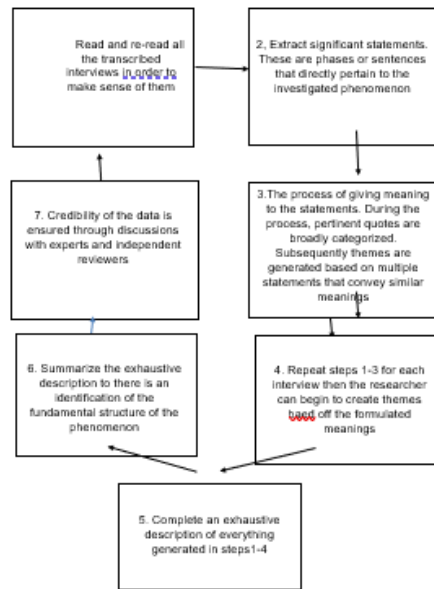


Fig. 2. Analytical Framework of the Study (Ritchie Spencer, 2019)

step involved attributing meaning to the significant statements that were extracted. During this phase, the researcher organized relevant quotes into broader themes. This necessitated interpreting the statements to uncover their underlying meanings and implications. By arranging the data into themes, the researcher began to recognize how different elements of the participants' experiences interconnected and related to the overall phenomenon being examined. In the fourth step, the researcher repeated steps one through three for each individual interview.

This detailed summary included all significant statements, their meanings, and the themes identified. The final step was to validate the credibility of the data through discussions with experts and independent reviewers. By seeking external confirmation, the researcher ensured the accuracy and reliability of the findings. These discussions helped to identify any

2.12. Trustworthiness of the Study—The notions of validity and reliability are generally unfamiliar within the realm of qualitative research. Rather than concentrating on reliability

This iterative approach guaranteed that all interviews were analyzed with the same level of thoroughness. By addressing each interview separately and then comparing themes across them, the researcher uncovered commonalities and differences among the participants' experiences. This stage was crucial for constructing a solid and comprehensive analysis. Upon completing the initial analysis of all interviews, the researcher assembled a thorough description encompassing everything generated in the previous steps.

potential biases or gaps in the analysis, ensuring that the conclusions drawn were strongly supported by the data. This step was essential for enhancing the research's trustworthiness and validity. By following these steps systematically, the researcher conducted a thorough and credible phenomenological analysis that provided deep insights into the phenomenon under study.

and validity, qualitative researchers emphasize the concept of data trustworthiness. This trustworthiness comprises several elements: credibility, transferability, dependability, and con-

firmability (Harts, 2019). Credibility enhances the belief in the trustworthiness of data by highlighting the aspect of prolonged engagement. To tackle the issue of credibility, I aimed to interview as many research participants as possible, or until I reached saturation. Transferability pertains to how well the findings of one study can be applied to different contexts. In positivist research, the focus often centers on showing that the results can be generalized to a broader population, while qualitative research findings are typically specific to a limited number of particular environments and individuals. It is not feasible to prove that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other contexts and populations. Therefore, to guarantee transferability, I accepted my responsibility as a researcher to provide adequate contextual information about the fieldwork sites, allowing the reader to make such a transfer. Confirmability relates objectivity in science to the use of tools that are

not dependent on human skill and perception. However, achieving true objectivity is challenging, as even tests and questionnaires are created by humans, making the influence of the researcher's biases unavoidable. In this case, measures must be implemented to ensure, as much as possible, that the findings stem from the participants' experiences and ideas rather than the researcher's attributes and preferences. Dependability requires confirming that the findings, interpretations, and recommendations of my study are backed by the data obtained from the participants. I took measures to allow participants to review the findings to verify that the study's outcomes accurately reflected their experiences. Furthermore, the dependability of the study can be validated by other researchers who could confirm the consistency of the data and conclusions through a similar process, thus reinforcing the findings' reliability.

3. Results and Discussions

This study section addresses the research questions and their related answers based on the participants' feedback. The investigation explored teachers' experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights as they navigate the blended learning of scientific concepts.

3.1. Experiences And Challenges Of Teachers In Promoting Work-Life Balance and Managing The Teacher's Wellness—Educators worldwide have increasingly recognized the importance of re-evaluating their professional roles and responsibilities to maintain a healthy work-life balance. As teaching demands evolve in both traditional and digital learning environments, schools have introduced various strategies to promote teacher wellness. Blended work models—such as flexible scheduling, task-sharing, and the integration of well-being practices—have emerged as responses to the increasing stress and workload associated with modern teaching roles. These approaches combine in-person collaboration with digital tools to man-

age responsibilities more efficiently and reduce burnout. This aligns with findings by Emmanuel et al. (2020), who noted that the successful integration of wellness-oriented tools and schedules contributes significantly to teacher satisfaction and retention. Resources like mental health support platforms, time-management tools, and digital wellness programs empower educators to manage professional duties without compromising personal well-being. Furthermore, Fisher et al. (2021) emphasized that the effectiveness of wellness strategies varies based on individual teacher needs and teaching contexts. Just as blended learning adapts to student levels, promoting teacher wellness requires a differentiated approach—offering flexible hours, support-

ive leadership, and mental health days. While educators report challenges such as the need for better administrative support and increased preparation time for self-care integration, many also highlight benefits like improved job satisfaction, reduced stress, and a more positive school climate.

Improved Job Satisfaction and Personal Fulfillment – Teachers who effectively promote work-life balance often report higher job satisfaction. Balancing professional responsibilities with personal time leads to a greater sense of accomplishment and well-being, which translates into more motivated and engaged teaching. Work-life balance plays a significant role in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and personal fulfillment. When educators are able to allocate adequate time between their professional duties and personal lives, they tend to feel more accomplished and motivated in their roles. According to Parasuraman et al. (2021), teachers who maintain a healthy work-life balance experience reduced stress levels, leading to higher satisfaction both in and out of the classroom. This balance allows them to recharge emotionally and physically, which positively influences their teaching performance and overall sense of purpose. Furthermore, Mani and Smriti (2021) emphasized that personal fulfillment is closely tied to having sufficient time for self-care, family, and hobbies, which in turn enhances teachers' dedication and enthusiasm in their professional responsibilities. The narrative above from the teachers is a personal reflection that underscores the importance of intentional time management and boundary-setting in promoting teacher wellness. The experience shared reveals how unmanaged workloads and blurred lines between professional and personal life can lead to burnout and emotional exhaustion. However, by making conscious changes such as prioritizing rest, quality time with family, and personal health, teachers can experience renewed energy, joy, and presence both inside

and outside the classroom. The result is not only improved well-being for the teacher but also a positive ripple effect on student engagement and classroom dynamics. Furthermore, this narrative highlights a critical aspect of work-life balance—emotional regulation and its influence on professional performance. When teachers prioritize their own wellness, it enhances their capacity to connect with students, create a supportive learning environment, and perform their roles with greater fulfillment. This insight supports the growing call for systemic support structures in schools that acknowledge and nurture the holistic well-being of educators. According to Ryan and Kossek (2020), teachers who actively manage their work-life boundaries and practice self-care experience higher job satisfaction, reduced stress, and improved professional performance. Their study emphasizes that achieving a healthy work-life balance is not only essential for educators' mental and emotional health but also significantly benefits student outcomes and overall school effectiveness.

Enhanced Productivity and Teaching Effectiveness – When teachers are well-rested and mentally healthy, they perform better in the classroom. Many educators share that having a balanced life allows them to plan lessons more effectively, engage more deeply with students, and maintain better classroom management. When teachers are well-rested and mentally healthy, their overall performance in the classroom significantly improves. A balanced life enables them to approach their teaching responsibilities with renewed energy and focus, which enhances the quality of lesson planning and delivery. Educators who prioritize their well-being often report being more present and patient with their students, allowing for deeper engagement and stronger teacher-student relationships. This balance also supports better classroom management, as emotionally stable teachers can respond more calmly and constructively to behavioral challenges. Ultimately,

when teachers take care of their physical and mental health, it positively affects not only their professional effectiveness but also the learning environment they create for their students. Achieving work-life balance has been closely linked to increased productivity and teaching effectiveness among educators. When teachers are able to manage their personal and professional responsibilities harmoniously, they are more likely to experience reduced stress, better time management, and improved focus in their instructional roles (Mani Smriti, 2021). This balance allows teachers to approach classroom tasks with greater clarity and enthusiasm, enhancing lesson delivery, student engagement, and academic outcomes. Furthermore, maintaining a balanced lifestyle contributes to sustained motivation and creativity, which are crucial in adapting to diverse learner needs and educational challenges (Thompson Porto, 2022). As teachers thrive personally, their professional performance is also elevated, resulting in a more dynamic and effective teaching-learning process. The participants' narratives in the in-depth interviews revealed their thoughts and feelings about the topics. Setting healthy boundaries between work and personal life can lead to significant improvements in a teacher's professional performance. As highlighted in the statement, avoiding the habit of bringing work home and prioritizing rest allows teachers to recharge mentally and physically. This change can lead to more efficient lesson planning and better focus during school hours. When teachers are less fatigued, they become more organized, better prepared, and able to deliver lessons with clarity and purpose, reducing the stress of rushing through tasks. Moreover, the ability to give students more focused attention and respond effectively to their individual needs stems from a teacher's improved mental and emotional state. Increased patience and emotional regulation, which come from adequate rest and work-life balance, enhance classroom management and

the overall learning environment. These improvements not only support teacher well-being but also contribute to positive student outcomes, highlighting the dual benefit of maintaining wellness in education settings. According to Ryan and Kossek (2020), teachers who experience a healthier work-life balance often report increased job satisfaction, improved time management, and more effective teaching strategies. Their study emphasized that maintaining boundaries reduces emotional exhaustion, allowing educators to be more responsive and patient in their classrooms. This supports the idea that wellness practices directly influence productivity and student engagement. Supportive School Culture and Leadership. Positive experiences often stem from working in schools with supportive leadership that encourages wellness initiatives—such as flexible scheduling, wellness programs, mental health awareness campaigns, and professional development focusing on teacher well-being. A supportive school culture and strong leadership play a vital role in promoting teachers' work-life balance and overall wellness. When school leaders prioritize the well-being of their staff—by encouraging manageable workloads, open communication, and collaborative relationships—it creates a nurturing environment where teachers feel valued and empowered. A culture of mutual respect and trust allows educators to express their concerns without fear of judgment, seek support when needed, and participate in decision-making. These factors not only reduce stress but also foster professional growth and job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a more motivated and effective teaching workforce. Research shows that positive school culture and leadership support are strongly associated with teacher well-being and retention. According to Owen and Celik (2021), leadership that actively supports work-life balance through flexible policies, recognition of teacher efforts, and well-being initiatives leads to in-

creased teacher morale and reduced burnout. Their study emphasized that when administrators create a climate of care and understanding, teachers are more likely to feel satisfied and committed to their roles. Similarly, Eisenberger and Stinglhamber (2021) argue that perceived organizational support enhances an employee's emotional attachment to the institution, motivating them to perform better and stay longer in their positions. In the context of schools, this means that when teachers feel supported by leadership and school policies, they experience lower levels of stress and higher levels of engagement. Therefore, cultivating a supportive school environment is not only beneficial for teacher wellness but also essential for long-term school success. The narratives shared by participants during the in-depth interviews exposed their thoughts and emotions regarding the topics discussed. These statements highlight how small but meaningful efforts from school leadership—such as “wellness hours” or promoting a culture of care—can significantly impact teachers' well-being. When teachers feel appreciated not just for their output but for who they are as individuals, their motivation increases. They show up more engaged, patient, and positive. Having time to recharge—even just one free afternoon a month—can relieve accumulated stress and allow educators to reconnect with their purpose. As a result, they are more present and effective in the classroom, fostering better student engagement and stronger learning environments. Furthermore, a supportive school culture fosters creativity, emotional resilience, and professional growth among teachers. When educators know that their emotional and personal needs are acknowledged by the administration, they often respond with higher commitment and enthusiasm. This emotional reciprocity leads to improved relationships with students, better planning, and a generally more optimistic work climate. Such environments don't just retain teachers—they empower them to thrive. Ac-

cording to Collie (2021), when schools nurture teacher well-being by creating emotionally supportive environments, educators are more likely to exhibit higher engagement and instructional quality. This is supported by research that links school climate and administrative support to reduced teacher burnout and enhanced student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020). Therefore, recognizing and valuing teachers as whole individuals plays a crucial role in sustaining their wellness and professional effectiveness.

3.1.1. Excessive Workload and Time Constraints—Many teachers face difficulties in promoting work-life balance due to long hours, heavy paperwork, extracurricular duties, and unrealistic expectations, leaving little time for rest or personal life. Excessive workload and time constraints are among the most pressing challenges faced by teachers in maintaining work-life balance and overall wellness. Teachers often juggle multiple responsibilities beyond classroom instruction, such as lesson planning, grading, administrative tasks, extracurricular supervision, and professional development requirements. These demands frequently extend beyond regular working hours, leaving little time for personal rest, family interaction, or self-care. As a result, many educators experience chronic stress, fatigue, and a sense of burnout, which can negatively impact their teaching effectiveness and personal well-being. Research shows that excessive workload significantly contributes to teacher stress and dissatisfaction. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2019), high job demands and lack of time for recovery are strongly associated with emotional exhaustion among teachers. Their study highlights that prolonged exposure to excessive workload leads to diminished motivation and an increased intention to leave the profession. The inability to manage both professional and personal responsibilities effectively often causes teachers to sacrifice their personal lives, resulting in strained relationships and reduced overall life satisfac-

tion. Similarly, Day and Gu (2024) argue that time pressure and unrealistic work expectations are among the leading causes of professional burnout in education. Teachers report that time constraints limit their ability to engage in meaningful instructional planning or participate in collaborative activities that could otherwise enhance teaching quality. This constant struggle to meet demands often undermines teacher morale and decreases job performance. As such, addressing workload and time management through institutional policies and support systems is essential to promoting teacher wellness and sustaining a healthy educational environment. The narratives collected from participants in the in-depth interviews revealed their thoughts and feelings about the themes addressed as teachers experiences ; These statements reflect the daily struggles of many teachers who juggle professional responsibilities and personal obligations. The overwhelming workload—lesson planning, grading, meetings, and administrative tasks—often spills into personal time, leading to emotional exhaustion and a sense of guilt when they attempt to rest. These teachers express a deep love for their profession, yet the lack of balance leaves them drained and sometimes resentful. The recurring theme of guilt and fatigue illustrates the toll that unrealistic expectations can take on educators’ well-being, as they are forced to sacrifice important moments with family and personal self-care just to meet professional demands. Despite the challenges, these reflections also emphasize the importance of institutional support. When school management offers realistic timelines and acknowledges the human side of teachers, it creates space for work-life balance and promotes teacher wellness. Teachers want to give their best, but they need a system that respects their limits. Supporting educators with fair workload distribution and a culture of empathy not only boosts their well-being but also enhances their effectiveness in the classroom. Accord-

ing to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), excessive workload and time pressure are among the main causes of teacher burnout, which negatively affects job satisfaction and personal well-being. Their study underscores the importance of administrative support and manageable workloads in reducing teacher stress and promoting better mental health outcomes. Thus, fostering a work environment that values teachers’ well-being is essential for sustainable and effective teaching.

3.1.2. Lack of Institutional Support for Wellness Programs—A common challenge is the absence of structured wellness initiatives or policies within schools. Teachers often report feeling unsupported when it comes to accessing mental health services, flexible working arrangements, or opportunities for stress relief. A lack of institutional support for wellness programs leaves many teachers feeling overlooked and unsupported in their efforts to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Without structured initiatives that prioritize mental health and physical well-being, educators are left to manage stress and burnout on their own. This can lead to feelings of isolation, decreased morale, and reduced productivity in the classroom. When wellness is not embedded in the school culture, teachers may struggle silently, which ultimately affects not only their performance but also student learning outcomes. Research by Herman et al. (2019) emphasizes that the absence of well-structured wellness programs contributes significantly to teacher stress and burnout. Their study found that schools lacking institutionalized support systems for staff well-being saw higher attrition rates and lower job satisfaction among teachers. This highlights the critical role of administrative commitment in fostering a healthy, supportive environment that empowers educators to thrive both personally and professionally. The narratives shared by participants during the in-depth interviews were expressed. The lack of a clear and consistent wellness program in schools has left many teachers feeling unsupported and un-

dervalued. As shared in the reflections above, most of the wellness support educators receive tends to be informal, sporadic reminders or general advice, without any concrete, sustainable initiatives. This absence of structured programs creates a sense of neglect, where teacher wellness becomes a personal responsibility rather than a systemic concern. When schools do not establish mental health check-ins, scheduled wellness breaks, or accessible counseling services, it not only affects the physical and emotional well-being of teachers but also compromises the quality of their teaching. Furthermore, when institutions fail to acknowledge the importance of teacher wellness, educators often feel pressured to continue performing despite exhaustion or emotional strain. This can result in diminished motivation, reduced patience, and strained relationships with students. Teachers need to feel that their struggles are seen and that their well-being is a priority. Something as simple as recognition from leadership or the implementation of small wellness initiatives can significantly impact morale and overall job satisfaction. According to Acton and Glasgow (2019), when schools fail to embed teacher wellness into their institutional priorities, educators experience higher stress levels, lower morale, and burnout—leading to decreased instructional quality and student engagement. Institutional support is crucial in fostering a culture where teachers are not only supported but empowered to care for their well-being without guilt or fear of judgment. A supportive framework can enhance teacher resilience and contribute positively to the overall learning environment. Figure 3 illustrates teachers' diverse experiences

By clearly mapping out these dynamics, the diagram serves as a helpful visual tool for understanding how both internal school practices and external pressures shape the overall well-being of educators.

navigating blended learning for scientific concepts. On the positive side, there has enhanced student participation, increased flexibility, better learning support, and successful technology integration. However, junior high school teachers face challenges like heavy workloads, insufficient training, and environmental factors that require careful adjustment. Blended learning is applied differently across educational environments, tailored to the needs of students, teachers, and institutions. It categorizes findings into two main themes: Positive Experiences and Challenges. Under Positive Experiences, it highlights factors such as Supportive School Culture and Leadership and Enhanced Productivity and Teaching, emphasizing how institutional support fosters teacher well-being and effectiveness. Meanwhile, Challenges include Excessive Workload and Time Constraints and Lack of Institutional Support, which hinder teachers' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. This structure helps visualize how both supportive and problematic factors influence teacher wellness in the school setting. This thematic figure not only organizes the key elements of teacher experiences but also demonstrates the interconnectedness of these factors. For instance, Supportive School Culture and Leadership appears twice under positive experiences, reinforcing its crucial role in enhancing teacher wellness and productivity. On the other hand, the challenges depicted—Excessive Workload and Time Constraints and Lack of Institutional Support—highlight systemic issues that can lead to teacher burnout, stress, and diminished classroom performance.

3.2. Teachers Cope With The Challenges Of Handling Work-Life Balance In School — Teachers often face immense pressure balancing their professional responsibilities with personal life demands. To cope with these chal-

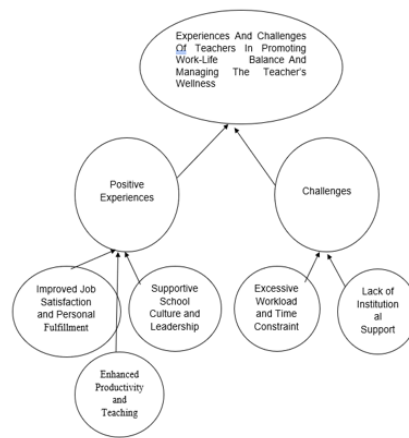


Fig. 3. Experiences And Challenges Of Teachers In Promoting Work-Life Balance

And Managing The Teacher's Wellness

Challenges, many educators adopt practical strategies such as time management, setting clear boundaries between work and home, and prioritizing self-care. For instance, some teachers allocate specific hours for checking papers or lesson planning to avoid overworking at night or during weekends. Others make conscious efforts to engage in leisure activities, spend time with loved ones, or practice mindfulness techniques to manage stress. These small but consistent efforts help teachers maintain their mental and emotional health, allowing them to be more present and effective both at work and in their personal lives. Additionally, peer

support and collaboration play a vital role in helping teachers manage work-life balance. By sharing resources, lesson plans, or even simply listening to one another's concerns, teachers build a sense of community that eases individual burdens. In schools where leadership fosters a supportive environment—through realistic workload expectations or scheduled wellness breaks—teachers feel more empowered and less isolated. Although systemic change is necessary for long-term improvement, these coping mechanisms demonstrate the resilience and adaptability of educators who continue to thrive despite the demanding nature of their profession.

3.2.1. Commitment to Professional Responsibility—This theme highlights the role of school administrators and institutional practices in fostering an environment that values teacher wellness. It includes initiatives like wellness programs, flexible scheduling, mental health support, and open communication between teachers and school leaders. Teachers demonstrate strong dedication to their roles by skillfully managing their tasks and ensuring quality education, despite time demands and busy schedules. Commitment to Professional

Responsibility critical components in promoting work-life balance and overall teacher wellness. When school administrators show empathy, provide emotional and logistical support, and prioritize the well-being of their staff, it fosters a more motivated and resilient teaching workforce. Practices such as wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and open communication can create a sense of belonging and reduce burnout. A school environment where teachers feel valued and heard contributes not only to their professional satisfaction but also

to their personal well-being, which in turn positively affects their performance in the classroom. Research has shown that leadership practices significantly influence teacher morale, retention, and stress levels. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), supportive school leadership that acknowledges teachers' efforts and promotes a positive school climate leads to lower emotional exhaustion and higher job satisfaction. Similarly, a study by Collie et al. (2015) emphasized that teachers working in schools with strong, positive cultures reported better well-being and were more likely to stay committed to their profession. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating supportive leadership and nurturing school cultures to enhance teacher wellness and maintain a healthy work-life balance. The participants' narratives gave a lot of realization that, Many teachers begin their day long before the first bell rings. As reflected in the experience of the teacher in P2, the day often starts before 6 a.m., filled with preparations, material checks, and reviewing lesson plans. Even after spending most of the day teaching, educators are expected to attend meetings, check student outputs, and prepare for the next day's lessons. This constant workload highlights the demanding nature of the teaching profession, where responsibilities

go far beyond classroom instruction. The cumulative pressure results in teachers sacrificing personal time and pushing through long hours with little to no pause. The emotional and physical toll of such a lifestyle is clearly expressed in P3 to P6. The teacher describes feelings of being overwhelmed, missing family time, skipping meals, and experiencing guilt for attempting to rest. These statements reflect the broader systemic issues in education where teachers are overburdened with both instructional and administrative tasks. The difficulty in setting boundaries—combined with expectations for constant availability—contributes to burnout, stress, and declining well-being. Unfortunately, this imbalance can negatively impact both teacher performance and their personal lives. According to Travers (2019), teacher stress often stems from workload, time pressures, and role conflict, which are worsened by inadequate support and the expectation to meet high performance standards. This aligns with the teacher's experience of constant pressure and difficulty in establishing work-life boundaries. Without intentional support systems and reforms in workload distribution, educators are left vulnerable to chronic exhaustion and emotional fatigue, threatening not only their health but also the quality of education delivered to learners.

3.2.2. Resilience and Emotional Strength—Educators exhibit remarkable resilience and emotional strength as they navigate daily challenges while still finding ways to stay motivated and connected to their purpose. Many teachers, despite the demanding nature of their profession, display a strong commitment to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. They continuously strive to manage their time effectively, plan ahead, and prioritize responsibilities to meet both professional and personal demands. This proactive attitude reflects not only their dedication to teaching but also their desire to

sustain meaningful relationships with their families and maintain personal well-being. Teachers often find creative ways to integrate wellness strategies, such as setting clear boundaries, practicing mindfulness, or engaging in hobbies, which help them stay energized and focused in both work and life. Research supports this positive outlook. According to Klassen and Chiu (2021), teachers who develop effective coping mechanisms and time management skills report higher job satisfaction and emotional well-being. These skills not only reduce stress but also empower educators to perform better in the

classroom while preserving their personal lives. This highlights the importance of supporting teachers in their efforts to achieve work-life balance through institutional policies, professional development, and a culture of care and respect. From the narratives of the participants it was found out that, Teachers often employ a variety of strategies to maintain emotional resilience in the face of their demanding roles. One common approach is mindfulness, where teachers take short breaks during the day to practice deep breathing and clear their minds. This practice provides a mental reset, allowing them to return to their tasks with a refreshed perspective. Additionally, many teachers prioritize "me time" by setting aside time after school to engage in relaxing activities such as reading or going for walks. These moments of rest, although small, are vital for recharging emotional energy, especially on days when the workload is heavy. Such practices not only help teachers manage stress but also foster a sense of balance, which is crucial for long-term well-being. Moreover, the deep sense of purpose that teachers feel in their profession is a key factor in their resilience. Their passion for teaching and the satisfaction of

seeing students learn and grow serve as motivating forces. Staying organized and prioritizing tasks helps reduce the overwhelming pressure that often accompanies teaching. Setting boundaries is another effective strategy, as it allows teachers to avoid burnout by learning when to say no and focus on what is most important. Feedback from students and parents also provides emotional support, reinforcing the value of their work. Finally, a strong support network of colleagues and friends plays an essential role in helping teachers reframe challenges and maintain a positive outlook even during difficult times. Research shows that mindfulness and self-care practices are effective in promoting emotional resilience among educators. According to Jennings and Greenberg (2009), practices like mindfulness not only improve teachers' emotional well-being but also enhance their ability to manage classroom stress and engage with students in a positive manner. This aligns with the teacher's experiences of using these strategies to maintain balance and emotional health, which ultimately benefits both their personal well-being and professional performance.

3.2.3. Efforts Toward Healthy Work-Life Integration—Teachers are actively seeking and applying strategies—such as time management, setting priorities, and self-care practices—to create a more balanced and fulfilling personal and professional life. Efforts toward healthy work-life integration are essential for maintaining teachers' well-being and job satisfaction. Teachers who consciously prioritize balancing their professional duties with personal time often find that they are more productive and emotionally available in both areas of their lives. By establishing clear boundaries between work and home life, teachers can ensure that they have time to recharge, pursue personal interests, and spend quality time with family and

friends. Such efforts help reduce stress and prevent burnout, contributing to a more sustainable career in education. This intentional integration of work and life fosters a healthier mindset and promotes long-term job satisfaction. According to Granziera, Collie, and Martin (2020), teachers who engage in strategies to integrate their work and personal lives report higher levels of well-being, lower levels of stress, and greater professional satisfaction. These findings suggest that healthy work-life integration is not just beneficial for teachers' emotional health, but it also supports their effectiveness in the classroom. By ensuring that teachers are able to take care of themselves, they are better able to support their students

and thrive in their roles. Based from the responses of the participants it was revealed that, Work-life integration involves finding a balance that allows both professional and personal aspects of life to coexist harmoniously. Unlike traditional work-life balance, which tends to emphasize separating work from personal life, work-life integration is about blending these areas in a way that they support each other. For instance, setting clear boundaries and being intentional about how time is spent is essential in this approach. By allocating enough time for both work and personal activities, individuals ensure that neither is neglected, fostering a sense of fulfillment in both spheres. Teachers, for example, can schedule breaks during the day to engage in activities that help them unwind and focus on their well-being, such as taking a walk or reading a book. Despite the challenges, making these efforts intentionally helps teachers feel more present in both their work and personal lives. An effective strategy to maintain work-life integration is creating a structured routine that includes specific times for work and personal activities. Teachers who organize their daily schedules with time set aside for lesson planning, grading, and other school-related tasks are better able to manage their responsibilities. However, it is equally important to establish a cut-off time to stop working and focus on personal time. This boundary ensures that work does not spill over into personal time, helping teachers recharge. Moreover, incorporating short, daily moments of self-care, like a 10-minute break for stretching or meditation, especially during stressful periods, can contribute significantly to emotional resilience and well-being. By maintaining this balance, teachers can improve their job satisfaction and overall mental health, ultimately benefiting both their personal and professional lives. Research indicates that integrating work and personal life is essential for alleviating stress and avoiding burnout among educators. According to Granziera, Col-

lie, and Martin (2020), when teachers successfully merge their professional and personal responsibilities, they tend to have lower stress levels and increased well-being. Implementing strategies such as establishing boundaries and taking purposeful breaks allows teachers to sustain a positive outlook and stay emotionally invested in their work, which subsequently enhances their effectiveness in the classroom. The figure 4 the highlights how teachers manage the challenges of handling work-life balance in school through three key areas: commitment to professional responsibility, resilience and emotional strength, and efforts toward healthy work-life integration. Teachers face a unique set of challenges as they try to balance their professional duties and personal lives. One way they cope is through a deep commitment to professional responsibility, which ensures they fulfill their roles effectively despite external pressures. This commitment enables them to prioritize tasks, maintain ethical standards, and uphold the quality of education. In addition, resilience and emotional strength serve as crucial internal resources. Teachers must regularly manage emotional fatigue, classroom stressors, and personal sacrifices, all while remaining composed and motivated. Finally, their proactive efforts toward healthy work-life integration—such as setting boundaries, practicing time management, and engaging in self-care—help sustain their well-being and performance. Together, these strategies create a framework for coping and thriving within the demanding environment of education. Research highlights that balancing work and personal life is essential for teacher well-being and job satisfaction. As noted by Klassen and Chiu (2021), teachers who exhibit strong emotional resilience and maintain a clear sense of professional identity are more likely to report higher levels of commitment and lower burnout rates. These factors not only benefit teachers themselves but also contribute to better student outcomes and healthier school environ-



Fig. 4. Teachers Cope With The Challenges Of Handling Work-Life Balance In School

ments.

3.3. Educational Management Insights are Drawn from the Findings of the Study—The growing demands of the teaching profession have brought increased attention to the importance of promoting work-life balance, particularly within the framework of educational management. The study "Promoting Work-Life Balance: Managing Teacher Wellness in a School

Setting" highlights how effective leadership, institutional support, and the implementation of teacher-centered wellness initiatives contribute significantly to maintaining teacher well-being. These insights emphasize that managing teacher wellness is not only a personal responsibility but also a strategic priority for school leaders, as it directly affects teacher performance, retention, and the overall learning environment.

3.3.1. Institutional Support and Leadership Responsiveness—This theme highlights the crucial role school leaders play in fostering a supportive environment. Effective educational management involves recognizing teacher workloads, providing reasonable expectations, and offering resources or interventions, such as flexible schedules or wellness programs, that support teacher well-being. Based from the statements above it was revealed that, School leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring that teachers maintain a healthy work-life balance. The statements highlight how responsive and understanding school heads can significantly influence the well-being of their staff. Teachers feel more supported when leaders listen to their concerns and show empathy toward both professional and personal struggles. When school

heads allow for flexible arrangements and acknowledge the individual needs of teachers, it cultivates an environment of trust and support that reduces stress and burnout. Moreover, effective leadership is not just about authority—it involves empathy, open communication, and proactive management. Simple actions such as adjusting workloads, providing time for rest, and maintaining transparency can greatly contribute to a positive school climate. Leaders who understand the everyday realities of teaching are better equipped to create responsive systems that not only support teachers' wellness but also enhance their overall performance and job satisfaction. According to Leithwood and Riehl (2020), effective educational leaders influence school success primarily by building strong relationships and creating conditions conducive

to teaching and learning. When school heads demonstrate empathy and provide appropriate support systems, it leads to higher levels of motivation and retention among teachers. This responsiveness is especially vital in maintaining a sustainable workforce in high-demand professions like teaching, where emotional exhaustion is common. Similarly, research by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) found that school leaders who promote a positive and supportive work climate

significantly reduce teacher stress and increase job satisfaction. They emphasize that open communication, reduced administrative burden, and recognition of teachers' contributions are essential elements of leadership that promotes teacher wellness. These findings affirm that institutional support and leadership responsiveness are not just helpful—they are fundamental in managing teacher wellness in school settings.

3.3.2. Strategic Implementation of Wellness Policies —Work-life balance can be enhanced through well-defined and consistently applied wellness policies. This includes integrating mental health awareness, promoting self-care, and embedding wellness into the school's operational plans. Educational managers must ensure these policies are practical, inclusive, and aligned with the school's culture. The strategic implementation of wellness policies in educational settings is essential for promoting the overall health and well-being of students, staff, and the broader school community. These policies aim to create a supportive environment that fosters physical, mental, and emotional health through comprehensive programs and practices. Effective wellness policies not only address nutrition, physical activity, and mental health but also promote a culture of wellness that is integrated into the daily routines and overall school atmosphere. By adopting a strategic approach to wellness, schools can empower individuals to take charge of their health, ultimately leading to improved academic performance, better behavior, and a more inclusive and productive educational experience. Based from the narratives of the participants it shows that, Implementing wellness policies in schools is a vital step toward ensuring the overall well-being of both students and staff. The integration of physical health initiatives, such as providing healthier food options and promoting regular

physical activities, lays a solid foundation for a healthy school environment. However, the focus should not be limited to physical health alone. Mental wellness is just as critical, especially in a school setting, where stress and emotional well-being can impact academic performance. Integrating mindfulness programs and promoting emotional well-being can help students and staff manage the pressures they face daily. A holistic approach to wellness, which includes both physical and mental health, can lead to a more productive, positive, and balanced school community. Engaging the entire school community is a key component of successfully implementing wellness policies. Through meetings with teachers, parents, and students, schools can ensure that everyone understands the importance of these policies and their role in promoting well-being. Making wellness topics visible and accessible through school events and collaborations with local health professionals can further strengthen the message. These efforts not only raise awareness but also provide valuable resources that help individuals take proactive steps toward maintaining their health. Despite the benefits, challenges remain, particularly in addressing the diverse needs of students and staff. The lack of full appreciation for the importance of wellness, especially mental health, can hinder the effectiveness of wellness policies. Overcoming these challenges requires continuous education and open com-

munication. The implementation of wellness policies in schools requires a comprehensive approach that addresses both physical and mental health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), promoting wellness in schools, especially through physical activity and proper nutrition, can lead to better academic outcomes and healthier students (CDC, 2023). However, physical health alone does not address the complex emotional and psychological needs of students and staff. Integrating mental wellness programs that promote mindfulness, emotional well-being, and coping strategies can improve the overall atmosphere of the school. Research indicates that schools with strong mental health support systems see a decrease in absenteeism and behavioral issues while fostering a more positive learning environ-

ment (Jones et al., 2021). Engaging the entire school community—teachers, parents, students, and health professionals—is crucial in the successful implementation of wellness policies. A study by Pate et al. (2022) highlights the importance of involving stakeholders in policy implementation, as their active participation leads to more sustainable and effective programs. Collaboration with local health experts ensures that schools have access to up-to-date information and resources that benefit everyone. However, despite these efforts, challenges remain in ensuring that wellness policies are fully embraced, especially in terms of mental health awareness. Overcoming these barriers requires continuous education, the dismantling of stigma, and fostering an environment where the value of wellness is universally understood (Pate et al., 2022).

3.3.3. Empowering Teachers Through Professional Autonomy and Collaboration—Teachers feel more balanced and less stressed when they are given a voice in decision-making and autonomy over instructional practices. Encouraging collaboration among staff and fostering a culture of mutual support leads to increased morale and resilience, which are key components of sustainable work-life balance. The strategic implementation of wellness policies in schools is essential in fostering a learning environment that supports the holistic development of students and staff. These policies go beyond physical health initiatives and include mental, emotional, and social well-being. Schools that effectively adopt wellness strategies often see improvements in student engagement, behavior, and academic outcomes. However, implementation requires collaboration, consistent communication, and adaptability to the diverse needs of the school community. By integrating wellness into everyday school culture, institutions can create healthier, more supportive environments conducive to learning and growth. Based

from the responses above it said that, The implementation of wellness policies has become an integral part of school development strategies, especially as schools increasingly recognize the connection between student well-being and academic success. By beginning with improvements in nutrition and physical activity, schools address the basic health needs of learners, which directly impact energy levels, concentration, and classroom behavior. As these foundational aspects are strengthened, institutions often shift focus to mental wellness, introducing initiatives such as mindfulness activities and peer support systems to create a more emotionally supportive school climate. Community engagement is essential to sustaining and maximizing the impact of wellness policies. Through orientation programs and meetings with parents, teachers, and student leaders, schools build awareness and strengthen stakeholder involvement. Activities such as wellness-themed events and partnerships with health professionals further reinforce the importance of well-being. While challenges exist, particularly

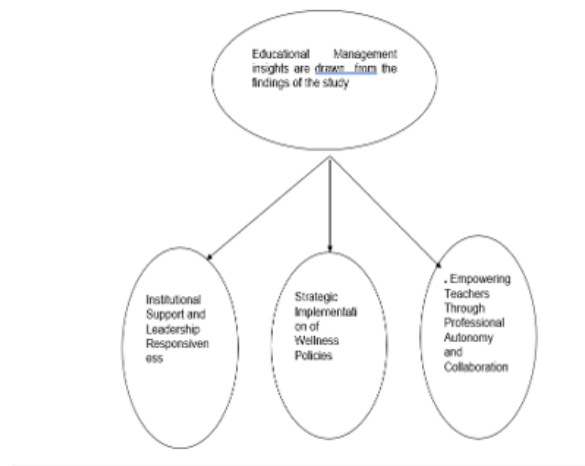


Fig. 5. Educational Management Insights are Drawn from the Findings of the Study

in changing perceptions around mental health, the process becomes more manageable when goals are small and realistic. Patience, empathy, and consistent application of strategies are key to creating a culture of wellness that transforms the school environment over time. Implementing comprehensive wellness policies in schools yields numerous benefits, including improved academic outcomes, enhanced social-emotional skills, and a more positive school climate. Research shows that schools that incorporate structured physical activity and nutritious meals see better student behavior, reduced absenteeism, and higher levels of classroom engagement (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2023).

As schools evolve, mental health support is increasingly prioritized. Programs focused on mindfulness and peer interaction are proven to reduce stress and anxiety among students, contributing to their overall well-being and readiness to learn (Jones et al., 2021). Stakeholder engagement is a critical factor in the success of these wellness efforts. A study by Pate et al. (2022) emphasized that strong collaboration among school staff, families, and community health professionals leads to more sustainable wellness programs. It is not enough to implement policies; schools must also ensure these are accessible, inclusive, and aligned with the diverse needs of the community. By starting with achievable steps and maintaining a patient, consistent approach, schools can foster a culture that not only promotes wellness but also empowers students and educators to thrive in a supportive environment. Figure 5 presents key educational management insights derived from

the study, highlighting three interconnected domains: Institutional Support and Leadership Responsiveness, Strategic Implementation of Wellness Policies, and Empowering Teachers Through Professional Autonomy and Collaboration. These elements emphasize the importance of a holistic and responsive educational leadership model. Institutional support ensures that leadership addresses the immediate and long-term needs of both learners and staff. Meanwhile, the strategic implementation of wellness policies signifies that well-being, both physical and mental, is a planned, sustained priority within the school system. Empowering teachers through professional autonomy and collaboration recognizes the vital role educators play and the importance of their voice in shaping school policies and practices. From an educational management perspective, these components contribute significantly to the creation of a nurturing and effective school environment.

According to Hallinger and Heck (2021), leadership that fosters teacher empowerment and institutional responsiveness positively affects school improvement and student learning outcomes. Additionally, when wellness policies are strategically implemented, they create systemic

support that reinforces not only student success but also teacher satisfaction and retention. Thus, these insights offer a valuable framework for school leaders aiming to foster sustainable, inclusive, and health-conscious educational systems.

4. Implications and Future Directions

This chapter presents a synthesis of the study's findings on promoting work-life balance and managing teacher wellness in a school setting. It outlines the key implications and offers recommendations for future initiatives. The research explored the lived experiences of teachers, focusing on the challenges they encounter in maintaining their well-being while meeting the demands of their professional roles. It highlights how these experiences reveal the need for structured wellness programs, supportive leadership, and realistic workload management. Moreover, the study underscores the value of empowering educators through meaningful health and wellness interventions that foster both personal resilience and professional fulfillment.

4.1. Implications—The study reveals that teachers' experiences in promoting work-life balance are deeply influenced by the interplay of personal fulfillment and institutional support. When teachers experience improved job satisfaction and personal well-being, their professional engagement significantly increases. These outcomes are further amplified in environments that promote supportive leadership and a positive school culture. It implies that for teachers to thrive professionally, school systems must equally value their personal wellness alongside their instructional performance. Despite these positive insights, the challenges posed by excessive workload and lack of time remain persistent issues that hinder teachers' ability to maintain a balanced life. The absence of comprehensive wellness programs and institutional support exacerbates feelings of stress and burnout. This suggests a pressing need for systemic change, where educational institutions not only recognize these issues but also respond with actionable policies. Without such efforts, even the most dedicated teachers may struggle to sustain their passion and effectiveness in the long term. The study also emphasizes the remarkable

resilience of teachers who navigate these challenges daily. Their strong sense of professional responsibility and emotional strength reflects a deep commitment to their role, even amid adversity. However, relying solely on personal coping strategies is not a sustainable model. This finding implies that teacher resilience should be supported by structural mechanisms—such as accessible mental health services, flexible scheduling, and workload adjustments—to ensure longevity and satisfaction in the profession. From an educational management perspective, the findings point to the importance of institutional support and leadership responsiveness in creating a culture that values wellness. Schools must move beyond reactive measures and adopt proactive, strategic implementations of wellness policies. These policies should be well-defined, consistently applied, and tailored to meet the specific needs of their teaching staff. Doing so not only promotes teacher well-being but also enhances overall school effectiveness and student success. Finally, empowering teachers through professional autonomy and collaboration emerges as a key factor in promoting work-life integration. When teachers are trusted with

decision-making power and are encouraged to collaborate meaningfully, they feel more in control and supported. This implication highlights the need for leadership practices that are participatory, transparent, and grounded in mutual respect. Prioritizing teacher wellness through shared responsibility and open communication is not only beneficial to teachers but is essential for a sustainable and thriving educational environment.

4.2. Future Directions —In light of the study's results, it is crucial for the primary stakeholders who were the target of this research to thoughtfully reflect on and implement the knowledge acquired in order to enhance teacher well-being and life balance within educational environments. The Department of Education – The findings of this study may guide the Department of Education in crafting responsive and inclusive policies that support teacher wellness. By acknowledging the realities faced by teachers in balancing professional responsibilities with personal well-being, the department can create strategic frameworks and institutionalized wellness programs. These may include clear guidelines on workload management, mental health initiatives, and professional development focused on sustainable teaching practices. Prioritizing wellness would not only enhance teacher satisfaction but also improve overall teaching quality and learner outcomes.

School Principals/School Heads – School leaders play a pivotal role in cultivating a culture of wellness and support. The study emphasizes the need for principals to be proactive in identifying teacher stressors and implementing supportive strategies. This includes adjusting workloads, encouraging open communication, and modeling healthy work habits. School heads

should also promote collaboration among staff, provide flexible arrangements when possible, and recognize the value of emotional support systems. Empowering teachers through responsive leadership can lead to higher retention, improved morale, and more effective classroom instruction.

Other Stakeholders – Parents, community members, and local partners may contribute by understanding the importance of teacher wellness and advocating for programs and policies that support it. They may provide resources, initiate wellness campaigns, or help create safe spaces where teachers can decompress and share experiences. Their involvement can bridge gaps between home and school life, recognizing that a well-supported teacher ultimately benefits the learners.

Teachers – Teachers themselves can benefit from increased awareness of their personal wellness needs and the significance of setting healthy boundaries. Acknowledging their own limits, seeking peer support, and engaging in professional collaboration can strengthen their resilience and improve work-life integration. Being mindful of their wellness can enhance their teaching effectiveness and personal fulfillment.

Future Researchers – Future studies may explore teacher wellness from different angles, such as school-specific policies, rural versus urban challenges, or the influence of professional autonomy. Research may also include voices of school leaders, students, and families to present a holistic view of wellness in the educational ecosystem. Publishing in academic journals would help broaden the discourse and inspire evidence-based practices across other school systems.

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