

Assessing Teacher Well-Being and Support Needs in Philippine Private Schools: Recommendations for Community-Based Wellness Programs

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Abstract. Teaching is a demanding profession, with educators in the Philippines facing burnout, low morale, and systemic stressors that impact both their well-being and student outcomes. This study aimed to assess the well-being and support needs of private school teachers in Silang, Cavite, to inform the development of a community-based wellness program. Using a qualitative needs assessment design, data were collected from ten teaching personnel via an online structured survey and analyzed through thematic analysis. Six major themes emerged: (1) documentation overload and burnout, (2) financial strain as a systemic barrier, (3) lack of structured wellness and mental health programs, (4) professional development needs, (5) peer and social support as protective factors, and (6) the value of recognition and empathy. These findings highlight the multifaceted challenges teachers face, which significantly affect their professional sustainability and morale. The study concludes that comprehensive interventions are urgently needed to address these issues. Recommendations include streamlining administrative tasks, providing financial support and literacy programs, implementing wellness initiatives, and enhancing professional development opportunities. Strengthening peer networks and institutionalizing recognition practices are also essential. These measures are critical for improving teacher well-being, reducing burnout, and fostering a supportive educational environment.

Keywords: Community needs assessment; Educational challenges; Mental health; Teacher support; Teacher well-being

1.0 Introduction

Teaching is widely acknowledged as one of the most emotionally and cognitively demanding professions. Educators are tasked with a diverse range of responsibilities that extend beyond classroom instruction, encompassing administrative duties, behavioral management, and emotional labor, all of which contribute to heightened stress levels (Wettstein et al., 2021). Both globally and within the Philippines, critical issues such as teacher burnout, low morale, and job-related stress have emerged as significant concerns, impacting not only the well-being of teachers but also the academic success of their students (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015).

In the Philippine context, school teachers frequently contend with systemic hurdles, including overcrowded

classrooms, insufficient compensation, limited access to mental health services, and burdensome documentation requirements (Tagapulot & Macasilang, 2024; Rojas-Andrade et al., 2024). Despite their crucial role in shaping future generations, the personal welfare of educators is often overlooked, potentially leading to diminished motivation and long-term challenges in sustaining their professional commitment.

Teachers often face numerous challenges that hinder their professional growth and well-being. A prevalent issue is the overwhelming workload and administrative burden, which frequently leads to significant stress and burnout. Studies indicate that this contributes to emotional exhaustion and a desire to leave the profession (Santavirta et al., 2007; O'Brennan et al., 2017; da Silva & Mello, 2023; Guider et al., 2024; Reinke et al., 2025). This high demand, coupled with low decision authority, further contributes to burnout (Santavirta et al., 2007). In the Philippines, the shift to remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic further intensified these challenges, highlighting the critical need for ongoing professional development in online pedagogy and information technology skills (Chin et al., 2022).

Beyond workload, financial difficulties represent a significant barrier for teachers, impacting their overall well-being and job performance. Low salaries, high living costs, and financial instability contribute to stress and job dissatisfaction (Jali, 2024; Savariapitchai, 2024). Such distress can negatively affect teachers' productivity and increase the likelihood of attrition (Maturana & Nickerson, 2020; Coffman et al., 2023), underscoring the importance of financial literacy and support initiatives.

The absence of comprehensive wellness and mental health programs in educational institutions is another pressing concern. Teachers' mental health is intrinsically linked to their effectiveness in the classroom and, consequently, to student outcomes (Aziz & Mangestuti, 2023; Rahmi, 2024). Implementing robust wellness programs can significantly improve teachers' mental health and reduce burnout (Barber & Brown, 2017; Osher et al., 2019; Poteet et al., 2020). Therefore, schools must invest in mental health literacy and supportive systems to cultivate healthier work environments for their educators (Childs et al., 2022; Robin et al., 2024).

Furthermore, continuous professional development is essential for teachers to remain updated with evolving educational practices and enhance their skills. However, many educators report a lack of adequate opportunities for professional growth, which can lead to job dissatisfaction and increased burnout (Childs et al., 2022; Rahmi, 2024). Providing targeted professional development programs is crucial for enhancing teachers' competencies and job satisfaction (Jali, 2024), especially for those in rural areas or teaching outside their specialization who may face unique difficulties like limited content knowledge and pedagogical resources (Salvador et al., 2022; Mercado & Morante, 2024).

Finally, social support from peers and colleagues, alongside recognition and empathy from school leaders, plays a vital role in mitigating stress and promoting well-being among teachers. A supportive work environment and positive relationships with colleagues are crucial in reducing burnout and improving job satisfaction (Bussemaker & Denessen, 2024; Wen et al., 2025; Yubero et al., 2010; Zhu et al., 2025). Teachers who feel valued and supported are more likely to experience lower levels of stress and burnout (O'Brennan et al., 2017; Ghoreyshi & Tahririan, 2021; Reinke et al., 2025). Empathetic leadership and a culture of recognition can foster a positive work environment, enhance teachers' resilience, and improve overall mental health and retention (O'Brennan et al., 2017; Hoferichter et al., 2022; Hoferichter & Raufelder, 2022; Fleming et al., 2023; Einav et al., 2024).

A needs analysis, therefore, is a fundamental step in educational planning and development, as it helps identify the gaps between current conditions and desired outcomes, thereby informing the design of targeted interventions (Hussein et al., 2022). In the context of teacher professional development, it is essential to understand the specific requirements and challenges faced by educators, which can vary significantly based on local contexts (Cecconi & Pintus, 2014; Liu et al., 2023).

Despite the growing body of international research on teacher stress and burnout, there remains a lack of localized, data-driven insights into the specific needs of Filipino teachers. This gap limits the effectiveness of interventions designed to support educators in the Philippine context. To address this gap, the present study aims to explore teachers' specific needs in a selected private school in Silang, Cavite. This localized assessment provides a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing teacher well-being and professional growth. The findings of the study are intended to inform the development of targeted, sustainable interventions that support educators in their

personal and professional lives. By grounding the analysis on the lived experiences of teachers within a specific community, the study contributes to a more contextually relevant approach to educational planning and teacher support in the Philippines.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative descriptive research design, particularly a community needs analysis to explore the specific needs, challenges, support systems, and priority areas for intervention among teaching personnel at a private basic educational institution in Silang, Cavite. This design is ideal for generating rich, contextualized data that can directly inform the planning of programs tailored to the unique environment of the community.

2.2 Participants and Sampling Technique

The research was conducted at a private basic educational institution in Silang, Cavite. Purposive sampling was utilized, in which the inclusion criteria for participation in the study were (1) faculty members, and (2) actively engaged in instructional duties during the data gathering period.

Ten teaching staff participated in the study, predominantly female ($n = 8$, 80%) and mostly aged between 20 and 30 years ($n = 7$, 70%), with additional representation from the 31 - 45 age group ($n = 3$, 30%). Most participants were single ($n = 9$, 90%) and living with their families ($n = 8$, 80%), while two reported living independently ($n = 2$, 20%). In terms of teaching experience, the majority had 1 to 3 years in the profession ($n = 8$, 80%), with one respondent having less than a year ($n = 1$, 10%), and another reporting ten years of experience ($n = 1$, 10%).

2.3 Research Instrument

Data was collected through a researcher-made online structured qualitative survey composed of open-ended questions. The instrument was designed to elicit responses about the teachers' challenges, awareness of support systems, current coping strategies, ideal conditions, barriers, facilitators, and desired outcomes. A licensed mental health professional validated the survey to ensure clarity, sensitivity, and validity.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering was administered online through Google Forms. Participants were provided with an informed consent form, outlining the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time, as well as the research instrument. Responses were collected anonymously to ensure privacy and encourage honest feedback.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. To ensure trustworthiness, specific steps were taken, such as establishing credibility by constantly comparing emerging themes with the raw data to ensure representation of participants' experiences.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

To ensure ethical practice, formal approval was secured from the participating institution. Participants were provided with an informed consent form detailing the study's objectives, potential risks and benefits, and their right to confidentiality and to opt out of the study at any point without fault.

3.0 Results and Discussion

The community needs assessment obtained from a sample of 10 basic education teaching faculty revealed that teachers within the school experience an interconnected set of challenges significantly impacting their well-being and professional motivation. These needs were then subsequently categorized into six key themes. The assessment identified documentation overload as a primary driver of teacher burnout, consistently cited by respondents as a source of significant emotional fatigue. Teachers reported that excessive paperwork, detailed lesson planning, and various administrative duties consumed a substantial portion of their time, often extending beyond official working hours and encroaching on personal time. This finding aligns strongly with existing literature, which consistently highlights overwhelming workload and administrative burden as prevalent issues leading to significant stress and burnout among educators (Reinke et al., 2025; da Silva & Mello, 2023; Santavirta et al., 2007).

The extensive documentation and preparation demands exacerbate emotional exhaustion and can even foster a desire to leave the profession (Guider et al., 2024; O'Brennan et al., 2017). The high demand coupled with low decision authority, as noted by Santavirta et al. (2007), further contributes to this burnout, suggesting that teachers feel overwhelmed by tasks over which they have little control. In the Philippine context, this burden is often compounded by systemic hurdles, including substantial documentation requirements (Tagapulot & Macasilang, 2024; Rojas-Andrade et al., 2024), making this a particularly acute challenge for local educators.

Table 1. Identified Needs and Emerging Themes

Theme	Description	Sample Quotes
Documentation Overload and Burnout	Teachers report emotional fatigue due to excessive paperwork, lesson planning, and admin tasks.	"The overwhelming workload and administrative burden, which frequently leads to significant stress and burnout." "Heavy workloads and limited awareness of support, and logistical challenges like time constraints that hinder teachers in the Philippines from seeking and accessing necessary help." "Reduce administrative burdens."
Financial Strain as a Systemic Barrier	Limited salary, lack of health benefits, and rising costs hinder teachers' access to support.	"And also the emergency funds." "To provide competitive salaries and ensure adequate resources so teachers can focus on quality instruction and student well-being."
Peer and Social Support as a Protective Factor	Informal support from family and coworkers is vital to coping with stress.	"Collaborative colleagues, empathetic administrators who prioritize well-being, and understanding family members who share responsibilities for a teacher's sustained effectiveness and overall job satisfaction."
Lack of Wellness and Mental Health Programs	There is a strong interest in wellness activities and structured mental health services.	"Mental health awareness month, training, and seminars." "Dancing, aerobics." "Health services are too expensive, but needed."
Professional Development Needs	Teachers desire skills training in time management, documentation, and mental health literacy.	"I think seminars/meetings, training." "Offer relevant and continuous professional development." "As a private teacher, I would need access to a broad range of up-to-date, subject-specific digital resources and interactive learning platforms to enhance student engagement and cater to diverse learning styles effectively."
Value of Recognition and Empathy	Morale and motivation are boosted by praise, emotional encouragement, and awards.	"Collaborative colleagues, empathetic administrators who prioritize well-being."

Compounding these pressures, financial strain emerged as a significant concern, directly impacting teachers' well-being and their ability to access essential support. Respondents frequently mentioned inadequate salaries, the absence of comprehensive health benefits, and the rising cost of living as significant stressors. This is consistent with research indicating that low salaries, high living costs, and financial instability contribute significantly to stress and job dissatisfaction among teachers (Jali, 2024; Savariapitchai, 2024). Financial distress has been shown to negatively affect teachers' productivity and increase the likelihood of attrition (Maturana & Nickerson, 2020; Coffman et al., 2023). The findings reinforce the systemic nature of financial barriers, highlighting that addressing these economic concerns is fundamental to improving teacher well-being and retention, as financial literacy and support initiatives can help mitigate these issues (Jali, 2024; Coffman et al., 2023).

A significant gap identified was the absence of structured wellness and mental health programs within the study setting, despite an apparent demand for such services. Teachers expressed a strong interest in activities like dancing, aerobics, and seminars on mental health awareness. This finding aligns with the broader literature emphasizing the critical link between teachers' mental health and their effectiveness in the classroom, as well as student outcomes (Aziz & Mangestuti, 2023; Rahmi, 2024). The lack of institutionalized support is a pressing concern, as robust wellness programs have been shown to improve teachers' mental health and reduce burnout significantly (Poteet et al., 2020; Barber & Brown, 2017; Osher et al., 2019). This underscores the need for schools to invest in mental health literacy and supportive systems to cultivate healthier and more sustainable work environments for their educators (Robin et al., 2024; Childs et al., 2022).

Furthermore, teachers in the study expressed a clear desire for targeted professional development opportunities, particularly in practical skills such as time management, documentation efficiency, and mental health literacy. This indicates a recognition among educators of the need to enhance their competencies to navigate their demanding roles better. This finding resonates with the literature that posits continuous professional development

as essential for teachers to stay updated with educational practices and improve their skills (Jali, 2024). The perceived lack of adequate opportunities for professional growth can lead to job dissatisfaction and increased burnout (Rahmi, 2024; Childs et al., 2022). Moreover, the specific mention of training in school materials, financial, and health management highlights a need for development that extends beyond pedagogical skills to encompass personal and professional well-being, especially relevant in contexts where teachers face unique difficulties like limited resources (Salvador et al., 2022; Mercado & Morante, 2024).

While not a primary gap, the assessment revealed that informal peer and social support mechanisms serve as crucial protective factors for teachers. Respondents frequently cited the importance of friends, coworkers, and family in helping them cope with stress. This finding is consistent with extensive research highlighting the importance of a supportive work environment and positive relationships with colleagues in mitigating stress, reducing burnout, and improving job satisfaction (Wen et al., 2025; Yubero et al., 2010; Zhu et al., 2025; Bussemaker & Denessen, 2024). Social support networks within schools can buffer against stress, improve coping abilities (Hoferichter et al., 2022; Hoferichter & Raufelder, 2022), and enhance teachers' overall resilience and mental health (Einav et al., 2024). While these informal supports are valuable, their role suggests they are a complementary resource rather than a substitute for formal institutional support systems.

Finally, the study indicated that recognition and empathy significantly contribute to teacher morale and motivation. Teachers expressed that awards, encouragement from leaders, and celebrations boosted their sense of appreciation. This aligns with literature emphasizing that teachers who feel valued and supported are more likely to experience lower levels of stress and burnout (Reinke et al., 2025; O'Brennan et al., 2017; Ghoreyshi & Tahririan, 2021). Empathetic leadership and a culture of recognition can foster a positive work environment and improve teacher retention (O'Brennan et al., 2017; Fleming et al., 2023). The consistent mention of recognition suggests its importance in fostering a positive and sustainable work environment, reinforcing the idea that acknowledging and appreciating educators' efforts is a valuable aspect of their well-being.

While this study provides valuable insights into the specific needs of teachers at this private institution, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. The findings are based on a small sample size of ten participants from a single school context, which may limit their generalizability to other educational settings. The qualitative nature of the study, while providing rich, in-depth data, does not allow for a quantitative measure of the prevalence or severity of the identified issues. These limitations highlight the need for future research with larger, more diverse samples to validate and expand upon these findings.

4.0 Conclusion

The findings of this community needs assessment highlight critical factors affecting the well-being and professional sustainability of private school teachers in Silang, Cavite. High-priority concerns include documentation overload and burnout, persistent financial strain, and the absence of structured wellness and mental health programs. While informal peer support, professional development, and recognition contribute positively to teacher experience, they remain insufficient to address the systemic challenges fully. The interconnected nature of these issues underscores the need for a holistic and context-sensitive approach to fostering a supportive work environment.

To address these needs, a multi-faceted strategy is recommended: streamlining administrative processes and offering time management training to reduce burnout; implementing financial support mechanisms and literacy programs to alleviate economic stress; and establishing comprehensive wellness initiatives that include regular activities and access to professional mental health services. Enhancing professional development, strengthening peer networks, and institutionalizing recognition practices are also essential to improving morale and retention. Future research should examine the effectiveness of these interventions through longitudinal studies and comparative analyses across different school contexts to inform scalable and sustainable solutions.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Author 1: Conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis, writing the results, discussion, and conclusion.

Author 2: Data analysis, data gathering, writing the results, and discussion.

Author 3: Data analysis, data gathering, writing the results, and discussion.

Author 4: Validation, supervision.

Author 5: Writing the introduction, methodology, and discussion.

Author 6: Writing the introduction, methodology, and discussion.

6.0 Funding

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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