

Teacher well-being and work–life balance

Castillo, Veronica H. ✉

Department of Education, Philippines (veronica.castillo@deped.gov.ph)

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Abstract

This study investigated the work–life balance and well-being of public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District, Ilocos Sur, and their relationship with teacher performance. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, integrating quantitative data from 144 teachers with qualitative evidence obtained through interviews and focus group discussions to provide a comprehensive analysis of factors influencing performance. Quantitative results identified work satisfaction and family responsibilities as significant predictors of teacher performance, whereas self-care, stress and burnout, and financial literacy showed no statistically significant direct effects. Nevertheless, qualitative findings revealed that these factors indirectly influenced performance outcomes. Teachers reported experiencing stress and burnout associated with workload demands and family obligations, which were alleviated through coping strategies and social support. Self-care practices and financial literacy were likewise found to enhance focus, engagement, and professional resilience. The findings indicate that while teachers demonstrate strong resilience and commitment, persistent workload pressures continue to challenge the attainment of a sustainable work–life balance. The positive influence of adaptive coping strategies underscores the need for institutional interventions. The study recommends that school administrators implement structured programs promoting stress management, sustainable work practices, and teacher well-being to support improved professional performance and long-term workforce sustainability.

Keywords: teacher well-being, work–life balance, teacher performance, stress management, public elementary teachers

Teacher well-being and work–life balance

1. Introduction

Teacher well-being has become an increasingly important concern in education because it directly affects teaching quality, student outcomes, and the overall effectiveness of schools. Around the world, teachers face challenges such as large class sizes, administrative responsibilities, curriculum demands, and personal life obligations, all of which can impact their physical, emotional, and mental health (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Zhao et al., 2022). In the Philippines, public elementary school teachers face additional pressures, including multi-grade classrooms, heavy teaching loads, limited resources, and socio-economic challenges in their communities, making the study of work-life balance particularly important (Aquino, Culajara, & Culajara, 2020).

Work-life balance refers to the ability to manage time and energy effectively so that professional responsibilities and personal needs—such as family care, personal development, and leisure—are both met (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). When balance is lacking, teachers are more likely to experience stress, burnout, absenteeism, and even leave the profession (Santiago, 2021). On the other hand, teachers who maintain a healthy balance tend to feel more satisfied with their work, stay motivated, and perform better in the classroom (Ancho & Bongco, 2019).

In teaching, work-life balance is multi-faceted. It includes work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care and well-being, financial literacy, and stress and burnout. Work satisfaction reflects the fulfillment teachers gain from their daily tasks and interactions with students. Family responsibilities refer to managing household duties alongside professional obligations. Self-care and well-being highlight attention to health, leisure, and personal growth. Financial literacy shows how well teachers manage their finances to reduce stress. Stress and burnout measure the emotional and physical strain caused by work pressures. Understanding these areas gives a complete picture of a teacher's professional and personal life.

Several studies in the Philippines have explored teacher work-life balance, though many remain limited in scope or context. Rufin and Buniel (2022) looked at public school teachers in Surigao del Sur and found that role overload, family responsibilities, and coping strategies strongly influenced teachers' perceptions of balance and job satisfaction. Ancho and Bongco (2019) found that teachers who could balance work and personal life were generally more effective and committed to their jobs. Research by Casingal and Ancho (2022, 2024) highlighted the role of financial literacy in reducing stress and improving overall well-being, showing that economic understanding is an important but often overlooked aspect of teachers' lives. More recently, Manalo and Velasco (2024) emphasized how time management, social support, and school conditions affect teachers' ability to maintain balance. While these studies provide useful insights, most focus on only one or two aspects of work-life balance, rely solely on either quantitative or qualitative methods, or are conducted in regional contexts that differ from other areas in the Philippines. Few studies examine all major dimensions of work-life balance together, or link these dimensions directly to teacher performance in a specific district.

This study stands out because it looks at work-life balance from a complete, multi-dimensional perspective, focusing on public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District, Ilocos Sur. Unlike earlier studies that often examine only one or two aspects of balance or rely solely on surveys or interviews, this research combines quantitative findings with teachers' personal experiences through interviews and focus group discussions. It considers five key areas—work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care and well-being, financial literacy, and stress and burnout—all at once, offering a full picture of teachers' professional and personal lives. Importantly, it also explores how these factors relate to teacher performance, providing practical insights for school administrators and local policymakers to support teachers' well-being and effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework - This study is guided by the Work-Family Conflict Theory (Greenhaus & Beutell,

1985) and Role Theory (Kahn et al., 1964). Work-Family Conflict Theory explains that when demands from work and home conflict, stress occurs, which can negatively affect performance and well-being. Role Theory emphasizes that each person has multiple roles with expectations, and failing to meet these can lead to role strain and burnout. In teaching, these theories help explain why balancing professional and personal responsibilities can be challenging.

The Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) also applies, suggesting that individuals try to maintain and protect valuable resources like time, energy, and emotional stability. Losing or overusing these resources can lead to stress and burnout. Applying these frameworks in the Philippine context helps understand how teachers cope with multiple demands and what strategies support their well-being.

Significance of the Study - Understanding teachers' work-life balance has practical, theoretical, and policy implications. From a practical standpoint, identifying the levels of work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care, financial literacy, and stress allows school administrators to design interventions that promote teacher well-being. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on occupational well-being, validating the application of Work-Family Conflict Theory and Role Theory in Philippine schools. Finally, in terms of policy, findings provide evidence for the formulation of programs, workshops, and guidelines aimed at reducing teacher burnout, enhancing professional satisfaction, and sustaining effective teaching practices.

Research Problem and Objectives - Despite the growing awareness of teacher well-being, there is limited quantitative research examining the level of work-life balance among public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District. Most studies have either focused on qualitative experiences or were conducted in urban contexts with different socioeconomic conditions (Santiago, 2021; Ancho & Bongco, 2019). Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by quantitatively assessing teachers' work-life balance through key indicators, providing actionable insights for school administrators and policymakers.

Research Questions - This study aimed to assess the work-life balance of public elementary school teachers in Santa Lucia District, Division of Ilocos Sur. Specifically, it sought to answer the following problems:

- What is the profile of the elementary school teachers in the Schools Division of Ilocos Sur in terms of their age, gender, civil status, position, number of children, highest educational attainment, number of trainings attended related to work-life balance, number of teaching loads, length of service, and type of school?
- What is the level of work-life balance among teachers in terms of work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care and well-being, financial literacy, and stress and burnout?

2. Methods

Research Design - This study employed a quantitative descriptive design, which is well-suited for examining the current state of work-life balance among public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District. A descriptive approach was chosen because it allows researchers to systematically present data regarding teachers' work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care, financial literacy, and stress levels. By quantifying these dimensions, the study provides a clear picture of the existing conditions, identifying areas of strength as well as challenges that require attention. Descriptive research is particularly effective for capturing the breadth of experiences across a population without manipulating variables, making it ideal for assessing the perceptions and self-reported behaviors of teachers in a natural setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population and Locale of the Study - This study was conducted in the public elementary schools in the Sta. Lucia District, Division of Ilocos Sur. The population comprised all 144 elementary school teachers assigned to public elementary schools within the district at the time of the study. The study surveyed the entire population of 144 teachers through total enumeration, as the number of respondents was manageable and allowed for

comprehensive data collection. Participants met the following criteria: (1) they were currently employed as public elementary school teachers in the Sta. Lucia District, and (2) they had at least one year of teaching experience.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

Phase of Study	Sampling Method	Target Number of Respondents	Location	Criteria
Quantitative Phase	Total Enumeration	144	Sta. Lucia District	Currently teaching in the district with at least 1 year of service

By narrowing the focus to the Sta. Lucia District, this study provided a localized and comprehensive understanding of the work-life balance of elementary school teachers and offered insights to improve teacher support and enhance educational outcomes within the district.

Research Instrument - This study used a structured questionnaire to gather quantitative data on the work-life balance of elementary school teachers in the Sta. Lucia District of Ilocos Sur. The questionnaire was adapted from the study entitled "Work-Life Balance of Public-School Teachers in Surigao Del Sur Division, Philippines" by Rufin and Buniel (2022) and modified to fit the context of this research. The questionnaire was designed to collect demographic information and insights into the factors affecting teachers' work-life balance. It was divided into three parts: the respondents' profile, the factors influencing work-life balance, and the coping strategies used by teachers. Part I collected information about the personal and professional characteristics of the respondents, such as age, gender, civil status, educational background, teaching experience, and the type of school where they worked. This helped provide context for understanding the teachers' backgrounds. Part II explored the factors affecting work-life balance, including work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care and well-being, financial literacy, and stress and burnout. Teachers were asked to rate statements on a 5-point Likert scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This section helped identify which aspects of their personal and professional lives most influenced their ability to maintain balance. Part III focused on the coping strategies teachers used to manage challenges in balancing work and personal life, such as counselling, physical activity, family support, and guidance from colleagues or administrators. Respondents evaluated how effective these strategies were in helping improve their work-life balance.

Data Collection Procedure – Prior to the conduct of the study, permission was secured from the Schools Division Office of Ilocos Sur. Upon approval, permission was also obtained from the Sta. Lucia District Office and the respective school principals. Public elementary school teachers were informed of the objectives and nature of the study and were assured that their participation would remain voluntary and confidential.

The research questionnaires were distributed to each participating school. Respondents were given sufficient time to accomplish the instrument to ensure careful and accurate responses. The researchers remained available to clarify instructions whenever necessary. After the respondents completed the questionnaires, the accomplished instruments were gathered and collected to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data.

All procedures undertaken in the study adhered to established ethical standards. Participants' privacy, anonymity, and autonomy were strictly observed. Participation was voluntary, and respondents could withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or adverse consequences.

Data Analysis - The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency counts, percentages, weighted mean, and standard deviation. These statistical measures were utilized to provide a systematic and objective description of the data obtained from the respondents. Frequency and percentage distributions were employed to describe the demographic profile of public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District in terms of age, gender, civil status, position or designation, number of children, highest educational attainment, number of trainings attended, teaching load, length of service, and type of school assignment. These

measures facilitated a clear presentation of respondents' characteristics. To determine the level of work-life balance among teachers, weighted mean and standard deviation were computed for each indicator, namely: work satisfaction, family responsibilities, self-care and well-being, financial literacy, and stress and burnout. The weighted mean determined the overall level of respondents' perceptions, while the standard deviation measured the variability of responses.

Descriptive interpretations were assigned to the computed mean values based on the established Likert scale to facilitate systematic interpretation of results. The responses were classified according to corresponding levels of worklife balance ranging from very low to very high. This approach ensured that findings were presented in measurable and quantifiable terms consistent with the quantitative research design. The results were organized and presented using statistical tables supported by objective numerical interpretation. The analysis focused exclusively on quantifiable data derived from respondents' responses to ensure accuracy, consistency, and reliability of the findings. The application of descriptive statistics enabled a comprehensive quantitative assessment of the work-life balance of public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District.

Statistical Treatment of Data - The study employed quantitative research methods to examine the profile and work-life balance of public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to ensure accuracy, clarity, and consistency in reporting measurable outcomes. To address the first research objective regarding the demographic profile of teachers, frequency counts and percentages were computed. These measures provided a systematic description of teachers' characteristics and highlighted distribution patterns across each category. The resulting tables offer a clear overview of the study population. To assess teachers' work-life balance, weighted means and standard deviations were calculated for five key indicators: (a) work satisfaction, (b) family responsibilities, (c) self-care and well-being, (d) financial literacy, and (e) stress and burnout. These statistical measures facilitated a precise evaluation of the levels of work-life balance among respondents.

Categorization of Data - The following norms were used to interpret the data collected in the study. Responses with a mean range of 4.21 to 5.00 were categorized as "Strongly Agree" (SA) and were interpreted as having a "Very High" (VH) overall rating. Those with a mean range of 3.41 to 4.20 were categorized as "Agree" (A) and were considered to have a "High" (H) overall rating. Responses falling within the range of 2.61 to 3.40 were labeled as "Undecided" (U), corresponding to a "Moderate" (M) overall rating. Means ranging from 1.81 to 2.60 were interpreted as "Disagree" (D) with a "Low" (L) overall rating, while those from 1.00 to 1.80 were considered "Strongly Disagree" (SD), indicating a "Very Low" (VL) overall rating. These norms provided a consistent framework for analyzing and describing the responses of the participants. This standardized scale allowed for quantitative categorization of work-life balance levels, enabling clear identification of areas of strength and concern.

Ethical Consideration - The study adhered to strict ethical standards in conducting research with public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District, Ilocos Sur. Prior to data collection, formal permission was obtained from the Schools Division Office of Sta. Lucia and the respective school principals, ensuring that all relevant authorities approved the conduct of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Teachers invited to participate were provided with a consent form detailing the purpose of the study, procedures involved, and any potential risks or benefits. The form emphasized that participation was entirely voluntary, that participants could skip any questions they preferred not to answer, and that refusal to participate would not affect their professional standing. Signing the consent form indicated the teacher's understanding and agreement to participate.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study. Personal information was kept secure, and participants' identities were not disclosed in any reports or publications. All data were anonymized during analysis to prevent identification of individual respondents, and access was restricted to authorized personnel in compliance with ethical research standards. Upon completion of the study, aggregated results were shared with the

schools and participants in Sta. Lucia District. This practice ensured transparency and allowed participants to observe how their contributions informed the study's findings without compromising privacy or professional integrity.

3. Results and discussion

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in the study on Teacher Well-Being: Work–Life Balance of Public Elementary School Teachers in the Sta. Lucia District. The results are presented in accordance with the research questions of the study and are derived from both quantitative and qualitative data. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the survey responses, while thematic analysis was employed for the qualitative data obtained from interviews or focus group discussions. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provides a comprehensive understanding of teachers' work–life balance experiences.

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1

Profile of the public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District.

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Age	20-30	14	9.72
	31-40	47	32.64
	41-50	67	46.53
	50 and above	16	11.11
	Total	144	100
Gender	Male	14	9.72
	Female	130	90.28
	Widower	-	-
	Total	144	100
Civil Status	Single	44	30.56
	Married	94	65.28
	Widow/Widower	6	4.17
	Total	144	100
Position/Designation	Teacher 1	24	16.7
	Teacher 2	13	9.0
	Teacher 3	99	68.8
	Master Teacher	8	5.6
	Total	144	100
Number of Children	0	52	36.1
	1-2	57	39.6
	3-4	35	24.3
	5 or more	0	0
	Total	144	100
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	86	59.7
	Master's Degree	54	37.5
	Doctor's Degree	4	2.8
	Total	144	100
Number of Trainings Attended Related to Work	0	53	37.4
	1-2	38	25.9
	3-4	25	16.5
	5 or more	28	20.1
	Total	144	100
Number of Teaching Loads	5	15	10.4
	6	78	54.2
	7	20	13.9
	8	31	21.5
	Total	144	100
Length of Service	1-10 years	73	50.7
	11-20 years	47	32.6
	21-30 years	19	13.2
	31 and up years	5	3.5
	Total	144	100

Type of School	Multi-Grade	1	0.7
	Complete Elementary	107	74.3
	Central School	36	25.0
	Total	144	100

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents according to age, gender, civil status, position/designation, number of children, highest educational attainment, number of trainings attended related to work-life balance, teaching load, length of service, and type of school. In Sta. Lucia District, the majority of teachers are aged 41–50 years (46.5%), while a smaller proportion are 20–30 years old (9.7%). This indicates a largely experienced, mid-career workforce, which can contribute to effective teaching, mentoring, and leadership within schools. The sample is predominantly female (90%) and married (65%), reflecting a workforce that balances professional responsibilities with family life. These characteristics underscore the importance of supportive school policies, flexible scheduling, and collegial support to promote teacher well-being and productivity. Most teachers hold the rank of Teacher III (69%), with a smaller proportion serving as Master Teachers (6%). While the workforce is skilled, there remains potential for growth, emphasizing the need for ongoing professional development, mentoring, and training opportunities.

Regarding family responsibilities, 40% of teachers have 1–2 children, and 60% hold at least a bachelor's degree, with 38% having completed a master's degree. This reflects a commitment to both career advancement and family obligations, which may pose challenges without adequate institutional support. Approximately 37% of teachers have not attended work-related trainings, highlighting gaps in professional development. Providing targeted workshops and learning opportunities can enhance instructional skills and strengthen teacher confidence. Most respondents manage six teaching loads (54%) and work in complete elementary schools (74%), often with 1–10 years of experience (51%). The combination of multiple responsibilities and workloads emphasizes the importance of equitable task distribution, mentorship, and collaboration to prevent stress and burnout. Overall, teachers in Sta. Lucia District are experienced, predominantly female, and committed to professional growth while balancing family responsibilities. Research indicates that supporting teachers in these areas through policies promoting well-being and work-life balance can sustain teaching quality and engagement (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2016).

Level of Work-Life Balance of Public Elementary School Teachers - Table 2 presents the mean scores and descriptive ratings of work satisfaction indicators among public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District.

Table 2
Summary Table on the Level of the work life balance of Teachers

Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Rating
Work Satisfaction	4.520	0.5835	VH
Family Responsibilities	4.547	0.5982	VH
Self-care and Wellbeing	4.435	0.6312	H
Financial Literacy Mean	4.044	0.7201	H
Stress and Burnout Mean	3.086	0.9062	M
Mean	4.126	0.6888	VS

Legend: Descriptive Rating (DR) based on the following scale: 4.21-5.00 = Strongly Agree (SA) /Very High (VH); 3.41 - 4.20 = Agree (A)/ High (H); 2.61 - 3.40 = Undecided (U)/Moderate (M); 1.81-2.60 = Disagree (D)/Low (L); 1.00-1.80 = Strong Disagree (SD)/ Very Low (VL)

Table 2 presents the summary of work-life balance among elementary teachers in Sta. Lucia District. Overall, teachers reported a very satisfactory work-life balance, with a combined mean score of 4.13. High levels of satisfaction were observed in work (4.52) and family responsibilities (4.55), indicating that teachers generally feel fulfilled in their professional roles while managing family duties. Self-care and well-being (4.44) and financial literacy (4.04) were also rated positively, though these areas show potential for further improvement. Stress and burnout (3.09) were moderate, suggesting that workload and emotional pressures remain ongoing challenges.

The high satisfaction in work and family responsibilities reflects supportive environments, effective time management, and strong family support, consistent with the Work-Life Balance Framework (Greenhaus & Allen,

2011). Awareness of self-care contributes to the prevention of burnout and helps maintain engagement (Collie et al., 2012). Moderate levels of stress highlight the demanding nature of teaching, as explained by the Job Demands–Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Although financial literacy is generally adequate, targeted workshops on budgeting, savings, and planning could further enhance life satisfaction and personal well-being (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014).

These findings suggest that schools can support teachers by implementing stress management programs, providing financial guidance, and establishing policies that recognize the importance of family responsibilities and self-care. Overall, teachers in Sta. Lucia District maintain a strong balance between work and personal life, although addressing stress and financial literacy could further improve their well-being and professional performance (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Collie et al., 2012).

Corroboration of Findings - The study shows that public elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District generally maintain a very satisfactory work-life balance. Most teachers are mid-career (41–50 years), female, married, and hold at least a bachelor’s degree, indicating a skilled and experienced workforce balancing both professional and family responsibilities. Teachers reported very high work satisfaction, feeling valued, finding their work meaningful, and enjoying positive relationships with colleagues. This suggests that recognition, meaningful tasks, and supportive workplace culture are key to motivation and commitment.

In terms of family responsibilities, teachers are highly engaged in household tasks, childcare, financial management, and emotional support, showing strong family involvement alongside professional duties. Teachers also demonstrate high self-care and well-being, feeling happy, competent, and socially connected. This indicates resilience and the ability to balance personal, family, and work roles effectively. Financial literacy is rated high, particularly in setting goals and monitoring finances, though areas like emergency funds, insurance, and retirement planning could be improved. Financial knowledge supports teachers’ ability to manage stress and sustain life satisfaction. Stress and burnout levels are moderate, mainly due to administrative tasks and workload, but teachers remain motivated and committed to their profession. This suggests that intrinsic satisfaction and supportive environments help buffer stress.

Overall, the findings confirm that Sta. Lucia teachers maintain a strong balance between work and personal life. Supporting teachers through fair workload distribution, stress management programs, financial guidance, and professional development can further enhance well-being and performance.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study reveals the profile and work-life balance of elementary school teachers in Sta. Lucia District, Ilocos Sur:

- Most are mid-career, female, married, hold at least a bachelor’s degree, and work primarily as Teacher III with six teaching loads.
- Teachers maintain a very satisfactory work-life balance, showing high work satisfaction, strong family engagement, good self-care and financial literacy, and moderate stress levels.

Recommendations

- Schools in Sta. Lucia District should implement programs on stress management, workload distribution, and financial planning to support teachers’ well-being and work-life balance.
- Teachers should be encouraged to participate in trainings on work-life balance, self-care, and financial literacy to strengthen their personal and professional skills.
- Further studies should investigate the relationship between teachers’ work-life balance and student outcomes, as well as its long-term impact on teacher performance and retention.

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