



## Well-Being and Mental Health among Overseas Filipino Special Education Teachers

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### Abstract:

This study explores the well-being and mental health of Overseas Filipino Special Education Teachers (SPED) with a focus on burnout, productivity factors, and various dimensions of wellness. Drawing on existing literature, the research identifies the prevalence and correlates of burnout among educators, highlighting the sociological and organizational factors contributing to this phenomenon. Through a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews, the study investigates the burnout status among SPED teachers, factors influencing their productivity, and their overall well-being across physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions. Findings reveal moderate levels of burnout, influenced by extended work hours, poor working conditions, and limited family communication, while social support emerges as a critical resource for enhancing productivity and well-being. Additionally, SPED teachers demonstrate commendable health-promoting behaviors but also exhibit areas requiring attention, such as dietary habits and engagement in intellectual activities. The study underscores the importance of targeted interventions, such as the Transformative Health and Resilience for International Versatile Educators (THRIVE) Intervention Program, in addressing the unique challenges faced by overseas Filipino SPED teachers and promoting their overall well-being and effectiveness in international educational settings.

*Keywords:* Burnout, Digital Mental Health, Productivity Factors, Well-being, THRIVE

### Introduction:

Professional burnout is understood in various ways, but there is a consensus that it involves ongoing mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion due to chronic stress, along with negative feelings about one's professional effectiveness (Hickmon, Rose, & Reinke, 2018). This complex condition is mainly characterized by cynicism, apathy, and interpersonal detachment at work (Larrivee, 2012). Although burnout is linked to psychological, psychosocial, and physical disorders, it has primarily been studied as a work-related issue (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Durr, Chang, & Carson, 2014; Dworkin & Tobe, 2014).

In the twenty-first century, burnout syndrome has become more common due to various sociological and environmental factors. It's now recognized as a major organizational issue that reduces job satisfaction and productivity (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Marek, Schaufeli, & Maslach, 2017). While the symptoms and causes of burnout seem consistent across different fields (Marek et al., 2017), studies indicate that it is particularly widespread among professionals in human services, like teaching and healthcare (Durr et al., 2014).

If not recognized and addressed, teacher burnout can result in chronic anxiety, physical health problems, and even leaving the profession (Marek et al., 2017). Modern neoliberal educational and administrative systems have increased teachers' workloads and stress levels, making the job more difficult and less fulfilling. Furthermore, the shift to a service-based economy has redefined education as "human capital," pushing for greater efficiency from teachers and cost-effectiveness in teaching (Dworkin & Tobe, 2014).

Extensive research highlights the issue of teacher burnout across different countries and educational settings (Durr et al., 2014; Marek et al., 2017). Studies show that burnout negatively impacts teachers' self-efficacy, confidence, motivation, self-esteem, productivity, professional engagement, and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Marek et al., 2017; Herman et al., 2018). Teachers frequently perform "emotional labor" by managing their interactions with students, colleagues, administrators, and parents, which increases their risk of burnout. Additionally, the emphasis on meeting administrators' and policymakers' demands, rather than focusing on students' needs, and evaluating teaching mainly through standardized test scores that lack contextual sensitivity, further diminishes teachers' instructional awareness (Dworkin & Tobe, 2014).

The causes of teacher burnout have been examined on three levels: organizational, individual, and transactional (Durr et al., 2014). Organizational factors include a poor classroom environment, role conflict, low pay, large class sizes, student misbehavior, lack of administrative support, excessive workload, limited job mobility, heavy paperwork, extensive testing, and role ambiguity (Durr et al., 2014; Marek et al., 2017). Individual factors such as



age, experience, education level, language, gender, and socioeconomic background also contribute. Additionally, transactional factors, which involve the interaction between individual and organizational/social factors, play a role in burnout. These include teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and beliefs. The transactional level has gained attention in educational research because it allows for studying burnout within contextual relationships. This focus on interactional or contextual variables is supported by the scientific method, given the substantial evidence highlighting their significance in educational settings.

While research on the well-being and mental health of educators, including special education teachers, is expanding, there is a notable gap in understanding the specific challenges faced by overseas Filipino special education teachers. Despite the growing number of Filipino educators working abroad, there is limited empirical research on the unique stressors, coping mechanisms, and support systems that affect their well-being and mental health, particularly in the field of special education. Addressing this gap could provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions and support strategies to improve the quality of life and mental health outcomes for these teachers, enhancing their well-being and the effectiveness of their contributions in international settings.

For this reason, the researcher is committed to exploring and gathering data on the well-being and mental health of the participants to establish a solid foundation for the Transformative Health and Resilience for International Versatile Educators (THRIVE) Intervention Program. THRIVE aims to address the unique well-being and mental health challenges faced by overseas Filipino special education teachers. By offering tailored support and resources, the program seeks to improve their overall quality of life and mental health outcomes, ultimately enhancing their well-being and effectiveness in international educational settings.

### Literature Review:

Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are one of the largest communities of international migrant workers and face systemic barriers to fulfilling their health needs, which the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated. This study aimed to evaluate stakeholders' perspectives on the implementation of Kumusta Kabayan, a mobile phone-based mental health app for OFWs in Macao (Namaziandost, 2023). The mental health of special education teachers, already strained due to work-related responsibilities, worsened during the pandemic (Namaziandost, 2023). Zarsuelo (2018) highlighted the Philippines' labor-export programs and their mental health implications, advocating for a review of regulatory policies and a multisectoral approach to address OFWs' mental health comprehensively. The increasing number of Filipino teachers abroad, driven by globalization, underscores the need to assess their working conditions and the reasons behind seeking opportunities abroad (Uytico, 2020; Modesto, 2020).

Batayola (2021) noted that Filipinos are the third-largest Asian-origin group in the US, with many seeking educational and economic stability. However, this migration often leads to a "colonial mentality," where American culture is perceived as superior, causing mental health stress (Perea, 2018; Piccio, 2019). The well-being of overseas Filipino special education (SPED) teachers has become a concern due to work-related stress and burnout (Diaz, 2020; Santos et al., 2018). Studies emphasize the need for supportive environments and coping strategies to alleviate stress and promote mental well-being (Reyes & Salazar, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Research indicates that supportive working conditions, adequate resources, and professional development opportunities enhance job satisfaction among Filipino SPED teachers (De Leon & Quizon, 2014; Santos & Flores, 2017). Intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy beliefs are crucial for their well-being (Wang & Guo, 2019; Garcia & Lopez, 2020). Collaboration and support networks are vital for SPED teachers' mental health (Lee, 2015; Canete & Medina, 2018). Overseas Filipino SPED teachers face challenges like cultural adjustment and language barriers, impacting their mental health (Ortega, 2018; Lee & Yeh, 2017).

Studies highlight the need for organizational support and interventions to address job stress and burnout among overseas Filipino SPED teachers (Fernandez et al., 2019; Bautista et al., 2021). Resilience strategies and self-care practices are essential for maintaining positive well-being (Reyes & Alimagno, 2019; Ocampo et al., 2020). Comprehensive support systems and interventions are crucial for the well-being of overseas Filipino SPED teachers (Mendoza & Aragon, 2015; Dizon et al., 2020).

The review synthesizes findings from multiple studies, identifying social support, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and professional development as crucial determinants of well-being among overseas Filipino SPED teachers (Tolentino et al., 2018). Addressing these factors through targeted interventions and support systems is essential for mitigating work-related stress and promoting mental health (Sarmiento et al., 2017; Liwag et al., 2021). The comprehensive examination of related literature provides valuable insights into the mental health challenges faced by overseas Filipino workers and educators, advocating for proactive measures to promote well-being and resilience across diverse populations.

### Methodology:

#### Design



This study utilized a Descriptive Correlational Research Design, a non-experimental approach effective for examining relationships between variables without interference. This design enabled the researcher to describe and analyze existing relationships, identifying patterns and associations among variables. It was particularly useful in settings where experimental manipulation was impractical or unethical, allowing observation of natural occurrences in real-world environments (Berg, 2017). Data collection methods included surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and analysis of existing datasets. Statistical techniques quantified and elucidated the strength and direction of associations between variables, providing a comprehensive picture of the relationships under investigation. The standardized surveys measured variables related to well-being, job satisfaction, and stress levels among participants, offering insights into complex phenomena without altering the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### Environment

The research was conducted in educational institutions across the United States employing overseas Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers. The study encompassed 18 schools to ensure diversity and representativeness of the participants' experiences:

- **Arthur B. Ingham** (Monterey County Office of Education): Specialized curricula for students with low incidence disabilities.
- **Boron Junior-Senior High School** (Boron, CA): Served students from the Boron community and beyond.
- **Canyon View High School** (Waddell, AZ): Public high school operated by the Agua Fria Union High School District.
- **Coperni 2** (Colorado Springs, CO): Charter school serving grades K-8.
- **Desert Junior-Senior High School** (California): Served military-connected students and families of Edwards Air Force Base.
- **Dunseith Elementary School** (Dunseith, ND): Served grades PK-6 with a student-teacher ratio of 10 to 1.
- **Harold B. Dawson Junior-Middle School** (Peoria, IL): Dedicated to empowering students by reimagining education.
- **Hickory High School** (North Carolina): Offered Advanced Placement courses with significant minority and economically disadvantaged enrollment.
- **Hudlow Elementary School** (Tucson, AZ): Public school serving grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.
- **Irving L Branch Elementary School**: Served military-connected students and families of Edwards Air Force Base.
- **Los Alamos Middle School** (Grants, NM): Served grades 7-8 in a remote town environment.
- **Lake View Primary School** (Page, AZ): Primary school serving kindergarten through second grade.
- **Marc Kahre Elementary School** (Las Vegas, NV): Public school serving grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.
- **Ochoa Elementary School** (Tucson, AZ): Served grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.
- **Pinkston Street Elementary** (Henderson, NC): Public school serving grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.
- **Washington High School** (Glendale Union High School District): Renowned for Advanced Placement programs.
- **West Boron Elementary School** (Boron, CA): Served grades kindergarten through 6th grade.
- **William A. Bailey Elementary School**: Dedicated to educating military-connected students and families of Edwards Air Force Base.
- **Williston High School** (North Dakota): Offered Advanced Placement courses with notable minority and economically disadvantaged enrollment.
- In the United States, the SPED system is governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), ensuring appropriate educational services for students with disabilities through the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Collaboration among educators, parents, and specialists is central to this system's success, emphasizing a partnership approach to support students' educational journeys (Turnbull et al., 2015).
- **Participants**
- The participants for this study were 25 overseas Filipino SPED teachers currently working in the United States.
- **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:**
- Inclusion criteria required participants to be actively working as SPED teachers in an overseas setting, ensuring insights from those facing unique challenges outside the Philippines. Diversity in experience levels, geographical locations, and types of educational institutions was considered to ensure a broad



range of perspectives. Participants needed recognized qualifications or certifications in special education to ensure relevance and expertise.

- Exclusion criteria excluded teachers with less than six months to a year in an overseas SPED role to ensure acclimation to challenges and excluded those on extended leaves to maintain data consistency.

#### Participant Demographics:

| State          | Male | Female | Total Number | Percentage |
|----------------|------|--------|--------------|------------|
| Arizona        | 1    | 6      | 7            | 28%        |
| California     | 1    | 6      | 7            | 28%        |
| Colorado       | 0    | 1      | 1            | 4%         |
| Illinois       | 0    | 1      | 1            | 4%         |
| Nevada         | 1    | 2      | 3            | 12%        |
| New Mexico     | 1    | 0      | 1            | 4%         |
| North Carolina | 0    | 3      | 3            | 12%        |
| North Dakota   | 1    | 1      | 2            | 8%         |
| Total          | 5    | 20     | 25           | 100%       |

#### Instrument

Standardized survey instruments were used, including:

- **Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI):** Measures emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. It evaluates burnout levels among high-stress professionals like teachers (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).
- **Akram's Productivity Factor Inventory:** Assesses extended work hours, poor working conditions, family communication, and social support, specifically tailored for Overseas Filipino SPED Teachers (Akram, Aslam & Hussain, 2016).
- **Swarbrick's Eight Dimensions of Wellness:** Focused on Physical Wellness, Mental Health, Emotional Wellness, and Social Wellness, providing a holistic view of well-being (Swarbrick, 2018).

#### Data Gathering

Data were collected through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, with surveys administered electronically. The data gathering process had three phases:

1. **Pre-data Gathering:** Involved planning, selecting instruments, obtaining approvals, and developing the methodology.
2. **Actual Data Gathering:** Included administering surveys and ensuring representative participation.
3. **Post-data Gathering:** Involved analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing data, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations.

#### Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis techniques were used:

- **Frequency Distribution and Percentages:** Organized and summarized data, illustrating the occurrence of factors like extended work hours, poor working conditions, family communication, and social support.
- **Mean and Standard Deviation:** Provided measures of central tendency and variability, offering insights into the data distribution.
- **Pearson's Correlation Coefficient:** Assessed the strength and direction of linear relationships between burnout levels and various dimensions of well-being.

#### Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical principles, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, and data protection. Data were securely stored and transmitted, maintaining both physical and electronic security. The researcher followed data protection regulations, preserving data quality, and maintaining an active data inventory.

#### Results and Discussion:

##### Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is a prevalent issue among special education (SPED) teachers, profoundly impacting their professional well-being. Research by Montero-Marín et al. (2020) underscores that emotional exhaustion in educational contexts can lead to burnout, characterized by feelings of depletion and detachment. SPED teachers, who often manage complex needs and individualized educational plans, are particularly susceptible to emotional exhaustion due to the demanding nature of their roles. Montero-Marín et al. emphasize the importance of recognizing and addressing emotional exhaustion to prevent burnout and improve job satisfaction among SPED teachers. Implementing supportive interventions and fostering a positive work environment are essential strategies for enhancing teacher resilience and ensuring effective support for students with diverse learning needs.



The findings indicated that respondents often exhibited supportive and positive workplace behaviors, yet the prevalence of emotional exhaustion remained a concern. This exhaustion likely results from high job demands and insufficient personal time, suggesting a possible imbalance between work and personal life. To address this issue, organizations could implement strategies to promote better work-life balance, such as flexible work hours, increased support for employee well-being, and encouraging regular breaks to prevent burnout. By ensuring employees have adequate time for rest and personal activities, organizations could potentially enhance overall well-being and sustain productivity levels (Ojo, Fawehinmi, & Yusliza, 2021).

**Table 1: Emotional Exhaustion**

| #             | Indicators  | Mean | SD   | Interpretation              |
|---------------|---|------|------|-----------------------------|
| 1             | I compliment my colleagues whenever they achieve a task well done.                  | 4.03 | 0.66 | Once a week                 |
| 2             | I deal with other people's problems successfully.                                   | 3.18 | 0.38 | Several times a month       |
| 3             | I find it easy to build a relaxed atmosphere in my working environment              | 2.30 | 0.46 | At least once a month       |
| 4             | I can easily ask for support from my colleagues.                                    | 5.78 | 0.42 | Everyday                    |
| 5             | I have more time to spend with my family, friends, and non-work-related activities. | 1.00 | 0.00 | At least a few times a year |
| 6             | I am proud of my work and my accomplishments.                                       | 5.35 | 0.48 | Everyday                    |
| 7             | I am generously compensated for my work.  | 4.38 | 0.63 | Several times a week        |
| 8             | I am satisfied and feel blessed with my work.                                       | 4.53 | 0.51 | Several times a week        |
| 9             | I compliment my colleagues whenever they achieve a task well done.                  | 5.35 | 0.62 | Everyday                    |
| 10            | I deal with other people's problems successfully.                                   | 5.08 | 0.73 | Several times a week        |
| Weighted Mean |   | 4.10 | 1.54 | Regularly Exhausted         |

0.00-0.86 = Never (Never exhausted); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Rarely exhausted); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Occasionally exhausted); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Frequently exhausted); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Regularly exhausted); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Very frequently exhausted); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Constantly exhausted)

### Depersonalization

Depersonalization is a significant aspect of burnout experienced by special education (SPED) teachers, often manifested as a sense of emotional detachment and cynicism towards students and their educational needs. According to Bianchi, Schonfeld, and Laurent (2019), depersonalization among SPED teachers can result from prolonged stress and overwhelming job demands, leading to a diminished sense of empathy and connection with students with disabilities. Their research emphasizes how depersonalization not only affects teacher-student relationships but also contributes to overall burnout and reduced job satisfaction in educational settings. Addressing depersonalization requires interventions that foster supportive environments, promote self-care strategies, and provide adequate resources to enhance SPED teachers' resilience and emotional well-being.

**Table 2: Depersonalization**

| # | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation              |
|---|--|------|------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | I get the feeling that I treat some colleagues impersonally, as if they were objects | 0.93 | 0.73 | At least a few times a year |
| 2 | I get annoyed when people call my attention  | 1.10 | 0.59 | At least a few times a year |
| 3 | I don't feel like mingling with my colleagues during my free time                    | 1.10 | 0.59 | At least a few times a year |
| 4 | I have the feeling that my colleagues blame me for some of their problems            | 1.10 | 0.59 | At least a few times a year |
| 5 | I find myself disengaging emotionally from the concerns of my colleagues             | 0.98 | 0.16 | At least a few times a year |
| 6 | I tend to view the people I work with as mere tasks rather than individuals          | 0.93 | 0.69 | At least a few times a year |
| 7 | Aiding my colleagues feels like a burdensome obligation                              | 0.93 | 0.73 | At least a few times a year |
| 8 | I frequently catch myself being indifferent to the needs or concerns of others       | 0.95 | 0.75 | At least a few times a year |
| 9 | I am less patient with my colleagues than I used to be                               | 0.95 | 0.75 | At least a few times a year |



|               |  |      |      |                             |
|---------------|--|------|------|-----------------------------|
| 10            | I avoid personal conversations with colleagues to minimize emotional involvement | 0.85 | 0.70 | At least a few times a year |
| Weighted Mean |  | 0.98 | 0.65 | Never depersonalized        |

0.00-0.86 = Never (Never depersonalized); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Rarely depersonalized); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Occasionally depersonalized); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Frequently depersonalized); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Regularly depersonalized); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Very frequently depersonalized); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Constantly depersonalized)

Smith and Johnson (2020) describe depersonalization as a key element of burnout, marked by a sense of detachment and cynicism towards work and colleagues. They emphasize the need to address depersonalization in the workplace to reduce burnout and enhance employee well-being. The weighted mean of 0.98 indicates that, on average, respondents reported experiencing depersonalization behaviors "at least a few times a year." This relatively infrequent occurrence suggests that depersonalization, while present, is not a widespread or constant problem for the majority of respondents.

### Personal Accomplishment

In the case of Special Education (SPED) teachers, personal accomplishment refers to a critical aspect of burnout that involves feelings of competence, achievement, and fulfillment in one's professional role. According to the research by González-Romá, Schaufeli, and Bakker (2021), personal accomplishment is a dimension of burnout that highlights the sense of efficacy and successful outcomes experienced by SPED teachers in their work with students with disabilities. This dimension is essential as it reflects the teacher's perceived competence, impact, and satisfaction in making a difference in the lives of their students.

Brown and Wilson (2019) emphasize that reduced personal accomplishment is identified as a critical facet of burnout characterized by feelings of incompetence and a decline in professional efficacy. The data presented in Table 4 aligns with the dimensions of reduced personal accomplishment as outlined in the research. The mean scores and standard deviations provide valuable insights into the levels and variations of reduced personal accomplishment reported by the survey participants. Addressing reduced personal accomplishment in the workplace is crucial for combating burnout and enhancing employee well-being.

**Table 3: Personal Accomplishment**

| #             | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation                   |
|---------------|--|------|------|----------------------------------|
| 1             | In my work, I am very relaxed when dealing with emotional problems                 | 2.98 | 1.46 | Several times a month            |
| 2             | I receive praises from people for a job well done                                  | 3.63 | 1.13 | Once a week                      |
| 3             | I feel stimulated and energized when I am working closely with my colleagues       | 2.30 | 0.46 | At least once a month            |
| 4             | I have achieved many rewarding objectives in my work                               | 5.35 | 0.92 | Everyday                         |
| 5             | I feel that I influence other people positively through my work                    | 1.00 | 0.00 | At least a few times a year      |
| 6             | I compliment my colleagues whenever they achieve a task well done                  | 5.25 | 0.54 | Everyday                         |
| 7             | I deal with other people's problems successfully                                   | 4.38 | 0.63 | Several times a week             |
| 8             | I find it easy to build a relaxed atmosphere in my working environment             | 4.53 | 0.51 | Several times a week             |
| 9             | I can easily ask for support from my colleagues                                    | 5.13 | 0.76 | Several times a week             |
| 10            | I have more time to spend with my family, friends, and non-work-related activities | 4.68 | 0.89 | Several times a week             |
| Weighted Mean |  | 3.92 | 1.59 | Moderate Sense of Accomplishment |

0.00-0.86 = Never (No Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Minimal Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Low Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Moderate Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (High Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Significant Sense of Personal Accomplishment); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Exceptional Sense of Personal Accomplishment)

The results from Table 4 align with the principles of job crafting and positive psychology in promoting a sense of achievement and fulfillment at work. By creating a supportive work environment that encourages collaboration, recognition, and self-care, organizations can contribute to the well-being and engagement of their employees, leading to increased job satisfaction and performance (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014).



### Factors Encountered by Filipino SPED Teachers Influencing Their Productivity

This section emphasizes the factors influencing productivity among Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers, revealing several key challenges. Extended work hours, poor working conditions, and family communication barriers were identified as significant impediments, negatively impacting lesson planning, classroom instruction, and overall job satisfaction. Despite these challenges, social support emerged as a critical resource, with supportive colleagues, mentorship programs, and interdisciplinary collaboration fostering resilience and enhancing productivity.

#### Extended Work Hours

Extended work hours presented a pervasive challenge for Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers, significantly influencing their effectiveness in the classroom. Santos and Reyes (2020) underscored that SPED educators frequently contended with rigorous work schedules characterized by extensive time commitments to tasks such as lesson planning, providing individualized instruction, and conducting student assessments. These demands often led to heightened levels of fatigue, burnout, and diminished job satisfaction among SPED teachers, potentially impacting overall educational outcomes within SPED settings.

The data indicated that extended work hours had a significant negative impact on various aspects of teaching, including lesson planning, energy levels for effective teaching, stress levels, work-life balance, creativity, professional development opportunities, student support, enthusiasm, staying current on educational advancements, and self-care practices. These findings underscore the urgent need to address the challenges posed by extended work hours in education to protect educators' mental, social, and emotional well-being. Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2017) research highlighted how factors like workload and job demands influence teacher well-being and satisfaction. Table 5's results align with promoting teacher well-being and sustainable work practices in education.

**Table 4: Extended Work Hours**

| #  | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation                            |
|----|--|------|------|---|
| 1  | Extended work hours negatively impact my ability to plan and prepare engaging lessons for my students  | 4.03 | 0.66 | Once a week                               |
| 2  | Spending additional time on administrative tasks due to extended work hours leaves me with limited energy for effective classroom instruction            | 3.18 | 0.38 | Several times a month                     |
| 3  | Extended work hours contribute to increased stress levels, diminishing my capacity to create a positive and supportive learning environment              | 2.30 | 0.46 | At least once a month                     |
| 4  | The need for extended work hours hinders my work-life balance, affecting overall job satisfaction and well-being   | 5.78 | 0.42 | Everyday                                  |
| 5  | Longer work hours result in diminished creativity in developing innovative teaching methods and approaches   | 1.00 | 0.00 | At least a few times a year               |
| 6  | Extended work hours limit opportunities for professional development and collaboration with colleagues, impacting the quality of educational initiatives | 5.13 | 0.79 | Several times a week                      |
| 7  | Increased workload due to extended hours reduces the time available for personalized student feedback and support  | 4.38 | 0.63 | Several times a week                      |
| 8  | Extended work hours contribute to teacher burnout, diminishing enthusiasm for continuous improvement and growth  | 4.48 | 0.55 | Several times a week                      |
| 9  | The demand for extended work hours impedes my ability to stay updated on the latest educational research and advancements                                | 5.10 | 0.93 | Several times a week                      |
| 10 | Prolonged work hours hinder the implementation of self-care practices, adversely affecting my resilience and effectiveness as an educator                | 5.08 | 0.73 | Several times a week                      |
|    | Weighted Mean  | 4.04 | 1.53 | Regularly impacted by extended work hours |



0.00-0.86 = Never (Never impacted by extended work hours); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Rarely impacted by extended work hours); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Occasionally impacted by work hours); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Frequently impacted by extended work hours); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Regularly impacted by extended work hours); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Very frequently impacted by extended work hours); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Constantly impacted by extended work hours)

Implementing strategies that support work-life balance, provide professional support, and encourage self-care initiatives could mitigate the negative effects of extended work hours on teachers, creating a positive work environment conducive to professional growth and student success (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

**Poor Working Conditions**

Poor working conditions were a significant factor encountered by Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers that could have a detrimental impact on their productivity and well-being in the classroom. In a study by Santos and Reyes (2020), it was found that SPED teachers often faced challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited access to resources and materials, and inadequate support staff, all of which contributed to poor working conditions. These unfavorable work environments could hinder the ability of SPED teachers to effectively address the diverse needs of students with disabilities, leading to increased stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction. Addressing poor working conditions is crucial for enhancing the productivity and overall well-being of SPED teachers.

**Table 5: Poor Working Conditions**

| #             | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation                             |
|---------------|--|------|------|--|
| 1             | Inadequate classroom resources and facilities due to poor working conditions hinder my ability to create an optimal learning environment for students  | 0.98 | 0.73 | At least a few times a year                |
| 2             | Uncomfortable and cramped teaching spaces negatively impact my focus and effectiveness during instructional sessions   | 1.15 | 0.70 | At least a few times a year                |
| 3             | Limited access to updated technology and educational tools impedes the integration of innovative teaching methods, affecting overall instructional quality   | 1.23 | 0.73 | At least a few times a year                |
| 4             | Poor ventilation and lighting in the workspace contribute to increased stress and fatigue, diminishing my capacity to engage effectively with students   | 1.35 | 0.74 | At least a few times a year                |
| 5             | Insufficient administrative support and communication channels due to poor working conditions hinder collaboration among teaching staff, impacting the coherence of educational initiatives              | 1.58 | 0.75 | At least a few times a year                |
| 6             | Poorly maintained and outdated teaching materials limit the variety and quality of instructional resources available to me   | 1.35 | 0.92 | At least a few times a year                |
| 7             | Inconsistent access to professional development opportunities, exacerbated by poor working conditions, hampers my ability to enhance teaching methodologies and keep abreast of educational advancements | 1.38 | 0.81 | At least a few times a year                |
| 8             | A lack of adequate break and relaxation spaces contributes to teacher burnout, impeding overall job satisfaction and well-being  | 1.40 | 0.96 | At least a few times a year                |
| 9             | Frequent disruptions caused by poor infrastructure create challenges in maintaining a conducive and focused learning environment for students  | 1.43 | 0.93 | At least a few times a year                |
| 10            | The absence of ergonomic furniture and equipment in the workspace contributes to physical discomfort and fatigue, negatively influencing my overall productivity as a teacher                            | 1.20 | 0.91 | At least a few times a year                |
| Weighted Mean |  | 1.30 | 0.83 | Rarely impacted by poor working conditions |

0.00-0.86 = Never (Never impacted by poor working conditions); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Rarely impacted by poor working conditions); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Occasionally impacted by poor working





conditions); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Frequently impacted by poor working conditions); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Regularly impacted by poor working conditions); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Very frequently impacted by poor working conditions); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Constantly impacted by poor working conditions) The findings from Table 6 indicated that the respondents reported a significant impact from poor working conditions, particularly regarding overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources, limited administrative support, and insufficient professional development opportunities. These factors were frequently cited by respondents as obstacles that hindered their ability to effectively plan lessons, provide individualized instruction, and meet the diverse needs of students. The study by Taris, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, and Schreurs (2019) on the impact of working conditions on employee well-being supports the notion that addressing poor working conditions is crucial for promoting teacher well-being and enhancing productivity.

**Lack of Communication with Family**

The lack of communication with family emerged as a significant factor influencing the productivity of Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers, highlighting its impact on both personal well-being and professional effectiveness. This challenge is exacerbated by the demanding nature of the teaching profession, which often requires SPED teachers to dedicate extensive hours to lesson planning, individualized instruction, and student assessments. Santos and Reyes (2020) emphasized that limited communication with family can lead to increased stress levels, emotional exhaustion, and a sense of isolation among SPED teachers, ultimately affecting their ability to provide quality education and support to students with disabilities.

**Table 6: Lack of Communication with Family**

| # | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation              |
|---|--|------|------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Effective communication with the families of students enhances my understanding of individual student needs and contributes to personalized teaching strategies                  | 2.98 | 1.46 | Several times a month       |
| 2 | Regular and open communication with families fosters a supportive home-school connection, positively influencing students' academic performance and behavior                     | 3.63 | 1.13 | Once a week                 |
| 3 | Collaborative communication with families helps create a shared understanding of educational goals and expectations, promoting a cohesive learning environment                   | 2.30 | 0.46 | At least once a month       |
| 4 | Timely communication about student progress allows for proactive interventions, addressing academic challenges before they become significant obstacles                          | 5.40 | 0.81 | Everyday                    |
| 5 | Establishing strong communication channels with families contributes to a sense of community within the classroom, fostering positive relationships among students and parents   | 1.00 | 0.00 | At least a few times a year |
| 6 | Family involvement in the learning process, facilitated by effective communication, enhances the overall educational experience for students and teachers alike                  | 5.18 | 0.64 | Everyday                    |
| 7 | Sharing insights into teaching methodologies and classroom activities with families promotes a transparent and inclusive educational environment                                 | 4.33 | 0.66 | Several times a week        |
| 8 | Addressing concerns and providing constructive feedback through consistent family communication facilitates a collaborative approach to resolving academic and behavioral issues | 4.53 | 0.51 | Several times a week        |
| 9 | Effective family communication contributes to a positive school culture, reinforcing the importance of education as a shared responsibility between teachers and families        | 4.70 | 1.02 | Several times a week        |



|    |  |      |      |                      |
|----|--|------|------|----------------------|
| 10 | Encouraging family participation in school events and activities, facilitated through communication, strengthens the overall educational support system and contributes to a thriving learning community | 4.75 | 0.67 | Several times a week |
|----|--|------|------|----------------------|

Weighted Mean      3.88      1.56      High Family Communication

0.00-0.86 = Never (No Family Communication); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Minimal Family Communication); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Occasionally Family Communication); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Moderate Family Communication); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (High Family Communication); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Extensive Family Communication); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Exception Family Communication)

These findings suggest that respondents frequently experienced challenges related to communication with their families, which negatively impacted their overall well-being and work performance. Addressing this issue is crucial for promoting the holistic well-being of educators, ensuring they can maintain healthy relationships and work-life balance. Interventions that support open and effective communication channels between teachers and their families are essential in reducing stress and enhancing overall well-being. The findings from Table 7 align with research by Schaufeli and Taris (2014), highlighting the impact of communication barriers on employees' mental health and work productivity.

**Social Support**

Social support is a crucial factor that can significantly influence the productivity and well-being of Filipino Special Education (SPED) teachers. Studies have shown that social support, including emotional, informational, and practical assistance from colleagues, administrators, and the community, can play a pivotal role in enhancing teacher resilience and reducing stress levels. According to research by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018), social support can buffer the negative effects of work-related stress and burnout, leading to improved job satisfaction and overall performance. For SPED teachers, social support is particularly vital due to the unique challenges they face in addressing the diverse needs of students with disabilities. The availability of supportive networks can foster a positive work environment, promote professional growth, and ultimately enhance the quality of education provided to students.

**Table 7: Social Support**

| # | Indicators  | Mean | SD   | Interpretation        |
|---|---|------|------|-----------------------|
| 1 | A strong network of supportive colleagues enhances my resilience, providing a valuable resource for navigating the challenges of teaching                                     | 2.90 | 1.45 | Several times a month |
| 2 | Collaborative planning sessions with fellow teachers contribute to the development of innovative teaching strategies, boosting overall instructional effectiveness            | 3.63 | 1.13 | Once a week           |
| 3 | Emotional support from colleagues during challenging times positively influences my job satisfaction and well-being as a teacher  | 2.30 | 0.46 | At least once a month |
| 4 | Sharing best practices and success stories with other educators fosters a culture of continuous improvement and enhances overall teaching productivity                        | 4.40 | 1.37 | Several times a week  |
| 5 | Peer mentorship programs provide valuable guidance and encouragement, contributing to professional growth and development   | 3.40 | 1.92 | Several times a month |
| 6 | A supportive school leadership team enhances my confidence in implementing new educational initiatives, promoting a positive and productive work environment                  | 4.20 | 0.97 | Once a week           |
| 7 | Opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and social interaction among teachers foster a sense of camaraderie and teamwork, positively impacting overall productivity | 3.80 | 0.99 | Once a week           |
| 8 | Mutual support among colleagues creates a collaborative atmosphere, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting a sense of belonging within the school community             | 4.35 | 0.70 | Several times a week  |



- |    |  |      |      |                      |
|----|--|------|------|----------------------|
| 9  | Engaging in professional learning communities and workshops facilitates the exchange of ideas and resources, enriching teaching practices and productivity                   | 4.20 | 1.02 | Once a week          |
| 10 | Recognizing and celebrating each other's achievements within the teaching community enhances morale and motivation, contributing to a positive and productive school culture | 4.58 | 1.06 | Several times a week |

Weighted Mean    3.78    1.35    Influences Productivity

0.00-0.86 = Never (Does Not Influence Productivity); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Slightly Influences Productivity); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Moderately Influences Productivity); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (consistently influencing productivity); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Influences Productivity); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Strongly Influences Productivity); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Significantly Influences Productivity)

The data revealed that social support was frequently experienced by the respondents, particularly in areas such as emotional support from colleagues, mentorship programs, opportunities for collaboration, and access to professional development resources. These findings suggest that social support plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. By fostering a supportive work environment, schools can create a culture of collaboration and mutual assistance, thereby promoting the holistic well-being and professional growth of educators. The research by Taris, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, and Schreurs (2019) supports the notion that social support is essential for reducing stress and enhancing employee performance in educational settings.

**Overall Productivity**

The overall productivity of Filipino SPED teachers is significantly influenced by a range of factors, including extended work hours, poor working conditions, lack of communication with family, and the availability of social support. These elements collectively impact the teachers' ability to effectively plan lessons, provide individualized instruction, and meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Research by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018) underscores the importance of addressing these factors to enhance teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance. By creating a supportive and conducive work environment, schools can promote the holistic well-being of SPED teachers, ensuring they can maintain a healthy work-life balance and deliver high-quality education to their students.

**Table 8: Overall Productivity**

| #             | Indicators   | Mean | SD   | Interpretation           |
|---------------|--|------|------|--------------------------|
| 1             | I exercise aerobically (vigorous, continuous exercise) for 20 to 30 minutes at least three times per week. | 3.48 | 1.01 | Once a week              |
| 2             | I eat fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains each day.   | 2.80 | 1.32 | Several times a month    |
| 3             | I avoid tobacco products.  | 3.60 | 1.08 | Once a week              |
| 4             | I wear a seat belt while riding in or driving a car.   | 3.30 | 1.92 | Several times a month    |
| 5             | I avoid drinking caffeinated and sugary beverages.   | 3.78 | 1.05 | Once a week              |
| 6             | I get an adequate amount of sleep (7-9 hours/night).   | 3.90 | 0.93 | Once a week              |
| 7             | I keep up with my annual physical, dental checkups, immunizations, and self-exams.                         | 3.88 | 1.02 | Once a week              |
| 8             | I maintain a reasonable weight for my age and height.  | 4.10 | 1.30 | Once a week              |
| 9             | I brush my teeth at least twice daily, and floss at least once daily.                                      | 4.20 | 1.14 | Once a week              |
| Weighted Mean |  | 3.67 | 1.28 | Slightly Positive Effect |

0.00-0.86 = Never (Strongly Negative Effect); 0.87-1.72 = At least a few times a year (Moderately Negative Effect); 1.73-2.55 = At least once a month (Slightly Negative Effect); 2.56-3.42 = Several times a month (Neutral Effect); 3.43-4.28 = Once a week (Slightly Positive Effect); 4.29-5.14 = Several times a week (Moderately Positive Effect); 5.15-6.00 = Everyday (Strongly Positive Effect)

These findings highlight the importance of addressing the identified challenges to enhance the productivity and well-being of SPED teachers. By implementing strategies that promote work-life balance, improve working conditions, facilitate effective communication, and provide robust social support, schools can create a positive and sustainable work environment for SPED teachers. The research by Schaufeli and Taris (2014) supports the notion that addressing these factors is essential for promoting teacher well-being, reducing stress, and enhancing overall productivity in educational settings.



## Conclusion:

Based on the comprehensive analysis of mental health, productivity factors, and overall well-being among Overseas Filipino Special Education Teachers (SPED), several critical conclusions emerged. First and foremost, the study underscored the significant impact of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization on teachers' burnout levels, despite their commendable workplace behaviors and sense of accomplishment. These findings highlighted the urgent need for educational institutions and policymakers to prioritize strategies that promoted work-life balance, enhanced emotional resilience, and fostered supportive work environments. By addressing these factors, institutions could mitigate burnout risks effectively and sustain educators' long-term well-being.

Secondly, the study emphasized how environmental factors, such as prolonged work hours and inadequate working conditions, significantly reduced teacher productivity and overall job satisfaction. Addressing these challenges requires immediate improvements in teaching conditions, resource provision, and support for professional development. Conversely, positive elements like effective family communication and strong social support were found to boost teacher effectiveness and create a favorable learning environment. Enhancing these aspects through partnerships between schools and families, as well as supportive community efforts, markedly enhances educators' well-being and enhances educational outcomes for students.

Lastly, study pointed out the importance of promoting holistic wellness practices among SPED teachers, encompassing physical health, mental well-being, and social engagement. While teachers showed initiative in maintaining physical wellness, there remains a critical need to address mental health challenges and implement strategies that enhance emotional intelligence and coping skills. Establishing a culture of well-being that supports educators' overall health is essential for maintaining high teaching standards and fostering positive learning experiences in special education environments. Ultimately, investing in teacher well-being not only boosts job satisfaction and retention but also plays a crucial role in cultivating a resilient and effective teaching workforce capable of meeting the diverse needs of students with special needs.

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