

Comparative Analysis on the Wellness of Elementary Teachers in Panabo City Division

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Abstract — The purpose of the study is to determine the significant differences of career stages on the wellness level among elementary teachers in Panabo City division. The following are the significant findings: majority of elementary teachers have between 1 to 10 years of service, and most are at the proficient career stage. Further, the overall wellness of elementary teachers appears to be strong across all dimensions with most indicators rated as High or Very High. Notably, teachers scored highest in spiritual wellness (mean = 4.27), particularly in feeling connected and purposeful, and physical wellness (mean = 4.17), especially in daily exercise, while emotional wellness showed slightly lower consistency (mean = 3.78), particularly in areas like daily gratitude. Finally, there is no statistically significant difference in the wellness levels of elementary teachers across groups, as indicated by a p-value of 0.278, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. In conclusion, elementary teachers demonstrate a high level of overall wellness, with particularly strong spiritual and physical well-being, while emotional wellness presents modest room for growth. Despite differences in years of service and career stages, wellness levels do not significantly vary across groups, suggesting a generally consistent and positive well-being among teachers. There is still more to discover—especially around emotional wellness. Dig deeper into what helps teachers thrive emotionally and explore how wellness varies across different contexts to build stronger, more responsive support systems.

Keywords — *Comparative Analysis, wellness, emotional, physical, intellectual, Occupational and spiritual*

I. Introduction

Wellness is a broad, multidimensional concept that goes beyond simply being free from illness. It includes various aspects of human well-being such as physical, emotional, social, intellectual, occupational, and spiritual health. In Panabo Central District, adopting healthy daily habits is seen as vital to achieving a balanced and sustainable lifestyle. Within the workplace, overall health and wellness play a crucial role in determining career success, directly influencing job performance, productivity, and satisfaction. Physical wellness supports sustained energy and reduces absenteeism, while mental and emotional well-being are essential for managing stress, improving concentration, and fostering creativity—key drivers of professional advancement.

On a global scale, workplace stress and burnout have become major issues. In China, rising levels of burnout among professionals are largely attributed to chronic stress and excessive workloads (Yang, 2022). The healthcare and education sectors are particularly vulnerable, with

research revealing high rates of depression and emotional fatigue (Zhong et al., 2022; Vineetha & D'Souza, 2023). Similarly, in the Philippines, teachers face significant stressors due to heavy workloads and insufficient support systems, which adversely affect their mental health, job effectiveness, and overall well-being (Sunga, 2019; Alcera, 2022). In Mindanao, educators must also contend with limited resources, political instability, and subpar welfare support—factors that contribute to teacher burnout and negatively impact the quality of education (Bayod et al., 2021; Dadulo & Canencia, 2010).

Teachers in the Central District of Panabo City Division face comparable difficulties. Heavy workloads, administrative demands, financial constraints, and limited access to wellness initiatives pose serious challenges to their physical and mental health. Despite strong evidence linking teacher wellness to the quality of education, support systems for mental health and stress management remain inadequate. Furthermore, existing research tends to take a generalized view of employee wellness, often neglecting the unique challenges teachers encounter at different stages of their careers. From early career adjustment to mid-career demands and late-career transitions, these stages involve evolving stressors and needs. Addressing this research gap is vital to creating effective, stage-specific wellness programs that enhance teachers' overall well-being and job satisfaction. Thus, this study aims to explore the health and wellness status of teachers in Panabo Central District, with particular attention to how these factors differ across various career phases.

Literature Review

This section will review the literature and studies that are significant to the topic explored. They were reviewed to help clarify, describe, support, and evaluate the study. This section is presented based on the two variables under the study: career stages among elementary teachers and their health and wellness.

1. Career

The concept of career stages outlines the progression teachers experience throughout their professional lives, typically moving through phases such as exploration, establishment, mid-career, and late-career (Burnison, 2024). According to the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), the teaching profession is structured into four key stages: Beginning, Proficient, Highly Proficient, and Distinguished. Each stage reflects distinct skills, responsibilities, and levels of professional growth (DepEd, 2017). Research indicates that these stages significantly affect teachers' motivation, effectiveness, and job satisfaction.

Teachers in the early stage of their careers often encounter high levels of stress and burnout, largely due to inadequate support systems. In contrast, those in mid-career usually enjoy greater job stability, although they may still feel undervalued or overwhelmed by increasing responsibilities (Ingersoll, 2012). Meanwhile, educators in the later stages of their careers often possess deep expertise but may feel disconnected if they are not given opportunities to lead or

mentor others (Klassen & Chiu, 2012). For teachers to thrive at each phase, tailored professional development and mentorship are crucial (Jackson, 2021; Navaei et al., 2023).

2. Proficient Teachers

Teachers at the proficient level are distinguished by their well-developed teaching practices, confidence in their abilities, and capacity to foster positive learning environments. They excel in four primary areas: instructional methods (pedagogic), personal attributes, interpersonal skills, and ongoing professional learning. These combined competencies contribute significantly to student learning and the overall quality of education (Husni, 2022). Their proactive attitude toward self-improvement and their optimistic perspective greatly enhance classroom engagement and effectiveness (Maloloy-on & Arnado, 2023; Fizza & Rashid, 2023).

3. Highly Proficient Teachers

Highly proficient teachers are recognized for their leadership in teaching innovation, mentorship, and the implementation of advanced instructional strategies (Watterston, 2015). They play a key role in driving school improvement by working collaboratively with colleagues, leading professional initiatives, and encouraging reflective practice (Lieberman & Miller, 2016; Gonzales, 2020). Their contributions go beyond teaching, positioning them as catalysts for broader educational reform and institutional excellence.

4. Distinguished Teachers

Distinguished teachers represent the highest echelon in the teaching profession, characterized by exceptional skills in teaching, mentoring, and leading curriculum enhancement efforts (AITSL, 2017). They serve as exemplary figures and policy advocates who influence school culture and educational standards (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2012; Natale et al., 2016). Their leadership fosters a collaborative learning environment, significantly boosting both student outcomes and institutional development (Stronge, 2018).

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Career Stage Model by Lee S. Shulman in 1987. Shulman's Career Stage Model offers a comprehensive perspective on how teachers progress through different stages of their careers, beginning with the early years of adaptation and moving through stages of growth, maturity, and eventually, potential stagnation or decline. Shulman identifies five key stages: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. These stages are not only developmental in terms of teaching skills and experience but also address how teachers' personal and professional needs evolve over time. As teachers progress, they increasingly demonstrate a higher level of autonomy, confidence, and proficiency in their roles.

Additionally, another theory that supports this study is the theory of Holism by Jan Christian Smut (1926), this emphasizes the interconnectedness of various aspects of human

experience—physical, emotional, social, and cognitive—and how these dimensions contribute to overall well-being. In the context of elementary teachers' health and wellness, this theory can provide valuable insight into the complexities of their professional and personal lives. Teachers, being caregivers and role models, are often under high levels of stress, which may impact their physical and emotional health. Holistic health perspectives support the idea that addressing multiple dimensions of a teacher's life, such as stress management, emotional support, and physical health, can contribute to improved well-being. Research by Rappaport (2021) affirms that teacher wellness is crucial not only for their personal health but also for their effectiveness in the classroom.

II. Methodology

This section presents the research design, research locale, respondents of the study, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and data analysis. A detailed discussion is provided.

Research Design

The study **utilized** a non-experimental quantitative research design. Quantitative research design **was** a process of collecting and analyzing numerical data; it **was** a systematic investigation of phenomena through the gathering of quantifiable data and the application of statistical, mathematical, and computational techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The results **were** depicted in numerical form. Specifically, the researcher utilized a descriptive-comparative design among elementary teachers. The descriptive aspect **provided** an overview of the career stages of elementary teachers, while the comparative aspect **determined** whether there **was** a significant difference between career stages and the wellness levels of teachers.

Ethical Consideration

To ensure the protection and well-being of respondents, this study **adhered** to strict ethical considerations, following universal ethical standards as mandated by the 2007 Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Administrative Order 2007-001. These guidelines **were designed** to uphold the dignity, rights, and safety of human participants. Additionally, in compliance with the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB), established through the 2013 PNHR Act, the study **observed** nine essential ethical principles: social value, informed consent, risk assessment, benefits and safety, privacy and confidentiality, justice, transparency, researcher qualifications, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement. Rizal Memorial Colleges **strictly followed** these ethical standards, ensuring that all research involving human respondents **maintained** both scientific integrity and respect for participants.

Research Locale

The research **was conducted** in the Panabo City Division, particularly in the Central District with 11 elementary schools, which **was overseen** by the Department of Education (DepEd). These schools **were organized** into clusters to streamline administration and enhance the delivery of educational services. DepEd Panabo City **provided** quality education to learners in the city, in line with the Department of Education's efforts in Region XI.

Research Respondents

This study **was conducted** with 204 out of 417 teachers within the Central District of Panabo City Division. Specifically, the researcher **used** a random sampling technique to identify the respondents for this study. According to Creswell (2021), random sampling **was** a method of selecting a sample of observations from a population to make inferences about that population. This technique **was ideal** for the study as it **eliminated** bias and **ensured** proper representation. It also **upheld** the scientific integrity of the respondent selection process.

Research Instrument

In gathering the data, this study **focused** on obtaining the demographic profiles, such as years of service, career levels, and wellness of teachers. Furthermore, the data that **was gathered shed light** on the establishment of the difference between the two variables mentioned.

The survey tool **was composed** of two parts. Part I **asked** for the demographic profile of the respondents, such as years of service and career levels (proficient, highly proficient, and distinguished), while Part II **was an adapted tool** from the National Wellness Institute's Six Dimensions of Wellness by Dr. Bill Hettler (1976). This **consisted** of indicators to determine wellness levels, including emotional wellness, physical wellness, intellectual wellness, occupational wellness, spiritual wellness, and social wellness. This adopted and modified questionnaire passed through a reliability test, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.919, suggesting that the items within the scale or questionnaire analyzed **were highly reliable**.

In determining the wellness level of teachers, the adopted tool **was divided** into six dimensions as presented by Hettler in his model. There **were** 36 items in total to measure the wellness level of elementary teachers.

The respondents **used** the following scale to rate the questionnaire: 5 as Almost Always, 4 as Often, 3 as Sometimes, 2 as Rarely, and 1 as Almost Never. The Likert scale below **was used** to analyze the results.

Research Procedure

The following steps **were undertaken** by the researcher in gathering data for this study:

Asking Permission to Conduct the Study. The researcher **secured** a certificate from the Research Ethics Council, confirming that universal ethical norms **were observed** to preserve and maintain respondents' dignity. Once secured, the researcher **requested** an endorsement letter from the Dean of the Graduate School, as well as the approval of the thesis adviser to conduct the study on the univariate analysis of career stages and wellness of elementary teachers in the Panabo City Division.

Seeking Permission from the School Heads. With the endorsement letter, the researcher **sent** a request letter to the target schools to conduct the study, followed by a letter informing the school principals of the involved schools about the research study **conducted** among the elementary teachers of the Panabo City Division.

Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaires. The researcher **properly explained** the method of answering the questionnaires to the designated respondents of the study, with the agreement and full support of the SDS and school administrator. The researcher **translated** each question from the indicators throughout the administration of the online surveys to ensure that respondents **understood** each question and **provided** valid responses. The selected teachers **complied honestly** and **provided** all the necessary data required for the survey questionnaire. The researcher **retrieved** all the answered questionnaires via Google Forms once completed.

Gathering and Tabulation of Data. The data **was compiled and calculated** following the successful administration and retrieval of the survey questionnaires. Subsequently, using SPSS and with the aid of a statistician, relevant statistical methods **were used** to collect the necessary data for interpretation and further analysis.

Interpretation of Data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) **was used** by the statistician for complex statistical data analysis in this study.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the results of the study, the researcher **used** the following statistical tools:

Mean. The mean **was** a mathematical average computed in various ways, such as the arithmetic and geometric mean methods. This measure **was crucial** in predicting the wellness level of elementary teachers. The mean represented the level of wellness among elementary teachers in the Panabo City Division.

Analysis of Variance. ANOVA **was used to** determine whether the career stages of teachers **significantly differed** based on wellness level. By treating career stages as the independent variable and wellness level as the dependent variable, a one-way ANOVA **tested** whether variations in career stages **were associated** with differences in wellness levels. If significant differences **were found**, post-hoc tests **identified** which career stage groups **differed** in their wellness levels.

III. Results and Discussion

Presented in this chapter the results and discussion of the study. The presentation starts from the descriptive analysis of the wellness level of elementary teachers in Panabo City Division. This is followed by the discussion on the test of difference on their wellness level across demographic profiles.

Table 1. Distribution of Demographic Profile Of Elementary Teachers

Demographic Profile	Range	Frequency
Years in Service	1-10 years	111
	11-20 years	92
	21-35 years	37
Career Stage	Proficient	215
	Highly Proficient	25

The table gives us a glimpse of the elementary teachers' background, focusing on how long they've been teaching and where they are in their careers. Most teachers in the group which are 111 out of 240 are fairly new to the profession, with just 1 to 10 years of experience. A good number have been teaching for 11 to 20 years, while a smaller group has over two decades of experience. This tells us that the teaching force is mostly made up of early to mid-career educators many of whom are still growing and developing in their roles.

Table 2. Level of Wellness of Elementary Teachers in terms of Emotional Wellness

Items	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I love and accept myself as I am.	3.65	High
2. I have the ability to express how I am feeling when experiencing strong emotions.	3.98	High
3. I am able to focus on the positive aspects of the situation in the midst of life's challenges.	3.81	High
4. I proactively seek help and support from others when experiencing difficulties.	3.86	High
5. I regularly engage mindfulness practices and stress-reduction activities.	3.81	High
6. I intentionally practice gratitude every day.	3.58	High
Overall	3.78	High

Table 2 gives us a look into how elementary teachers are doing emotionally, based on how they rated different wellness habits and behaviors. Overall, the results are quite positive with every item scored within the *High* range, showing that most teachers feel emotionally well and balanced.

Table 3. Level of Wellness of Elementary Teachers in terms of Physical Wellness

Items	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
I engage in physical activity every day.	4.47	Very High
I consume nutritious foods (fruits, vegetables, lean protein) only.	4.09	High
In general, I rest soundly and wake up feeling refreshed.	4.09	High
I refrain from smoking and using prohibited drugs.	4.02	High
I refrain from overconsuming alcoholic beverage.	4.09	High
I prioritize my physical health by seeking out appropriate medical care when necessary.	4.27	Very High
Overall	4.17	High

Table 3 gives us a closer look at how elementary teachers are doing when it comes to their physical wellness, and the results are largely encouraging. Most of the responses fall under the high or even very high categories, showing that many teachers are actively taking care of their bodies and health.

Table 4. Level of Wellness of Elementary Teachers in terms of Intellectual Wellness

Items	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
I am inspired to explore a variety of stimulating, innovative, and creative activities.	3.93	High
I regularly engage in interesting and stimulating learning opportunities.	4.00	High
I willingly acknowledge my own errors and see them as opportunities to learn and grow.	4.40	Very High
I use trusted resources to stay informed about local, regional, national, and world events.	4.00	High
I regularly immerse myself in intellectual pursuits with energy, focus, and genuine interest.	4.26	Very High
I take regular breaks and am committed to relaxation to recharge my brain.	4.33	Very High
Overall	4.15	High

Table 4 offers a meaningful glimpse into how elementary teachers are nurturing their intellectual wellness. Overall, the data shows that teachers are deeply engaged in learning, thinking critically, and expanding their minds both in and out of the classroom. Most responses landed in the *High* range, with a couple even reaching *Very High*, showing a strong and healthy intellectual mindset across the board.

Table 5. Level of Wellness of Elementary Teachers in terms of Occupational Wellness

Items	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
My professional, academic, and/or volunteer pursuits reflect my personal values.	4.11	High
I believe that the work I do accomplishes something important.	3.81	High
I regularly have opportunities to make meaningful contributions where I work.	3.72	High
My choice of work includes a variety of challenges that I can manage with my current skills.	3.81	High
I feel that I have a good life-work balance.	4.11	High
I authentically enjoy the work I do.	4.23	Very High
Overall	3.97	High

Table 5 offers a more personal look into how elementary teachers feel about their work and overall, the results are uplifting. Every indicator falls into either the *High* or *Very High* category, which shows that most teachers are not only committed to their jobs but also find real meaning and satisfaction in what they do.

Table 6. Level of Wellness of Elementary Teachers in terms of Spiritual Wellness

Items	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
I feel that my life has a sense of direction or meaning to it.	4.55	Very High
I have a sense of peace about my life and my place in the world.	4.09	High
I accept events and others as they are and do not make judgments.	4.16	High
I feel a sense of connectedness with all other living things.	4.56	Very High
Prayer and/or meditation are a regular part of my daily routine.	4.02	High
I live each day in a way that is consistent with my values.	4.23	Very High
Overall	4.27	Very High

Table 6 paints a heartfelt picture of spiritual wellness among elementary teachers, revealing how they connect with their inner selves and the world around them. Overall, the data shows a strong spiritual foundation, with all six indicators rated as either *High* or *Very High* a sign that many teachers lead lives filled with purpose, peace, and personal meaning.

Table 7. One-Way ANOVA on the Significant Difference of Wellness of Elementary Teachers

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Decision on H ₀
Between Groups	.617	2	.308	1.287	.278	Accept
Within Groups	56.793	237	.240			
Total	57.409	239				

Table 7 presents the results of a One-Way ANOVA conducted to determine whether there are significant differences in the wellness levels of elementary teachers based demographic profile of the respondents. The analysis shows that the F-value is 1.287 with a corresponding p-value of 0.278. Since the p-value is greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, the decision is to accept the null hypothesis (H₀). This means there is no statistically significant difference in the overall wellness of elementary teachers between the groups considered. In simple terms, regardless of how the groups were divided, their wellness levels appear to be relatively consistent across the board.

Findings

The purpose of the study is to determine the significant differences of career stages (proficient, highly proficient, distinguished) on the wellness level among elementary teachers in Panabo City division. Further, it presents the demographic profile and discusses the level of wellness elementary teachers. Furthermore, it determines the significant difference between wellness according to their demographic profile.

The following are the significant findings: majority of elementary teachers have between 1 to 10 years of service, and most are at the proficient career stage. Further, the overall wellness of elementary teachers appears to be strong across all dimensions with most indicators rated as High or Very High. Notably, teachers scored highest in spiritual wellness (mean = 4.27), particularly in feeling connected and purposeful, and physical wellness (mean = 4.17), especially in daily exercise, while emotional wellness showed slightly lower consistency (mean = 3.78), particularly in areas like daily gratitude. Finally, there is no statistically significant difference in

the wellness levels of elementary teachers across groups, as indicated by a p-value of 0.278, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, elementary teachers demonstrate a high level of overall wellness, with particularly strong spiritual and physical well-being, while emotional wellness presents modest room for growth. Despite differences in years of service and career stages, wellness levels do not significantly vary across groups, suggesting a generally consistent and positive well-being among teachers.

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