



TEACHERS' AUTONOMY AND THEIR WELL-BEING OF DON CARLOS II DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between teacher autonomy and well-being among 107 elementary teachers in Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon, for the School Year 2024–2025, focusing on autonomy in classroom observation, teaching competence, and workplace condition, as well as well-being in terms of family life, work motivation, and mental health. Respondents, mostly female, aged 30–39, with 6–10 years of experience, Master's degrees, and holding Teacher I positions, reported very high levels of autonomy in their classroom practices. Findings revealed that teacher well-being was positively influenced by maturity, experience, and social support, and that all dimensions of autonomy were significantly linked with well-being, though only partial differences were observed when grouped by demographic profile. The study concluded that strengthening autonomy through supportive classroom observations, clear feedback, shared decision-making, and conducive workplace conditions can boost teacher morale, retention, and effectiveness, with implications for school leaders, policymakers, and professional development planners to foster growth and promote mentally healthy, motivated, and effective teaching professionals.

Keywords: *autonomy, well-being*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, attention has been given to the challenging relationship between teacher autonomy and their overall well-being. As educational demands increase and standardized systems become more inflexible, many teachers report feeling constrained by limited decision-making power in their professional practice. This lack of autonomy can shape life, work motivation, and mental health. Simultaneously, the well-being of teachers plays a vital role in maintaining a positive learning environment and achieving learner success. The issue lies in balancing institutional accountability with empowering teachers to exercise professional judgment, raising essential questions about how autonomy influences their well-being and, in turn, the quality of education the teachers will provide.

Moreover, several legal frameworks and policy initiatives recognize the importance of educators' professional independence and well-being. Republic Act No. 11713, known as the "Excellence in Teacher Education Act," emphasizes the significance of teacher training, curriculum development, and research. Its goal is to improve the quality of education. Additionally, Republic Act No. 12080, the "Basic Education Mental Health and Well-being Promotion Act," focuses on promoting mental health and well-being in the basic education sector. It highlights the necessity of addressing teachers' psychological health. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has also developed a framework for examining teachers' occupational well-being. This underscores the global recognition of the need to support educators' mental and emotional health. These legal and policy documents provide a strong foundation for this research into the connection between teacher autonomy and well-being.

Teachers' autonomy is the ability of educators to make decisions independently within the classroom, and it plays a crucial role in fostering a dynamic and effective learning environment (Hudson, 2023). These decisions are made within their classroom, including the curriculum delivery, instructional strategies, assessment methods, and classroom management. This autonomy is significant in creating a dynamic and effective learning environment, as it allows teachers to prioritize student needs, engagement, innovative practices, and motivation. Therefore, students must be given full support and autonomy so that they become lovers of their work. Moreover, devote themselves to teaching and educating people in a relaxed and enthusiastic manner (Dong et al., 2022).

It plays a crucial role in building a stronger sense of efficacy, which means teachers' beliefs in their ability to influence student learning and handle classroom challenges. Therefore, educators need the freedom to make their own choices about how to teach and manage their classes. This independence can boost their confidence and skills. When teachers feel confident, they become more effective, motivated, and satisfied with their jobs. The study by Dong et al. (2022) found a strong positive link between teachers' autonomy

and their mental health, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction.

Additionally, providing autonomy support is a key factor in teaching practices that enhance student engagement (Yang et al., 2022). When teachers receive autonomy support from the school, they are more likely to use methods that encourage students to be independent, creative, and motivated. This leads to greater student engagement, as learners feel empowered to take an active part in their education.

Therefore, teacher well-being plays a vital role in developing a positive relationship with learners, enabling formative influence, finding creative ways to teach, enhancing learner achievement, and exhibiting effective classroom management (Yuksilir, 2022). Moreover, it is an assumption that teachers with higher levels of professional autonomy will have a greater overall well-being compared to those with lower levels of autonomy. However, teachers' well-being plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' ability to exercise autonomy effectively. However, some teachers experience poor well-being, which hinders them from independently deciding and taking ownership of their teaching practices. Therefore, it aims to assess the relationship between teachers' autonomy and their well-being. Specifically, it seeks to identify the aspects of well-being that influence teachers' autonomy.

Literature and Related Studies

Autonomy

Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is one of the components of teachers' autonomy. It is defined as a method of evaluation and recording specific information about what is going on within a classroom. It helps teachers adopt new methods of teaching that might not have occurred to them beforehand (Halim & Wahid, 2024). Its main objective is to support teachers in their professional development by encouraging them to reflect on their practices, learn more about what they do and why, and learn more about what works in school (Torres et al., 2024).

Purpose of Classroom Observation

There are different purposes for classroom observations. It is a way to improve teaching skills and teacher quality (Caratiquit, 2021). It provides feedback to teachers on appropriate instructional strategies, encourages teachers' self-reflection, and identifies teachers' strengths and weaknesses in teaching skills. Moreover, it helps evaluate students' reaction to the. Techniques and methods were learned, and an appropriate strategy was sought to address the diverse learners.

On the other hand, teachers recognize the purpose and importance of classroom observation practices. This implies that no one can refuse to be observed, but to comply as one of the artifacts to be attached to the performance portfolios of the teacher (Soquino, 2021). Since classroom observations ensure that the teacher refuses to be observed, but complies as one of the artifacts to be attached to the performance portfolios of the teacher (Coquina, 2021). Classroom observations ensure that the teacher complies with school policies and educational guidelines. Research finds that most of the teachers answered that observers should observe in the class who are there to provide feedback to improve teaching rather than formally evaluate it (Frasier, 2024). Thus, it was concluded that classroom observation is another way to identify various tasks that a teacher can perform and their developmental needs, and identify those who require assistance. Consequently, she identifies strengths and weaknesses and encourages reflection. Study revealed that classroom observation is the basis for planning and in-service training for teachers. Thus, decisions and budget allocation, training, and instructional improvements of teachers are for the higher-ups to consider. It also helps the teachers perform well and grow professionally, and keep on track (Caratiquit, 2021). This implies that classroom observations are a powerful tool for teachers to enhance performance, ensuring alignment with best practices and fostering professional growth.

Classroom Observation Tool

Classroom observation is a reliable tool for tracking and monitoring a teacher's progress as they master their craft. When done effectively, observation may also be used to support teachers since it provides such a complete picture and permits the formulation of particular goals (Munawar, et. al, 2023). It is an authoritative tool for evaluating and observing teachers' improvement. If it is used well, it can be a way to support teachers, since observation gives a thorough picture and allows a particular objective to be set (Barrogo, 2020). It serves as the measuring tool in achieving teacher professional goals or the performance level of the teacher to become a better educator (Caratiquit, 2021). This is a structural Instrument used to assess, record, and analyze pupils' activities. Furthermore, the OECD, in its report on teachers and leaders (2021), emphasizes the importance of using structured, evidence-based evaluation tools to support reflective teaching positions.

As stipulated in DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015, the Results-based Systems, DepEd's vision, values, and strategic goals are emphasized throughout the organization. It also manages, monitors, and measures teacher performance and organizational needs. This is a standard classroom tool in the DepEd. It is a structured tool to measure teachers' performance. This RPMS aligns with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers. That serves as a guide to assess teachers' classroom performance, ensuring accountability and a basis for supporting professional growth. Moreover, the DepEd Memo 008, s. 2023, which is the Multi-Year Guidelines on the RPMS-PPST, mandates that all performance appraisals of teachers shall be based on this set of standards. DepEd Memo 017, s. 2025, entitled "Interim Guidelines in the Department of Education Performance Management and Evaluation System for Teachers in the School Year 2024-2025, reiterated that providing support to teachers to be able to deliver quality education for Filipino learners.

Thus, the survey showed that eight out of ten states' standardized classroom observation tools yielded an overall response of "strongly agree". The study concluded that the standardized observation tool serves as a guide to teachers to assess their performance and plan for improvement, thus enhancing teachers' preparation and competency (Barrogo, 2020). This tool helps teachers, observers (including the school head and education researchers), assess instructional engagement and effectiveness, and provides a basis for constructive feedback by the observer.

Classroom Observation Quality Feedback

Giving quality feedback on classroom observation, an observer should extend. Thus, providing constructive, concise, and evidence-based insight after having the classroom observation serves as the teachers' basis for improvement on teaching effectiveness. Moreover, it guides the teachers to grow professionally. Feedback that serves to clarify learning goals and to assess students' current learning status could also be given "in writing, (Ruelmann et al, 2022). This implies that it plays a vital role in guiding the teachers towards achieving learning objectives. This may include understanding learning goals, knowing current progress, and taking actions for improvement. Additionally, according to Garet et al (2021), professional feedback that is timely, actionable, and individualized fosters an environment where teachers feel valued and guided rather than judged.

However, a study showed that all teachers interviewed agreed with the sentiment that feedback was the most effective when it was specific and situated in the context of the classroom (Frasier, 2022). This implies that effective feedback is effective when it is exact and contextually relevant to the school's context. Unclear feedback will not give teachers enough guidance for improvements. Thus, it should be directed to the teacher's actual performance, learning process, and students' interactions to be truly meaningful.

Moreover, observations are helpful for both the observer who gains experience by watching and for the observee who receives feedback because more heads know more. Usefulness was also attributed to goals, concrete and above all constructive feedback that follows observation (Bajec, 2020).

Frequency of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is one to be integrated as a routine practice, signifying as one of the school's priority areas (Bajec, 2020). This implies that integrating classroom observation as a routine practice ensures the continuity of instructional improvement, teachers' professional development, and enhances students' learning. It brings collaboration growth, evidence-based teaching practices, and accountability.

Moreover, the importance of frequent engagement with the school heads provides feedback on the classroom (Frasier, 2022). This brings a positive and effective school climate. Regular engagement with teachers provides feedback on classroom observations and creates a culture of continuous communication that benefits both of them. Furthermore, according to Killion and Hirsh (2020), consistent and well-communicated observation schedules are essential for creating a professional culture of accountability and support.

This study revealed that administrators who do not frequently visit the classroom may not get an accurate representation of individual teaching. The school head may miss the crucial insights of the actual teaching and learning in the classroom. This leads to incomplete and misleading evaluation of teachers' teaching practices and, therefore, fewer opportunities for targeted support and intervention.

Teaching Competence

Competence is formulated as a set of knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, and ways of thinking of a teacher in performing effectively according to the current demands, according to Noor (2025). Teacher competence is the foundation of high-quality education that influences student learning outcomes. Moreover, it is formulated as a combination of knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, and cognitive approaches that

teachers can perform efficiently and effectively. A competent teacher is the Master of all subject knowledge and also has pedagogical expertise, critical thinking skills, and can face various classroom challenges.

Additionally, according to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021), teachers who feel competent are more likely to exercise judgment in selecting appropriate instructional strategies and modifying lesson plans to meet student needs. The teaching profession is a vital profession that plays a crucial role in the learning process. Therefore, teachers must have the competence according to their qualification (Aihan, 2022). It is one of the essential pillars of the education system that helps shape the learning experiences and outcomes of the learners. The teachers are the servers or the facilitators of knowledge, the mentors and the role models in guiding the learners academically and also in critical thinking, social development, and lifelong skills.

Moreover, their roles are beyond the instructions and influence the student motivation, engagement, and overall success in education. Hence, competence is a crucial characteristic of how a person behaves or thinks in different situations and adapts to challenging times. The study of Sapro and Matondang (2023) revealed that the teacher's management of learning will exacerbate the academic stress that students will experience. Therefore, having a competent teacher leads to higher student achievement.

Workplace Condition

Teachers exhibited a strong sense of commitment to perform high-quality work and established strong relationships with colleagues (Dia, 2024). Moreover, the study of secondary teachers in China shows that respondents perceived organizational support as a fundamental catalyst in enhancing the well-being of the teachers. Therefore, the support of the supervisors, principals, and colleagues matters most in the workplace. Strengthen the positive effects of a supportive environment on teachers' well-being (Wang, 2024). Moreover, according to Torres and Wenier (2021), teachers are more likely to engage meaningfully in their instructional roles when they operate in an environment where their input is respected and where collaboration is encouraged.

Another study revealed that respondents acknowledged that their co-teacher possesses a sense of humor and a good working environment, which helped reduce their stress level at work. It implies that the school's use of tactful humor is the key to success at work and promotes a positive working environment (Dulce, 2021).

On the other hand, research showed that it helps teachers to build a strong rapport with parents and stakeholders, encouraging them to be openly involved in the child's learning (Sugot & Landro, 2024) and fostering a strong learning relationship with the child. Building a strong rapport with the parents and stakeholders is very important for teachers to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students. Such open communication and trust encourage parents' involvement and stakeholders' support, collaboration for learning, and more.

Well-being

Investing in teachers' well-being emerges as an integral component of broader educational enhancement initiatives (Wang, 2024). Consequently, teachers' well-being is essential for the optimal functioning of schools and the educational system (Geothe, 2023). Thus, there is a deep need to enhance work-life balance since it influences their effectiveness in the conduct of student learning (Dia, 2024). Researchers defining well-being have introduced domain-specific well-being aspects, such as work-related well-being, for the study of work-related well-being of teachers, as the author terms it, teachers' well-being (Bardach, 2021).

Family Life

The teacher must have a positive family life so that he can perform well in his duties in the classroom. Research shows that teachers need to spend time with friends, loved ones, and people they trust. Talk about or express feelings regularly (Lebor, 2021). Teachers who have a family that they can share their thoughts and feelings with and support them. This shows that they have a happy family life. According to Roffey (2021), educators with strong family systems tend to exhibit greater resilience, empathy, and emotional regulation- skills that directly translate into better classroom performance and student outcomes.

Moreover, the study of teachers' occupational well-being is coherent with the need to understand the behavior of teachers in the performance of their duties. The study emphasizes that the result identifies family income or s (Kume, 2024). Therefore, family income contributes to the behavior of the teacher in his teaching observation practices. The study of Danillido (2023) revealed that a large percentage of teachers reported significant changes at a personal level. It is correlated with international studies that financial crisis

affects relationships with others. Decreased income makes it difficult for people to meet their financial obligations. In general, occupational and economic instability affects people's psychological and family relationships.

Work Motivation

Motivation has many factors that inspire individuals to perform their job well. They commit. A motivated individual loves his work. A study revealed that teachers were satisfied with their job when they noticed progress in the student and considered the student's achievement and success. Receiving recognition and appreciation for their hard work, team members also feel valued, and they are satisfied with their job. When they noticed progress in the student, they considered the student's achievement and success. Receiving recognition and appreciation for their hard work also makes teachers feel valued in their work. Salary and benefits are the contributing factors that motivate employees to perform at their best (Taboclaon, 2021). This implies that an individual who is passionate about their work finds fulfillment in it, not just a job. This motivation may sustain. Continuous support and a positive work environment are needed. These are the individuals who have a sense of purpose in life. According to UNESCO (2022), teacher pay and financial security are closely linked to job satisfaction, retention, and overall well-being.

Moreover, teachers have found fulfillment in their profession when they witness the progress of their students. Feeling successful, too, for seeing students improve academically, learning new skills, and little by little achieving their goals, reinforces the teachers' sense of purpose and commitment to their role as teachers.

Mental Health

The research results indicate that respondents perform well, and mental and physical health affect their performance. This denotes that the higher level of mental health well-being of the respondents is associated with higher teacher performance (Lebor, 2021). This implies that mental health plays a critical role in determining individual performance, whether academic, workplace, or personal. A higher level of mental well-being enables individuals to function optimally, manage stress effectively, and sustain motivation that leads to a higher performance level.

Only satisfied teachers can perform well in the classroom because they improve their teaching quality. They become more hardworking and show greater commitment to the teaching and learning process (Soundararajan, 2021). Satisfied teachers have supportive and happy families, friends, and colleagues. They feel motivated at work and have enough financial resources at home. Furthermore, according to Ryan and Deci (2020), social recognition and public appreciation of the teaching profession are essential. When individuals see their roles as meaningful, their emotional and psychological well-being improves.

Teachers must respond positively to the best of their ability, even when they face challenges and problems. This shows that, despite heavy workloads, personal issues, and limited resources, their passion for teaching remains strong (Dulce, 2021). The teaching profession is demanding and dynamic, requiring educators to confront these challenges. Despite these obstacles, teachers need to respond positively to ensure students receive quality learning, emotional support, and motivation.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature consistently emphasizes the strong connection between teachers' autonomy and their overall well-being. When teachers have more control over their instructional methods, classroom management, and professional decisions, they feel more motivated and satisfied, leading to better mental health. The findings highlight the importance of fostering a supportive school environment that values teacher independence, which contributes to more effective teaching and learning outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

This study is primarily based on the Self Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Deci and Ryan in 1985. They argue that human motivation and well-being are affected by meeting three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are satisfied, individuals experience higher intrinsic motivation, improved performance, and better psychological well-being.

In education, teacher autonomy refers to the perceived freedom to make decisions about instruction, manage the classroom, and take part in school governance. It reflects shared autonomy. This study investigates teacher autonomy by examining classroom observation dimensions such as purpose, tools, quality, feedback, and frequency. These factors are key to either supporting or limiting autonomy.

According to Self Determination Theory, when teachers have more autonomy in their professional roles, they tend to be more intrinsically motivated, feel competent in their work, and build meaningful relationships

with colleagues and students. This, in turn, contributes to their overall well-being, including emotional, psychological, and social health.

Additionally, teaching competence relates to SDT's second psychological need. When teachers believe they are effective in their roles, they are more likely to feel job satisfaction, confidence, and motivation, which SDT identifies as signs of psychological well-being. In other words, when teachers think effectively due to constructive classroom observation practices, supportive feedback, and professional trust, they boost their sense of competence. Observation tools that align with professional standards, like the Results-Based Performance Management System and the Philippines for Teachers Professional Standards, provide structured chances for reflection and freedom, helping teachers improve their skills.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the teachers' autonomy and well-being in Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon, for the School Year 2024-2025.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions.

1. What is the extent of teachers' autonomy based on classroom observation, teaching competence, and work-place conditions?
2. What is the respondents' level of well-being about family life, work motivation, and mental health?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' autonomy and their well-being?
4. Is there a significant difference in the teachers' autonomy and their well-being when grouped according to their profile?

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on determining autonomy and well-being among elementary school teachers in Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon. The respondents are the public elementary school in Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon. The respondents were the public elementary school teachers in the schools where this study was conducted. The moderating variable one (1) is the respondents' profile in terms of age, sex, positions, teaching experience, and highest educational attainment. Furthermore, variable two (2) is limited to the teachers' autonomy, such as classroom observation on purpose, tool, quality feedback and frequency; teaching competence; and mental health on psychological, emotional, and social levels. Moreover, variable three (3) is also limited to the teachers' well-being based on family life, work motivation, and mental health on psychological, emotional, and social levels.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used descriptive-correlational research methods, which focused on the current state of teachers' autonomy and teachers' well-being while examining the relationship between the two variables.

The researcher used the descriptive design to systematically describe and analyze the condition, behavior, and relationship without modifying the variables. Through this, it helped the researcher capture and document the real situation in the classroom observation practices and experiences. Moreover, it was easily identified that the patterns and relationships between the variables in the study were clear. This research design ensured a comprehensive evidence-based exploration of the relationship between teachers' autonomy and their well-being. The findings contributed to a better evaluation system, support strategies, and overall school improvement.

Study Setting

This study was conducted in the municipality of Don Carlos, located in the southern part of Bukidnon province in Northern Mindanao, Philippines.

Given the evolving demands in the education sector, particularly with the implementation of the MATATAG program, blended learning modalities, and administrative expectations, teachers in Don Carlos face various pressures that impact their sense of autonomy and overall well-being. Understanding the lived experiences of these teachers within their local context is essential for making policies and supportive practices that promote a healthier and more empowered teaching workforce.

At present, the municipality of Don Carlos has seven external high schools and elementary schools catering to the 29 barangays. Comprising the three districts of the city of Don Carlos are the District 1, it is

office situated at Don Carlos Central School, Don Carlos, Bukidnon, Don Carlos 2 at Bocboc Central Elementary School, Bocboc, Don Carlos, Bukidnon and San Nicolas Central School, San Nicolas, Don Carlos for District 3 respectively. This study focused on the exploring the levels of autonomy that teachers in Don Carlos experience in their professional roles, and how this autonomy related to their family, motivation and mental health well-being. By capturing the voices and perspectives of these teachers in this specific setting, the research aimed to shed light on the realities of teaching in rural yet progressive communities like Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The researcher chose Don Carlos as the local focal point of the study due to compelling reasons that align with the objectives of this research.

Research Respondents and Sampling Technique

The respondents are the one hundred seven (107) elementary school teachers of Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon, for the School Year 2024-2025. These teachers have different characteristics in terms of age, sex, positions, teaching experience, and highest educational attainment.

In this research, a complete enumeration technique was used. All the teachers in the elementary schools of Don Carlos II District, Division of Bukidnon, were included as respondents. This approach ensured the collection of data from the entire population of interest and allowed the researcher to capture a full range of perspectives on teacher autonomy and well-being.

Research Instrument

The instrument that was used in gathering the data is the questionnaire, composed of three (3) parts: age, sex, positions, teaching experience, and highest educational attainment.

The first part of the questionnaire was the respondents' basic information profiles. The information involved the age, sex, teaching experience, and highest educational attainment.

The second part assessed the teachers' autonomy based on classroom observation, purpose, tool, quality feedback, and frequency; teaching competence; and workplace conditions. The variables were taken from the RPMS-PPST tool, and the researcher created the indicators. This was always used as a rating scale of (4) as At All Times, (3) Most of the Time, (2) Sometimes, and (1) Never.

The last part of the questionnaire inquired about the teachers' well-being regarding family life, work motivation, and mental health, on psychological, emotional, and social levels, respectively. The variables were based on the theory of Self-Determination of Deci and Ryan (1985). The questionnaire was patterned and modified from the study of Lebor (2021) entitled "Mental Health and Well-being and Teachers' Performance of Kitaotao District, Division of Bukidnon". This was a rating scale of (4) Strongly Agree, (3) Agree, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly Disagree.

Statistical Treatment of Data

After collecting and recording the data, the researcher analyzed the data using the following statistical tools: frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA for testing differences. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were also used to describe the variables of the study. To determine the relationship between the teachers' autonomy and their well-being, Pearson (r) was employed. Through this, statistical significance was determined to determine whether the observed relationship was likely to exist. Furthermore, the t-test and f-test were explored to test the significant difference in the respondents' autonomy and their well-being when grouped according to their profile.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations play a crucial role in this research, ensuring the participants' identities remain confidential and that they provided informed consent before participating. It is essential to ensure the privacy and anonymity of the teachers who participate in this research. Teachers may be more inclined to participate honestly and openly if they are assured that their identities and personal information will be kept confidential. The following ethical concerns were undertaken: informed consent was obtained from all participating teachers, and they were informed about the purpose of the study, the data collection process, and how their information would be used. This is to ensure that they have the option to withdraw from the study at any time without facing consequences.

For data identification, teachers were asked to remove or replace any personally identifiable information, such as names, school, or contact details, from the data during analysis and reporting. Some pseudonyms were assigned to participants to protect their identities.

To safeguard the collected data, it was stored using encryption, and only the researcher has access

to it. This is to ensure that data are not accidentally disclosed to unauthorized parties. Lastly, ethical approval was sought from the ethics committee to ensure that the research design and data handling procedures meet ethical standards and guidelines.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What is the extent of teachers' autonomy based on classroom observation, teaching competence, and workplace conditions?

Table 1
Summary: Distribution of the Extent of Teachers' Autonomy

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Classroom Observation	3.50	0.38	Very High
Teaching Competence	3.65	0.52	Very High
Workplace Condition	3.65	0.50	Very High
Overall	3.59	0.12	Very High
Legend:	4.00 – 3.26 At All Times/Very High	2.50 – 1.76 Sometimes/Low	
	3.25 – 2.51 Most of the Time/High	1.75 – 1.00 Never/Very Low	

Table 1 presents the summary distribution of respondents' autonomy based on classroom observation. The overall mean of 3.59 (SD=0.12) reveals that teachers experience a **Very High** level of independence based on classroom observations. They are given substantial space to make professional decisions related to their instructional strategies, materials, feedback processes, and classroom management. Teachers tend to perform better when they feel they are trusted to make decisions about their practice, rather than simply following rigid guidelines.

As observed, teachers generally feel they have a strong sense of independence and support in their work. This includes having the freedom to make decisions about how they teach, using helpful tools during classroom observations, receiving valuable feedback, and working in a positive and professional environment. It shows that teachers feel trusted and valued in their roles, which helps them do their jobs more effectively and confidently. OECD (2021) emphasizes that when teachers have greater control over their work, they demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of burnout.

Further, **teaching competence** and **workplace condition** both received the highest mean of 3.65 (SD= 0.52; 0.50), respectively, with an interpretation of **Very High**. This indicates that the respondents have a **Very High** level of perceived autonomy in these areas. They have a Very High confidence in how much freedom they have to teach in their own ways and believe their school supports them well. When teachers are trusted to do their job and are not micromanaged, they feel more motivated and capable. Having the highest mean for **teaching competence** also entails that teachers feel in control of their teaching styles, strategies, and classroom decisions.

They likely feel that their ideas and professional knowledge are respected, and they are free to adjust lessons to fit their students' needs. This kind of trust helps teachers become more effective and creative. This freedom allows educators to tailor teaching methods based on learners' needs and context, an essential feature of practical education (Blazar & Kraft, 2020).

On the other **hand, workplace conditions**, such as having the highest means, imply that a **very high** workplace environment where school heads are supportive, resources are available, and teachers work well together, helps these teachers feel more confident and in control of how they do their jobs. This reflects a supportive and empowering school environment. Having a positive school setting gives the teachers the space to grow, collaborate, and feel safe to express themselves professionally. Benevene et al (2020) emphasize that supportive work environments are predictors of both job satisfaction and retention among teachers. These two variables that have the highest mean also suggest that schools recognize the importance of both competence and context in supporting autonomy. When teachers are both trusted in their abilities and supported by conducive working conditions, their capacity to innovate, collaborate, and stay resilient improves considerably (Parylo & Zepeda, 2021).

Meanwhile, **classroom observation** got the lowest mean of 3.50 (SD=0.38), but was interpreted as **Very High**. This means that while teachers have a very high feeling about being observed in class, it is not as much as they do about teaching competence or the workplace. It might be because observations often feel more formal or evaluative. Some teachers might feel nervous or judged when someone comes in to observe

their class. Even if the goal is to help them improve, it can still affect their sense of freedom. They may not feel as free to teach naturally when they are being watched. While structured observation aims to support teacher growth, the perceived autonomy during such evaluation can vary depending on how feedback is delivered and the extent of agency teachers feel in responding to it.

Some teachers may feel less confident during classroom observation because they see it as a judgment rather than an opportunity for professional growth. The pressure to perform well in front of an observer can create anxiety, especially if they are unsure about the criteria being assessed or if previous feedback lacked clarity. This lack of confidence may also come from a fear of negative evaluation or criticism, rather than helpful support. When teachers are not well-informed or prepared for the observation, it can hurt their sense of control and confidence in the classroom. Building trust, providing clear guidelines, and offering helpful feedback can reduce these worries and promote a more positive and developmental observation practice. According to Acton and Glasgow (2020), for observations to improve autonomy, they should be framed as collaborative and reflective, not as top-down assessments. This also supports Ryan and Deci's (2020) study, which mentioned that continued focus on formative feedback and participatory reflection can further strengthen autonomy in this area.

Problem 2. What is the respondents' level of well-being about family life, work motivation, and mental health?

Table 2
Summary Distribution of Respondents' Well-being

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Family Life	3.71	0.48	Very Positive
Work Motivation	3.50	0.50	Very Positive
Mental Health	3.36	0.35	Very Positive
Overall	3.47	0.52	Very Positive

Table 2 encapsulates the distribution of respondents' well-being. The overall mean of 3.47 (SD=0.52), interpreted as **Very Positive**, indicates that teachers have a **Very Positive** perception of their well-being across different life domains, such as family, work, and mental health. Despite the pressures and challenges associated with the teaching profession, the respondents maintain a good balance in their personal and professional lives. These teachers consistently show signs of resilience, optimism, and emotional stability in managing the demands of both individual and professional life. As evident in their responses, many teachers draw strength from their supportive relationships, a sense of purpose in their work, and the ability to manage stress constructively. This affirms that these teachers are not merely coping but thriving through a combination of internal motivation and external support. Teachers who feel emotionally and socially supported are more resilient to stress and more effective in their work. As observed, such a holistic sense of well-being deserves continued attention, as it directly influences not only their health but also classroom effectiveness, student learning, and school climate. According to Collie et al. (2020), high levels of teacher well-being are directly associated with better instructional practices and improved relationships with students and peers.

Moreover, **Family life** got the highest mean of 3.71 (SD=0.48), which indicates that teachers feel **Very Positive** and satisfied with their personal and family relationships. These respondents experience emotional security, stability, and support at home, which are key elements that influence their ability to perform well professionally. As noted in earlier indicators, many teachers acknowledged the emotional, financial, and motivational support they receive from their families. This strong familial backing not only enhances their emotional stability but also contributes to their overall job satisfaction and psychological resilience. Evident in related findings, a well-functioning family unit plays a vital role in helping teachers maintain balance, motivation, and a sense of meaning in their daily lives. They rely on their families as a primary source of strength and encouragement. As observed, the positive perception of family life implies that many educators benefit from a nurturing home environment, where they feel understood, valued, and emotionally secure. Such a setting allows them to return to school each day with renewed energy and focus, knowing that they are supported outside of their work roles. The study of Asiamah et al. (2024) found that family support has a significant positive effect on emotional well-being and job satisfaction among teachers. It emphasizes that strong familial relationships can help buffer work-related stress, improve motivation, and contribute to

sustained psychological health.

In addition, a strong personal life contributes to psychological resilience. When teachers can rely on their family or household for encouragement and understanding, they are better prepared to tackle professional challenges like workload, behavioral issues, or administrative pressures. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021), strong family support significantly lowers stress levels among teachers and improves their job satisfaction and performance. Teachers who feel valued and supported in their family life bring that positive energy into the classroom.

On the other hand, the lowest mean belongs to the **emotional well-being** with a mean of 3.29 (SD=0.50), interpreted as **Very Positive**. This suggests that emotional well-being may be the most sensitive area of teacher wellness. These teachers may be emotionally committed to their roles, but at times they feel emotionally exhausted or unsupported. They may feel emotional toll because of constant change and unpredictability in the teaching profession. As observed, teachers often juggle multiple roles and expectations, which can leave them emotionally drained. The emotional demands of connecting with students, adapting to curriculum changes, or managing parental expectations contribute to their emotional fatigue. As evident in classroom realities, teachers often put aside their own emotional needs to prioritize those of their students and schools. The cumulative pressure to remain composed, positive, and emotionally available can leave them feeling depleted by the end of the day. Kim and Asbury's (2020) study emphasizes how emotional well-being in teachers is often the most vulnerable area of wellness, especially during prolonged stress or uncertainty, even when other dimensions of well-being remain intact. This also aligns with Benevene et al.'s (2020) study, where they found that well-being is often affected by workload, classroom management pressures, and lack of emotional support at work, which may explain the slightly lower score.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' autonomy and their well-being?

Table 3
Correlation Between Respondents' Autonomy and Their Well-being

Correlated Variables	Well-being										Overall
	Family Life		Work Motivation		Psychological Well-being		Emotional Well-being		Social well being		
<i>Purpose</i>	r=.296** p=.002	S	r=.187 p=.054	NS	r=.245* p=.011	S	r=.180 p=.063	NS	r=.253** p=.009	S	r=.278** p=.004
<i>Tool</i>	r=.237* p=.014	S	r=.128 p=.190	NS	r=.167 p=.085	NS	r=.238* p=.014	S	r=.188 p=.043	S	r=.268** p=.005
<i>Quality Feedback</i>	r=.223* p=.021	S	r=.268** p=.005	S	r=.196* p=.043	S	r=.212* p=.028	S	r=.322** p=.001	S	r=.417** p=.000
<i>Frequency</i>	r=.253** p=.009	S	r=.350** p=.000	S	r=.349** p=.000	S	r=.322** p=.001	S	r=.357** p=.000	S	r=.395** p=.000
<i>Teaching Competence</i>	r=.433** p=.000	S	r=.340** p=.000	S	r=.260** p=.007	S	r=.285** p=.003	S	r=.388** p=.000	S	r=.436** p=.000
<i>Workplace Condition</i>	r=.410** p=.000	S	r=.390** p=.000	S	r=.340** p=.000	S	r=.372** p=.000	S	r=.434** p=.000	S	r=.528** p=.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 3 illustrates the correlation between the six dimensions of teacher autonomy (purpose, tools, quality feedback, frequency, teaching competence, and workplace condition) and five aspects of teacher well-being (family life, work motivation, psychological well-being, emotional well-being, and social well-being). The result of the correlational analysis indicates that all independent variables—autonomy have statistically significant relationships with teachers' overall well-being. Hence, the null hypothesis is **rejected**. **There is a substantial relationship between the respondents' autonomy and their well-being.** This emphasizes that

a single factor does not shape teacher well-being but is instead influenced by a pattern of professional experiences and institutional supports.

Among all predictors, **workplace conditions demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with overall well-being** ($r = .528, p = .000$). This strong and direct relationship reflects how access to instructional resources, administrative support, mutual respect, and collegiality contribute significantly to teachers' professional satisfaction and mental wellness. These results suggest that when teachers feel capable and confident in their teaching abilities and are supported by a conducive working environment, they are more likely to enjoy positive relationships at home, higher motivation at work, and stable emotional and social well-being. This is supported by Collie (2021), who emphasized the pivotal role of school conditions and professional self-efficacy in sustaining teacher wellness.

In addition, consistent with previous findings, positive school environments are associated with lower stress levels, greater emotional balance, and stronger engagement among teachers (Diliberti & Schwartz, 2021; UNESCO, 2022). The consistent statistical significance of workplace condition across emotional ($r = .372, p = .000$), psychological ($r = .340, p = .000$), and social well-being ($r = .434, p = .000$) further confirms that organizational culture plays a central role in shaping holistic teacher well-being.

Likewise, **teaching competence was found to be a significant predictor of overall well-being** ($r = .436, p = .000$), indicating a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship. This suggests that teachers, who perceive themselves as professionally skilled, knowledgeable, and effective in their instructional practices, are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction in both their personal and professional lives. Such self-perception contributes positively to their sense of purpose, motivation to perform, and emotional resilience amid the daily demands of teaching. When educators feel confident in their teaching strategies and believe they are making an impact on student learning, they are more likely to develop strong self-efficacy, which in turn enhances their psychological and emotional well-being. This finding aligns with the research of Pakarinen et al. (2021), which emphasizes that teacher competence not only fosters instructional quality but also reduces burnout and increases job fulfillment. Moreover, competent teachers often experience a greater sense of control over their work, which can buffer them against workplace stress and help sustain long-term engagement in the profession (Richter et al., 2021).

Moreover, the **frequency of classroom observations** was significantly associated with overall well-being ($r = .395, p = .000$), indicating a **moderately strong and statistically significant relationship**. This implies that when classroom observations are conducted regularly, with a constructive tone, and accompanied by timely, meaningful feedback, teachers are more likely to view these practices as forms of professional support rather than judgment or surveillance. Regular observations, when framed as opportunities for growth rather than compliance, can enhance teachers' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Teachers may feel validated when their instructional strategies are noticed and appreciated, and they are more open to reflective practice when feedback is offered in a collegial and respectful manner. As supported by OECD (2021), effective observation practices foster continuous improvement and contribute to a favorable school climate, thereby promoting not only professional development but also psychological well-being and job satisfaction. Research by OECD (2021) and Parylo & Zepeda (2021) suggests that autonomy and feedback, when combined, boost job engagement and perceived respect.

Furthermore, **quality feedback** exhibited a significant correlation with overall ($r = .417, p = .000$), indicating that teachers who receive constructive, timely, and meaningful feedback are more likely to experience enhanced well-being across both personal and professional domains. **The moderately strong relationship** with overall well-being suggests that feedback is not merely a tool for instructional improvement, but also a source of affirmation, motivation, and emotional support. Teachers who engage in regular, supportive feedback exchanges are more likely to build positive relationships with supervisors and peers, strengthening their sense of connectedness and collaboration within the school community. This finding supports the idea that feedback processes are not solely evaluative. Still, they are social mechanisms that influence how teachers perceive their relationships and roles within the broader school culture (Benevene et al, 2020). Also, Richter et al. (2020). Also, Richter et al. (2021) stressed that when feedback is delivered in a way that emphasizes strengths, encourages reflection, and promotes growth, teachers feel more valued and competent in their roles.

Likewise, **purpose** and **tools** also had **significant but moderate correlations** with overall well-being ($r = .278, p = .004$; $r = .268, p = .005$, respectively). These results imply that when teachers have a clear understanding of their institutional goals and access to adequate teaching materials and resources, they are more likely to experience a positive sense of well-being.

Although the strength of this correlation is slightly lower compared to other predictors, the significance of the results highlights their continued relevance

in shaping teachers' professional satisfaction. A clear sense of purpose enables teachers to align their daily work with broader educational goals, which enhances motivation and reinforces a meaningful connection to their profession. As noted by Ryan and Deci (2020), clarity of purpose is essential for fulfilling intrinsic motivational needs, particularly autonomy, and competence. Meanwhile, having the necessary tools and resources supports the execution of instructional tasks efficiently and with less stress. Without adequate materials, teachers may experience frustration and fatigue, which can undermine both performance and well-being (OECD, 2021).

These findings support Self-Determination Theory, which highlights that perceived autonomy, relevance, and access to necessary resources can boost motivation and psychological health (Ryan & Deci, 2020). However, their lower coefficients indicate that although these elements are essential, they have a greater impact when combined with active feedback, professional recognition, and workplace stability. These modest correlations suggest that while having a clear purpose and access to tools is helpful, they are less effective on their own. They should be accompanied by emotional support and workplace conditions that encourage personal connection and professional growth.

Problem 4. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' autonomy and their well-being when grouped according to their profile?

Table 4
Difference in Respondents' Autonomy When Grouped According to Their Characteristics

Respondents' Characteristics	Purpose <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Tool <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Quality Feedback <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Frequency <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Teaching Competence	Workplace Condition
Age	2.118 .102 NS	4.291 .007 S	3.443 .020 S	5.548 .001 S	1.964 .124 NS	3.436 .020 S
Sex	.479 .490 NS	.003 .953 NS	.115 .735 NS	.419 .519 NS	.790 .376 NS	.161 .689 NS
Teaching Position	5.424 .001 S	2.063 .091 NS	1.859 .123 S	.283 .889 NS	2.249 .069 NS	4.787 .001 S
Teaching Experience	2.851 .028 S	6.311 .000 S	3.822 .006 S	2.460 .050 NS	2.983 .022 S	2.533 .045 S
Highest Educational Attainment	1.310 .275 NS	.240 .868 NS	1.610 .192 NS	.696 .557 NS	1.304 .277 NS	1.037 .380 NS
	3.934	0.160	2.590	6.778	0.821	.770
Overall	0.011 S	0.690 NS	0.041 S	0.000 S	0.485 NS	.383 NS

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4 investigates the statistical differences in **teacher autonomy** when respondents are grouped by demographic characteristics such as age, sex, position, experience, and education. The F-values and corresponding p-values indicate which variables have a **statistically significant** impact. The table shows that respondents' perceptions of autonomy vary significantly when grouped according to **age** ($p = .011$), **teaching position** ($p = .041$), and **teaching experience** ($p = .000$). Hence, the **overall trend** shows that **age, teaching position, and teaching experience** significantly **affect autonomy**, while **sex and educational attainment do not**. This implies that autonomy is more influenced by factors that relate to one's **professional maturity** and **institutional role** rather than inherent characteristics such as sex or academic degree alone. In other words, a

teacher's autonomy or their ability to make decisions about their teaching mostly depends on their experience and position in the school. For example, teachers who have been in the profession longer or who hold higher roles, like department heads, are likely to be given more freedom and responsibility. This is because they have already proven their skills and reliability, which makes school leaders trust them more. In contrast, newer or lower-ranking teachers might still be following set rules or guidelines until they gain more experience.

On the other hand, characteristics like **sex** or **educational background**, such as having a master's or doctorate, do not seem to have a significant impact on autonomy. This shows that just being highly educated or being male or female does not automatically lead to more freedom in decision-making at work. Instead, what matters more is how long a teacher has been working and the kind of role they play in their school. So, it is the **professional maturity** and **level of responsibility** that shape the level of autonomy a teacher has. This aligns with research by Kaban and Kaya (2021), who emphasized that teacher autonomy increases with experience and role-related responsibilities, reflecting professional growth and trust from the institution.

Table 5
Difference in Respondents' Well-being When Grouped
According to Their Characteristics

Respondents' Characteristics	Well-being				
	Family Life <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Work Motivation <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Psychological <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Emotional <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>	Social <i>f-value</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>interpretation</i>
Age	2.890 .039 S	6.640 .000 S	4.693 .004 S	7.791 .000 S	1.951 .126 NS
Sex	4.357 .039 S	2.278 .134 NS	1.543 .217 NS	.166 .684 NS	.060 .807 NS
Teaching Position	.549 .700 NS	.302 .876 NS	1.179 .325 NS	2.118 .084 NS	1.655 .166 NS
Teaching Experience	1.356 .255 NS	5.746 .000 S	6.430 .000 S	3.346 .013 S	1.734 .148 NS
Highest Educational Attainment	4.144 .008 S	1.419 .242 NS	6.430 .000 S	3.346 .013 S	1.734 .148 NS
Overall	4.878 .003 S	2.019 .158 NS	.786 .537 NS	2.689 .035 S	.720 .542 NS

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 explores how teacher **well-being** varies according to demographic and professional characteristics. The data reveal that **age** ($p = .003$) and **teaching experience** ($p = .035$) are significantly associated with well-being, while **sex**, **position**, and **educational attainment** are not. The findings imply that **personal maturity** and **professional longevity** are more closely linked to well-being than other variables. Personal and professional maturity significantly contribute to better emotional and psychological health in teachers. As teachers grow older and gain more experience, they tend to develop more effective **coping strategies** and emotional regulation, which enhances their resilience in the workplace. They tend to feel better emotionally and mentally at work. They usually become more confident, calm, and better at handling stress. Over time, they learn how to manage their responsibilities and deal with challenges more easily, which helps them feel happier and more balanced in their jobs. In other words, a teacher's **well-being** is more affected by their level

of maturity and experience, rather than by factors such as their sex or the number of degrees they have earned. Characteristics like sex or educational background, such as having a master's or doctorate, do not seem to have a significant impact on autonomy.

Further, this shows that just being highly educated or being male or female does not lead to more freedom in decision-making at work. Instead, what matters more is how long a teacher has been working and the kind of role they play in the school. Being older and more experienced helps teachers build stronger coping skills and a better understanding of their work, which leads to better emotional health. So, the longer they teach, the better they tend to feel about their job and themselves. This aligns with the idea that seasoned educators tend to develop **emotional resilience** and **coping strategies**, which help sustain their well-being (Viac & Fraser, 2020).

Conclusion

This study found a significant influence of professional maturity, especially experience and role responsibilities, on teachers' autonomy and well-being. Results consistently show that teachers with greater knowledge and higher positions tend to see themselves as more autonomous and report better emotional and psychological health. As educators grow older and take on more responsibilities within their schools, they develop stronger coping strategies and emotional resilience, which contribute to their overall well-being. In contrast, factors such as sex and educational attainment do not significantly impact autonomy or well-being. This finding highlights that professional growth and role maturity are more important in creating a positive work environment and supporting teachers' mental health. Additionally, the data emphasize the importance of systemic support in improving teacher autonomy and well-being. Findings reveal that autonomy is positively linked to various aspects of teachers' well-being, including motivation, emotional stability, and social well-being. When teachers can make decisions, receive constructive feedback, and work in supportive environments, they tend to experience higher job satisfaction and emotional balance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions from the study, here are the recommendations:

1. Schools should increase the frequency of classroom observations. These observations should be regular, structured, and include prompt, specific feedback. Establishing consistent follow-up practices and tracking their effectiveness will create a supportive environment that encourages ongoing instructional improvement and teacher independence.
2. Administrators should launch initiatives like counseling services, stress management workshops, and mindfulness training to help teachers develop effective emotional regulation strategies. Additionally, supporting peer relationships, promoting work-life balance, and acknowledging emotional contributions can significantly boost teachers' emotional health and job satisfaction. Administrators should adopt policies that encourage shared decision-making and give teachers more control over their teaching goals, resources, and classroom settings. Building a school culture that values teachers' input will increase their sense of independence and improve their overall well-being.
3. Administrators should develop specific interventions for less experienced or lower-ranking teachers to improve their sense of professional independence and support their well-being. Offering mentorship programs, customized professional development, and more responsibilities can bridge the gap in perceived autonomy and promote well-being among various teacher groups.

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