

WELLNESS OF LAST MILE SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE DISTRICT OF DUMARAO

April Rose Baes Clarin¹

¹Collegio De La Purisima Concepcion, CPC School of the Graduate Studies, cpcsgs22@gmail.com,
aprilrose.clarin@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

Being healthy is the definition of wellness. The direction every individual chooses determines the inescapable desire to be in a state of wellness. This study aimed to explore the wellness-issues, concerns, and emerging perspectives among the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao using a phenomenological design- a pioneering qualitative venture of the department. Following the analytic method of Ryan & Bernard emerged from the findings, thematic typologies, and referents on the wellness issues, wellness concerns, and emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. The identified wellness issues are personified as emotional well-being, physical dimension, environmental well-being, occupational well-being, and financial well-being, whereas the wellness concerns are thematically labeled as personal safety, school meals, weather condition, and school location. A noteworthy finding is the emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao drawn through personifications and typologies from the referents of the significant statements coming from the transcripts of the lived experiences as a flexible schedule, interdependence on one another, simple lifestyle, financial matter, and commitment to service of the participants.

Keywords: *Wellness, well-being, last mile schools, teachers*

1. Introduction

In Europe and the United States, wellness is deeply rooted in many scholarly, sacred, and medical activities that arose alongside predictable medicine. According to Ohrt et al. (2018), their prominence on holistic and self-healing, natural approaches, and preventive care underpins present wellness. Conversely, self-responsibility motivates wellness and is proactive, preventive, and intentional. The difficulty persists, though, that some groups may face more obstacles to exercise and physical activity than others. According to Baker (2022), individuals involved in more bodily movement during the epidemic required lesser anxiety and sadness and higher quality of

life. As a result, shifting attitudes toward wellness and pursuing health care are inescapable forces of lifestyle trends in today's hectic and fast-paced modern world.

Teachers are the critical human resource that propels the country's educational system. However, today's classroom instruction is a dynamic process. Teachers face obstacles due to ongoing changes in pedagogy, learning theory, curriculum, and educational goals. Therefore, it is vital to look after teachers' well-being so that they can do their jobs effectively. According to Willis et al. (2020), who agreed with this viewpoint, teachers' well-being can be impacted by elements related to their comfort, health, and happiness. Thus, the quality of teachers' working lives is considered when evaluating teachers' well-being (Zakaria et al., 2021).

Those mentioned above gave an idea to the researcher to conduct a research study concerning the teachers' wellness, especially in the remote area since they were far from the city and often encountered many challenges. Therefore, the researcher developed a concept to investigate the wellness of teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao to find out the issues that are concerning and warrant the attention of higher authorities to improve the delivery of quality education to the learners.

2. Literature Review

Wellness Issues

The problematic events that teachers encounter in the twenty-first century can impact their well-being at work. Emotional well-being is consistent with research showing that teachers are emotional workers whose feelings can affect their performance, self-worth, job fulfillment, stress, and effectiveness in teaching (Frenzel, 2014; Yu et al., 2022). However, how teachers feel about their work and themselves significantly impacts both their success and the success of their students. Students' feelings at school impact their willingness to participate in learning and achieve positive academic results (Pekrun et al., 2017). In addition, teachers' emotions affect students' emotions because they create the culture and climate in their classrooms (Keller et al., 2020).

Conforms with the study of Yang et al. (2018), that along with career fulfillment, factors such as workload, workplace conditions, and one's disposition toward change directly influence physical symptoms. The most harmful stressor for teachers' well-being is their workload, consistent with prior research in that psycho-somatic symptoms are linked to unfavorable environmental conditions and a negative impression of change (Yu et al., 2022). Furthermore, an unhealthy work environment impacts employees' enjoyment, social relationships, performance, health, and motivation. As a result, several issues need to be considered, including creating a positive workplace that meets the needs of teachers for well-being at school and the function of school leaders in managing the work environment and teachers' well-being (Zakaria et al., 2021).

A study by Quejada et al. (2018) found that teachers in the Philippines' geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA) are characterized by an impoverished community, poor schools, and lower student skills. In order to provide a better education, teachers are forced to use a portion of their pay to fund classroom activities due to the poor status of the school's teaching and learning resources. Teachers cannot provide the education outlined in the Philippine Constitution due to a lack of resources. Most of the time, teachers must pay for supplies for the classroom out of their own pockets. Many pupils may be struggling academically due to the convergence of numerous issues.

In this scenario, job satisfaction is a growing concern (Li et al., 2016). In Sweden, one in four teachers says they feel stressed out at work and have thought carefully about changing careers or places of employment. In 2018, one in five teachers in the UK reported feeling stressed out about their job most of the time, compared to 13% of similar professionals (Greenberg, 2016). According to Nordin and Thien (2017), the financial demands of teachers, particularly those related to their family responsibilities and everyday expenses, can be met to a certain extent by the school organization. On the other hand, stress might be brought on by a lack of income. As a result, teachers can make extra money and become less dedicated to their work as teachers.

Wellness Concerns

Personal safety is the awareness, recognition, and avoidance of potentially hazardous situations in the working environment (Mubita, 2021). Educational settings must be secure and safe for students, instructors, support workers, and the surrounding community. In order to minimize accidents and incidents and to foster an environment that promotes physical, emotional, and social well-being, it is crucial to handle school safety and security appropriately. A more pragmatic and management-focused explanation of school safety was supplied by Hull (2011), who claimed that it encompasses the school's culture as well as the right resources and training to handle threats and dangers.

The shaping of children's future makes teaching a remarkable vocation. However, research has shown that this line of work is among the world's most stressful jobs. It covers many life experiences, including mental, organizational, physical, and cognitive difficulties. In addition, studies have shown that a teaching career carries some risk factors that, over time, will lead to numerous health issues like obesity, hypertension, and other illnesses that may cause discomfort and organ dysfunction (Ariyo, 2015). According to Abirami et al. (2018), teachers' lifestyle was characterized by a lack of exercise, skipping meals, and a narrow variety of foods. These situations could decrease their productivity and put them at risk for non-communicable diseases later in life, harming students' eating habits.

Furthermore, wellness also concerns teachers' safety from potential dangers and disasters in the school setting. Natural disasters, other emergencies, and hazards can occur anytime in school settings (Mubita, 2021). Moreover, extreme weather conditions, strong winds, fire breakouts, floods, thunderstorms, lightning, landslides, and debris flows, among other natural calamities, can impact schools. Due to all these risks and calamities, a school may become dangerous for teaching and learning according to Mubita. Weather conditions harm remote schools aside from the challenging distance. For teachers, the distance and difficulty of getting to schools and the roads' poor condition and distance from the economic hub influence their well-being (Ujianti, 2022). Although it has long been acknowledged as a problem for rural communities, health services research rarely focuses on transportation. According to Henning-Smith et al. (2017), access to reliable, reasonably priced transportation is essential for maintaining one's mental, physical, and emotional health as a social determinant of health. In rural locations, where distances are far-flung, and transportation infrastructure is more limited, worries about transportation access were accentuated.

In terms of infrastructure, the Philippines lags below other nations in terms of road connectivity, exposure to unsafe drinking water, competence of train services, and electrification rate, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2013). This demonstrates the vast range of yet underdeveloped locations, making individuals more isolated and taking part in fewer information exchanges. Most of the time, due to other government priorities, the government does not address issues faced by the residents and schools in these areas.

Wellness Perspectives

Perspectives on well-being or wellness are major to personality development. Teachers consciously using strategies to improve their well-being has contributed to their outlook in life internally and externally (Yu et al., 2022). One of the teacher's perspectives concerning their well-being is that a flexible work arrangement is any work arrangement that deviates from the norm of standard employment, which entails fixed daily hours on the employer's premises (Orishede et al., 2020). Additionally, flexible work schedules have been acknowledged as a way for workers to achieve a more fulfilling balance between their personal and professional lives. Thus, a flexible schedule motivates employees to perform their jobs.

Furthermore, teachers who are motivated and assured in their abilities typically perform better. According to OECD research, participation in effective in-service training programs like school-based professional development and peer collaboration and higher implementation rates of effective practices are both related to teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction. (OECD, 2013). Similarly, Zakaria et al. (2021) found that teachers

interact well with one another, have confidence in one another, and are content with one another, become more productive and perform better on the work when their positive emotions outnumber their negative emotions.

To promote health in society, everyone must accept responsibility and incorporate a healthy lifestyle into their everyday activities (Dhawan, 2016). Education and health go hand in hand. It should be remembered that a healthy teacher is an excellent resource for many pupils and a resource for oneself. Moreover, Dhawan reiterated that to encourage teachers to lead healthy lifestyles, the government should take the lead. Teachers' health is vital since they are the foundation of society and the country. Additionally, only healthy individuals can contribute or produce at their best. Students, communities, and entire countries are expected to gain from investments in teachers which could result in a better quality of life as well as more significant social and economic development are some of these advantages.

In developing teachers' social and economic aspects, their financial well-being comes into perspective. A person's financial well-being depends on their ability to apply and understand fundamental financial principles (Surendar & Sarma, 2017). Unfortunately, the authors highlighted that many teachers lack financial management skills. The degree of financial literacy and personal financial planning knowledge could aid teachers in this regard. However, most teachers are committed regardless of their economic and financial standing.

Teachers' commitment is an internal force that motivates instructors to continue their involvement in the school by devoting more time and effort. This readiness to support the school fosters an emotional bond between instructors and the institution, motivating them to look for methods to advance their careers as teachers and create a productive learning environment that enables students to achieve their goals Ekwulugo (2015). A crucial element in raising children's success levels is teacher dedication. The requirement for high-quality learning and instruction is crucial since passion also motivates (Altun, M., 2017). also, the foundation of effective teaching is passion. Through the desire it generates, passion, which is essential for learning and teaching, increases learning. In order to maximize their pupils' learning potential, enthusiastic teachers work to create effective learning environments.

Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework was expressed in the Venn diagram (Figure 1) presented below. The Venn diagram was composed of exogenous variables (variables that affect), which explore the lived experiences of teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao regarding their wellness issues and concerns, and the endogenous variable (affected variable) which explores their emerging perspectives on wellness. The study's concept is illustrated below.

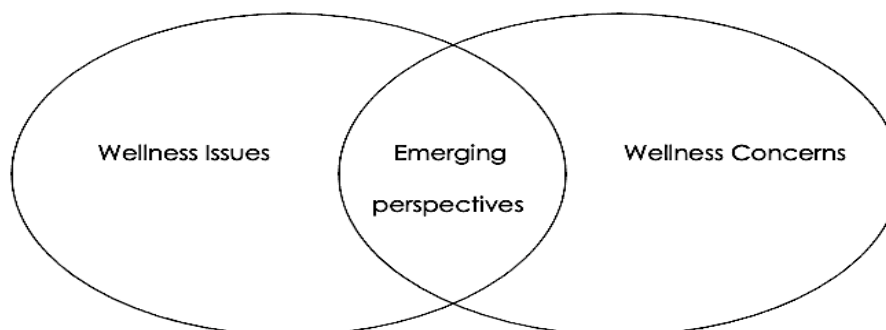


Figure1. Venn diagram showing the framework of the study.

The Venn diagram showed the concepts that the researcher was trying to explore the emerging perspectives on wellness among teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. The exogenous variables, comprised of wellness issues that refer to the general situations or matters that do not directly affect the participants but affect society, while wellness concerns refer to matters that directly affect those participants, were drawn from the participants' life experiences. The endogenous variable relied on the wellness issues and concerns

of the teachers teaching in the last-mile schools in the district of Dumarao to draw out emerging perspectives on wellness among participants.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, this qualitative study aimed to explore the wellness of the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the wellness issues of teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?
2. What are the wellness concerns of teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?
3. Are there emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?

3. Methods

Research Design

This study used a qualitative methodology employing phenomenological designs. Qualitative research examines lived experiences in the quest to recognize and provide meanings to a given situation (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The authors expressed that it is a systematic method of collecting and analyzing narrative materials using methods that guarantee the integrity of the data and the results. A phenomenological study denotes the shared significance of a subject or a phenomenon out of the personal experiences encountered by individuals (Creswell, 2014).

This study obtained the data from the responses of the research participants in an in-depth individual interview with open-ended questions. The qualitative research employed in this study aimed to discover the wellness of teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. At the same time, a phenomenological approach was used to describe the wellness issues and concerns the teacher teaching in the last mile school in the district of Dumarao encountered, as well as their emerging wellness perspective.

Research Participants and Sampling Procedure

The research participants of this study were the five (5) selected teachers teaching in the last mile schools in Aglamate, Agsirab, Nagsulang, Tina, and Agbatuan elementary schools in the district of Dumarao for the school year 2022-2023. The number of participants complied with the suggested sample size for phenomenology, which involves a range of 3-10 participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Participants were chosen through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was utilized to obtain information from participants relevant to the study (Creswell, 2014). This study selected participants who are teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao for the school year 2022-2023 and those who were willing to share their narrative in either face-to-face or through digital communications.

Data Gathering

To properly compile the collected data, the following processes were implemented:

On preparation stage. The researcher secured a permission letter from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Capiz regarding the study's conduct and to the school heads bearing the prospected number of participants and where the interview transpired.

On distribution stage. After elucidating the approvals in the preparation stage, the researcher prepared and distributed the consent letter for the participants' approval. In the progression of the interview, the researcher oriented the participants about the title and the nature of the study, interview procedures, benefits they may gain, and the ethical considerations preserved by the study, specifically on anonymity, confidentiality, approval requirement, and their right to withdraw at any time and reason. Participants were given enough opportunity to ask questions about the interview procedures prior to the actual interview. Then, the researcher asked the

participants to answer the first part of the questionnaire, which contains the *robotfoto* or the information describing their demographic profile (Bautista et al., 2017), such as their age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and home location. Subsequently, the participants were interviewed using the semi-structured questionnaire or the *aide memoir* prepared by the researcher, allowing them to elaborate as needed. The in-depth interview was conducted in a conducive environment, with no potential distractions, and for the safety of the researcher and the participants following health protocols.

On collation stage. After the in-depth interview, the data were transcribed and checked several times to ensure accuracy and comprehension. The transcribed data were the primary source for describing teachers' lived experiences in the last-mile schools in the district of Dumarao. The information that was gathered, as well as the identities of the participants, were kept strictly confidential. To ensure confidentiality, all names and responses of the participants were coded. The researcher used TP as a code for Teacher participants (TP-01, TP-02, TP-03, TP-04 and TP-05) assigned to every participant. The appropriate recording was performed, and systematic data analysis was done through Ryan & Bernard's (2010) method of data analysis.

4. Results, Analysis, and Discussion

Presentation of Data The *Robotfoto*

The first part of the questionnaire contained the *robotfoto*, which refers to the research participants' personal data sheets containing important personal and professional information, such as their age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and home location. This was a report of the characteristics of the participants (see Table 1) following the criteria for inclusion as specified in chapter 3. Thus, this connotes the research endeavor's openness and truthfulness.

There were five (5) participants (N – the number of participants) who participated in this study following the framework of Creswell (2014) for phenomenological studies.

Table 1. The *Robotfoto* of the participants

Demographics	Specifics	N
Age	25 years old and below	0
	26 -40 years old	5
	41 years old and above	0
Sex	Male	2
	Female	3
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	4
	Master's Degree	1
	Doctorate Degree	0
Length of Service	0-3 years	3
	4-10 years	1
	More than 10 years	1
Home Location	Rural	5
	Urban	0

The five (5) participants who participated in the face-to-face interview were ages 26-40 years old. There were two (2) male and three (3) female participants. As for educational attainment, four (4) had bachelor's degrees, and only one (1) had a master's degree. For the length of service, three (3) participants had been teaching for 0-3 years, only one (1) for 4-10 years, and one (1) for more than ten years. Lastly, all five (5) participants resided in a rural area (see Table 1).

Problem Statement 1: What are the wellness issues of teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?

The in-depth interview generated five (5) themes pertaining to the wellness issues of the five (5) teacher participants teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Table 2 presents the lived experiences of the participants from whence the five (5) themes relating to the wellness issues: (1) Mental and Emotional Well-being, (2) Physical Dimension, (3) Environmental Well-being, (4) Occupational Well-being and (5) Financial Well-being.

Table 2. Wellness Issues of Teachers

Themes	Sub-themes	Priori Codes
Emotional Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxiety and stress Emotional instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mood swings Gets easily angered due to lack of sleep Personal/family problems
Physical Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disease /illness such as fever, colds, and flu Injury due to accident Pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get sick due to weather condition Lack of sleep Accident involvement Overfatigue
Environmental Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet and communication signal Restricted access to transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to receive data/ information due to weak connection Difficult online reports submission Challenging topographic location
Occupational Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work-life balance Adjustment in teaching higher grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissatisfied due to being physically, emotionally, and mentally exhausted Excessive workloads and grade level adjustments
Financial Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation fare Fuel/gas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited transportation access Expensive vehicle rental fee High-priced fuel/gas

After thematizing the collected essences of the participants as the experiences were constituted to their viewpoints, the following wellness issues emerged:

1a. Emotional Well-being. This theme compromised the various psychological changes of the teacher's teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao, like being emotionally unstable and having anxiety and stress. Moreover, **TP-01** expressed that being a teacher in a last mile school sometimes compromises their emotional and mental health, thinking about their safety. In addition, **TP-02** and **TP-03** expressed that their stress and anxieties sometimes affect their jobs and personal way of life at home. It is reflected in significant *etic* accounts translated into *emic* narratives in terms of their built anxiety and stress due to their safety, personal problems, and school workload, as described by the following specific testimonials:

TP-01: "The road is so dangerous that it becomes a reason for me to have anxiety or stress from overthinking about it."

TP-02: "There are times when I feel like I am struggling with work, probably due to stress and a personal problem".

TP-03: "There are times that you bring your problems at home to school."

Furthermore, **TP-01**, **TP-02**, and **TP-03** agreed that they snap out and deal with their co-teachers and students unobjectively when they get stressed and anxious. The following statements came from the participants'

experiences that teaching in the last mile schools is emotionally unstable due to circumstances like lack of sleep, being impatient and personal problems:

TP-01: "There were times that we can feel that our mood is not good because of lack of sleep or stress from personal or family problems."

TP-02: "There are times when you get angry with your student because you have run out of patience, and sometimes yell at them."

TP-03: "There are times when you get angry with your student because you are not concentrating on teaching because you are doing/thinking something else."

Participants stated that due to the stresses from their working environment, overtime work that caused sleep deprivation, and personal problems, they became emotionally unstable, which resulted in being easily irritated and angry. Furthermore, it is unavoidable for them not to carry their problems in school, making them unable to focus and give their best performance at work and even release their anger or stress on their students unintentionally by shouting when students misbehave. Teachers cannot deny that sometimes running out of patience makes them emotionally unstable and stressed out due to different factors, such as a toxic environment, burnout, or exhaustion from too much workload that made them do overtime work and lack proper sleep. That said, sometimes their performance in delivering quality education to learners is negatively influenced. Thus, emotional well-being indeed played a role in the effectiveness in performance of the teachers in delivering a safe, child-friendly, and better-quality education to the students.

The result of this study leans towards the study of Yin (2015) that educators are emotional employees, and it has been discovered that their emotions impact their productivity, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, burnout, and instructional effectiveness (Frenzel, 2014). Further supported by the study of Li et al. (2016), for some, talking about the emotional health of teachers may seem unnecessary to the critical discussion about the future of schools. However, teachers' attitudes and satisfaction with their profession significantly impact both their own achievement and that of their students. Furthermore, teachers comprehend how students' feelings influence their willingness to engage in the educational process and their academic results (Pekrun et al., 2017). Furthermore, the teachers shape the classroom environment and culture, and their own emotions impact their pupils (Keller et al., 2020). Thus, emotional well-being as perceived by teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao can significantly influence their job performance as well as their student's academic performance and emotional state.

1b. Physical Dimension. This theme encompasses all the health-related issues encountered by the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Further, **TP-01 and TP-02** stated that they sometimes get sick such as colds and headaches, when they are caught up by rain going to school. Also, all paperwork and deadlines add up to their workload, negatively influencing their physical health because of sleep deprivation. Their narratives support that weather condition, lack of sleep, and overfatigue poses risks to their physical health. Thus, the statements below reflected the thoughts of the participants:

TP-01: "There are times that my sleep is not enough because I had to do and finished my paper work so I can meet deadlines, that I often get headache."

TP-02: "For health-related issues, we cannot avoid sometimes getting wet from the rain when travelling going to school that make us sick, such as having fever, headache or colds."

Due to the slippery, rocky, and steep roads, accidents occur while traveling to school. These scenarios were conveyed by **TP-01** and **TP-02** which are challenging for teachers, compromising their physical stability, and even endangering their lives. The following statements support this:

TP-01: "Sometimes it is very difficult to drive due to the wet and slippery road, there are times that I fell from my motorcycle and got bruised and minor injury."

TP-02: "There was a time that when travelling I saw my co-teachers fell from their vehicle, they had minor injuries."

Moreover, the physical status of teachers, especially married female teachers who were pregnant, hinder their everyday activities, and experience difficult situations like being nauseous and dizzy, as expressed by **TP-02** and **TP-03**. Moreover, being pregnant gives them limitations to their daily school and personal activities, which significantly influence teachers' well-being. The following statements support these findings:

TP-02: *“There are times when it's difficult because I am pregnant. I feel lazy and have to wait to get better first because it was difficult every time, I feel nauseous and dizzy.”*

TP-03: *“When I got pregnant, I cannot perform my daily activities and had limitations on my movements unlike when I am not pregnant and have to be cautious with my movements.”*

The health-related issues encountered by the participants were because of too much workload, pregnancy, weather conditions, and accidents due to the topographic location of the school influenced their physical health. The teachers narrated that due to too much workload, they even brought their paper works at home and did overtime which resulted in sleep deprivation and overfatigue that weakened their immune systems and made them vulnerable to diseases like fever, colds, and headaches added by the sudden change of weather. Two participants shared their experience teaching while pregnant that she sometimes finds it difficult to do their role and responsibilities because of the changes in their body condition. They often got dizzy and nauseous. Lastly, due to the topographic location of the school, some of the teachers are often involved in an accident that results in them being injured and wounded.

The study findings are confirmed by Yang et al. (2018), that workload, work environment, and attitude toward change directly influence physical symptoms and job satisfaction. According to the authors, psycho-somatic symptoms are connected to unfavorable environmental factors and a negative impression of change, and the teachers' workload is the most harmful stressor for their health conditions. Thus, the physical dimension is one wellness issue discovered by this study which is influenced by teachers' workloads and topographic location.

1c. Environmental Well-being. This theme encompasses all areas of health that relate to the environment and, in turn, how the environment can induce health risks in the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Further, **TP-03**, **TP-04**, and **TP-05** all agreed that being in a GIDA like the last mile schools in Dumarao, phone signal and internet connectivity were weak/unstable, creating hassle and difficulties for the teachers. Thus, the below statements revealed the challenges encountered by the teachers:

TP-03: *“Challenging to make reports to ICT and planning because of the signal and internet connectivity.”*

TP-04: *“Reports sent in group chats were delayed because of the problem with the signal so the report did not arrive on time, so we crammed with the submission.”*

TP-05: *“To submit reports on time and without delay we struggle to travel from our school to town just to have a communication signal and internet connection.”*

Furthermore, **TP-01** and **TP-04** reiterated that due to the topographic location of the last mile schools, the access to transportation is limited, which made it difficult for the visitors and DepEd personnel or administrators to check and monitor their schools. Also with the delays in supplies delivery, teachers are obliged to cover the expenses of those supplies until such time that supplies are received. The following participants' statements support these findings:

TP-01: *“Another thing is the support from DEPED since the school is in the remote area, delivery of feeding and school supplies are delayed.”*

TP-04: *“Our school is often not visited by DepEd personnel or administrators. For example, if they have to choose a school to be monitored or assessed, probably our school will not be chosen because of its location, issues and concerns of our school will not be assessed and addressed.”*

This thematic typology came from the essence of the participants' lived experiences. Environmental conditions such as remote locations and the school's inaccessibility result in a weak communication signal, unstable internet connectivity, undelivered resources, and unaddressed issues and concerns, which also negatively influence teachers' working lives in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. As narrated by the participants, they struggled to accomplish and meet the deadlines with the task given to them by the Division's office due to the delayed information, weak communication signal, and unstable internet connections that contributed to their poor mental and physical health. Supported by the study conducted by Ujianti (2021), the Indonesian 3T schools are challenged in their learning engagements and face many hindrances, such as the significant challenge for distant region instructors is communication and internet connectivity. The authors confirmed that internet access in most rural areas had become a challenge worldwide.

According to certain research, instructors who work in remote schools endure unique, frequently connected health problems that are not present in other schools (Almarshad, 2015; Nordin et al., 2017). For instance, the numerous problems with students' well-being have influence on teachers' well-being either directly or indirectly. Teachers also mentioned that due to their size and resulting resource availability, major schools (in urban regions) could emphasize teachers' well-being by assigning time and money, but this was not possible in small schools (Yang et al., 2018). Conforms with the study of Quejada et al. (2018), that the actual experiences of the participating instructors are congruent with what other Filipino teachers in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA) have reported. It is distinguished by the community's poverty, the school's poverty, and the lower student competencies. In order to provide better education, teachers are forced to forgo a portion of their pay to fund classroom activities due to the inadequate teaching and learning resources in schools (Nordin et al, 2017). Teachers are unable to provide the kind of instruction outlined in the Philippine Constitution due to lack of resources. The majority of the time, classroom supplies must be provided by the teachers out of their own pockets (Quejada et al., 2018). Many of the pupils may not be performing well in their academic studies as a result of the convergence of numerous circumstances.

It was further stressed in the study by Willis and Grainger (2020) that personal, social, technical, and professional isolation are the reasons for the problem, which is more precisely linked to transitional problems and teacher well-being. It is crucial to remember that social and ecological connectedness is just as vital for well-being as the availability of goods (Clarke & Denton, 2013). The authors also criticized whether systems rely too much on early career teachers' resilience rather than offering sufficient and appropriate assistance for moving to remote areas. Thus, environmental well-being is one of the wellness issues distinguished in this study by the teachers in the last-mile schools in the district of Dumarao and has a holistic influence on the participants' overall well-being.

1d. Occupational Well-being. This theme encompasses all aspects of well-being on the personal satisfaction of the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao to their job and career. This is articulated by **TP-01**, **TP-02**, and **TP-04** narratives revealing how various school activities and changes in the teachers' workload influence their satisfaction with their profession. Thus, the statements below reflected the thoughts and feelings of the participants:

***TP-01:** “Due to school-related works that need to be finished and reports to be submitted sometimes I lack work-life balance, I brought more school works at home and do my home obligations, works longer hours, and lacks personal time.”*

***TP-02:** As married person, due to doing overtime works I often do not have time for my family.”*

***TP-04:** “There are instances wherein I felt physically, emotionally, and mentally exhausted due to too much school-related works and activities.”*

It was also revealed during the in-depth interview that **TP-02** had difficulties adjusting to and preparing lesson plan for a new grade level. The statement below supports this claim:

TP-02: *“In terms of school-related work, maybe I have an adjustment right now because I changed grade levels from Grade 1 to Grade 5, so I really need to study the lessons because they are more advanced, especially in English and Mathematics, compared to Grade 1.*”

Participants' statements showed occupational well-being about the personal satisfaction of the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao towards their job and career. However, according to the participants, they sometimes felt dissatisfied with their work due to the exhaustion from too much workload and adjustments due to the changes in the grade level they were teaching, resulting in a lack of work-life balance.

Supported by the study from OECD (2013), the multifaceted approach of the OECD framework to measure well-being informs the idea of teachers' professional well-being. Under material circumstances, it is critical to consider job stability, individual wages, and unemployment when evaluating teachers' occupational well-being. An outstanding work-life balance and strong social ties are essential for teachers in their everyday work, which falls under the pillar of quality of life. According to Nordin et al. (2017), industrial employees and educators discuss workload and job satisfaction, and many teachers frequently whine and express dissatisfaction with their work. Consequently, individual experiences this unhappiness when their need is not met. Stressful workplaces also affect instructors' dedication, motivation, and self-efficacy, impacting the educational system and students' learning outcomes (Greenberg, 2016). Thus, occupational well-being issues influence teachers' positive outlooks and attitudes toward their teaching profession.

1e. Financial Well-being. This theme encompasses all aspects of well-being on finances and expenses of the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. This was evident in the statements of **TP-02** and **TP-03** that their salary was insufficient due to daily transportation fares and living expenses due to the school's very remote location. This typology came from the lived experiences of the participants. Thus, the statements below reflected the thoughts and feelings of the participants:

TP-02: *“Actually, the salary is not enough since the commodities are expensive and fare for the transportation is expensive due to the location of the school.”*

TP-03: *“To be frank, our salary is not enough, especially we have to pay for our daily fare, foods, and household expenses. The fare ranges from 300 to 400 pesos per day depending on the weather and to your transaction to the driver.”*

In addition, **TP-01** and **TP-05** shared the same sentiments that their transportation expenditure is taking a significant part of their salary. Supported by the following statements from the participants' lived experiences, they tended to consume more fuel/gas as per minimum and paid more due to the location of the schools.

TP-01: *“I often spent more for my gas/fuel for my motorcycle because of school's distance from my home.”*

TP-05: *“One of my problems despite having my personal transportation was that I need to consume more fuel/gas because of the long distance of my home from school.”*

This thematic typology came from the essence of the participants' lived experiences. It referred to financial literacy and management of finances and expenses for the transportation fare and fuel/gas of the teacher's teachings in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. This showed that being assigned to a GIDA where restricted access to transportation is common and teachers pay more than the regular transportation fare. Those with personal transportation need to consume or refill more fuel for their vehicles to avoid running out of gas on their way to school. Nowadays, fuel prices are high. The financial issues they have encountered add problems and influence their well-being.

The study conducted by Nordin and Thien (2017) also stated that how well-off teachers are can be gauged by how well their employer can meet their financial demands, particularly regarding the dependence on their families and everyday expenses. The author emphasized that a lack of income might bring on stress. Teachers now have a chance to make extra money, making them less dedicated to their jobs. Thus, financial well-being issues or financial crises could affect the commitment to the service of the teachers and their well-being.

2. What are the wellness concerns of teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?

Data collected and analyzed revealed various wellness concerns among the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Table 3 displays the findings regarding their wellness concerns, followed by their supporting narratives revealing four (4) clustered themes relating to their wellness concerns; personal safety, school meals, weather condition, and school location based on the results of in-depth interviews.

Table 3. Wellness Concerns of Teacher

Themes	Sub-themes	Priori Codes
Personal Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling from cliffs Stress and anxiety Life threatening situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steep, slippery, and rocky road. Fear of being robbed Worried of being hurt by the residents for being a non-resident Presence of New People's Army (NPA) in the area
School Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inaccessible food Skipped meals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No functional canteen Not taking breakfast to avoid being late Not eating on time due to overlapping school works
Weather Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy rains Inclement weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in going to school due to heavy rains Slippery and muddy road causes lateness and absenteeism
School Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work-life balance Adjustment to teaching in remote area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting up early not to be late to school due to distance

In the parlance of this research, explored perceived wellness concerns of the participants were the following:

2a. Personal safety. The participants shared this common theme as one of their primary concerns in their daily life activities as a teacher teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Participants such as **TP-03**, **TP-04**, and **TP-05** agreed that being committed to their profession in a remote school also means their safety is compromised. Being assigned in a GIDA school, danger awaits them, such as vehicular accidents, robbery, and shooting incidents due to communist people (NPA). The statements below revealed the concerns of the participants for their safety:

TP-03: "I felt unsafe also due to being a non-resident of the place where my school is located. I felt, the people around may harm me at any moment."

TP-04: "It's dangerous when you travel when you have seen and experienced the steep, rocky and slippery road, it's really hard. It is inevitable for vehicular accident to happen."

TP-05: "When we went home at night, the road became dangerous since there was no light post in the area the surroundings were too dark."

Personal safety is one of the major concerns of the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Being assigned in GIDA schools, there are instances that teachers are endangered due to the sudden change of weather conditions that made the road more dangerous, slippery, and muddy, aside from being steep and rocky. These make roads not passable sometimes, and teachers get injured. Moreover, they fear going home late at night and being a robbery victim or even in a shooting/killing incident.

Different people have different ideas about what makes a school safe. For instance, Yang et al. (2018) proposed that a safe school is devoid of violence and is characterized by a setting with no sense of unease about the institution or its disciplinary measures. This means that everyone at a safe school is free to interact with one another without fear of harm or being threatened in a way that promotes teaching and learning. Additionally, Hull (2011) presented a more pragmatic and management-focused explanation of school safety, arguing that it entails the culture of the school as well as the appropriate resources and training to deal with risks and dangers as well as a school without fear of mockery, intimidation, harassment, or physical assault comes from. Thus, a safe working environment is a must for the teachers to feel at ease and give their utmost best in their work.

2b. School Meals. Having a proper meal will make the body healthy and free from diseases. Due to their situation, **TP-01**, **TP-02**, and **TP-03** shared that teachers in the last mile schools share a common problem relating to school meals. Participants stated that since their schools were far from the city and did not have a school canteen, some struggled to find food during lunch break if they did not bring their packed meals. The common foods they ate to ease their hunger were canned goods and noodles, which were easy to cook and hassle-free. The below statements support these views:

***TP-01:** “Sometimes when I don't have enough time, I don't eat breakfast at home, but I just bring my food to the school so that when I get there, I won't be hungry.”*

***TP-02:** “I brought my breakfast and ate it at school because time is gold, and I don't want to be late and I don't want to have an empty stomach that may affect my performance.”*

***TP-03:** “If we don't have packed lunch, we just bought canned goods in a mini store like sardines or tuna to avoid having empty stomach.”*

Skipping breakfast meals and no proper school meals due to the lack of a cafeteria or school canteen as well as the lack of the opportunity to prepare and eat resulted in an imbalanced diet, which in turn became a wellness concern for teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao which needs to be addressed.

Teaching shapes children's future, so it is considered a noble vocation. However, investigations by Abirami et al. (2018) revealed that this line of work is among the world's most demanding. It includes many facets of a person's existence, including cognitive, physical, organizational, and mental disruptions. The authors also discussed several risk factors related to teaching, such as various health issues, including discomfort and organ dysfunction, obesity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and glucose intolerance. According to the study's findings, backed by Bozkurt and Erdogan (2021), about half of classroom teachers skipped meals throughout the day, with lunch being the most common missed meal. Thus, school meals are a wellness concern for teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao.

2c. Weather Condition. It is also common among participants to experience difficulties due to the weather condition. TP-01, TP-02, and TP-03 stated that the problem related to weather conditions strongly influenced those teaching in the last mile schools. Inclement weather brings many problems, such as making teachers sick and facing danger due to slippery, muddy roads and overflowing rivers/streams that sometimes hinder them from attending school and performing their roles and responsibilities. Reflective of this perspective are the statements below:

***TP-01:** “If the weather is not good, it is hard for us to travel going to school because the road is not passable.”*

***TP-02:** “From my experience, if it rains, the steep, rocky road will be more slippery that sometimes made the wheel of the vehicle deflate and of course the vehicle will slide.”*

***TP-03:** “Due to heavy rains that the water overflow in the nearby stream, and it became not passable, so we need to wait for it to subside in order for us to pass that's why our time going to school was affected.”*

Another wellness concern of the teachers was the weather condition. If there is bad weather resulting in heavy rains, their well-being is affected, and bad weather is one factor that makes them challenging to travel and attend school. In addition, it made the surrounding area more dangerous since the steep, rocky road became slippery and muddy, and the overflowed water from the nearby stream and the area where they passed by might have swept them due to its strong current.

The results of this study conformed to the study of Mubita (2021) that a school might become dangerous for teaching and learning activities due to dangers and disasters which can occur at any time in school settings. The author reiterated that stakeholders should be ready to handle issues when they occur safely and efficiently. In order to enhance safety and lessen the effects of emergencies and other dangerous situations in their environments, students, teachers, parents, and other school staff members can collaborate. Thus, weather condition, as one wellness concern of teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao, requires a contingency plan to mitigate the impact of such at any time.

2d. School Location. This refers to the challenges participants experienced regarding the physical distance between their homes and school. The school is in a GIDA with restricted transportation access and a lack of other establishments like a gasoline station. **TP-03**, **TP-04**, and **TP-05** agreed that they needed to wake up early because the school was too far and in order not to be late, also due to being in a remote area where the roads are steep, rocky, and slippery. That is why some teachers either rent a vehicle service or have their transportation. The following statements revealed this claim:

***TP-03:** "I left the house around 6 am to travel and arrived at 6:30 am or 7:00 am, depending on the weather condition."*

***TP-04:** "I usually wake up around 5 am in the morning to prepare food for me and my family and leave at 6:30 am."*

***TP-05:** "I wake up around 4:30 am in the morning and prepare everything that I needed like foods or packed meals. I left home at 6 am, rode a tricycle and travelled for 30 minutes to arrive to school early."*

However, **TP-02** stressed that due to the school location, in addition to the challenging roads, causes them to be late for school. For instance, their vehicle runs out of gas in the middle of going to school, and there has no residence in the area. The below statement supports this claim:

***TP-02:** "There are other cases where the fuel runs out. I've had experience when I rode a motorcycle with my co-teacher, and then suddenly the motorcycle ran out of gas, since there weren't many houses and there was no gas station, we waited for about two hours to be rescued."*

Lastly, a wellness concern that relates to the physical distance between the home and school of the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. The school being in a GIDA influence the daily life activities of the teachers.

The study findings are supported by Ujjanti's (2021) study that even teaching in 3T areas had become difficult for instructors before the pandemic because of the difficult access to schools due to broken and muddy roads and their distance from the economic hub. Although it has long been acknowledged as a problem for rural communities, health services research rarely focuses on transportation. However, access to good, inexpensive transit is crucial for mental, physical, and emotional health as a social predictor of health. In addition, the concerns about transportation access were exacerbated in rural areas with greater distances and more limited transportation infrastructure (Henning-Smith et al., 2017). This is seen in the Philippine setting (DepEd, 2019) because of other government priorities. The government must address the issues the residents and schools face in these locations. Thus, with government engagement, the issue of school placement as a health problem for teachers working in last-mile schools can be remedied.

3. Are there emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao?

Data collected and analyzed revealed various emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao, as shown in Table 4. Their narratives revealed six (6) clustered themes relating to their emerging perspective on wellness; flexible schedule, interdependence on one another, classroom matter, simple lifestyle, financial matter, and commitment to service based on the results of in-depth interviews.

Table 4. Emerging Perspectives on Wellness

Themes	Sub-themes	Significant Situation
Flexible Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid life threatening situation • Work-life balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School heads allow teachers to go home early to avoid untoward incidents - Waking up early for school
Interdependence on One Another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support system • Compassion for each other • Sharing of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers assisting, guiding, and treating each other as family. - Good relationship with colleagues - School heads excellent leadership - Relieving each other's physical and mental stress
Simple Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyable things • Healthy living • In control of finances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers eating healthy foods - Avoid or minimize vices - Avoid extravagant buying of wants
Financial Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management • Avoid being extravagant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowing how to manage finances, by identifying least and top priority - Not to waste money/salary on unimportant things
Commitment to Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining positive outlook • Being adaptable • Passion for teaching • Source of income • Being professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not giving up despite challenges - Managing personal and professional obligation - Teaching as bread and butter - Not letting personal problems affect profession

Making decisions and caring for one's health and mind are vital components of wellness which involves choosing wisely (Ohrt et al., 2018). A lack of health initiatives may impact teachers' and students' lives. Additionally, because the teachers cannot devote their all to the teaching-learning process, it affects the student's academic achievement (Yu et al., 2022). Consequently, a wellness program is essential to offering high-quality instruction. The school heads are in charge of starting the wellness program because they are the ones in charge of overseeing teachers at the school. They ought to therefore create, carry out, and manage their wellness programs in their respective schools.

3a. Flexible Schedule. A flexible work schedule allows teachers to design their schedules and strike a work-life balance that works for them. According to **TP-01**, **TP-02**, **TP-03**, and **TP-04**, they were considered by the school heads going home and end their class early to avoid danger when it gets dark such as robbery and shooting incidents. Moreover, school heads are also considerate when inclement weather occurs, such as teachers being either sent home early or can come late for school to avoid risks of overflowing rivers and slippery roads. In return, teachers wake up and go to school early during the good days. Hence, the following statements prove this theme:

TP-01: “*So, our school head allows us to go home early after our class ended to avoid dangerous situation.*”

TP-02: *“During bad weather, we can immediately inform the school that we can’t work or we will first wait until the water subside even it takes longer, and we get late because it was understandable.”*

TP-03: *“If the weather is bad, we wake up early and travel early so that we can arrive at the school on or before time or the weather gets worse.”*

TP-04: *“I woke up early so that I will not be late in school despite lacking proper sleep.”*

A flexible work schedule allowed the teachers to come and leave the school with the permission of their school heads, which also allowed them to strike a work-life balance that worked for them. As a result, waking up early, going to school, and going home is the common occurrence in the daily lives of teachers.

Flexible work arrangements are rules or procedures, official or informal, that permit individuals to choose when and where work can be executed (Orishede et al., 2020). Flexible work arrangement entails set daily hours with the employer’s premises. Additionally, the author emphasized that flexible work schedules have been acknowledged as a way for workers to achieve a more fulfilling balance between their personal and professional lives. The detrimental effects on both the individual and the company that work-life conflict has on employees are evidence of the advantages of flexible work arrangements. Thus, a flexible schedule as one of the teachers in last mile schools in the district of Dumarao’s emerging perspectives of wellness involves the consideration and exemplary leadership of school heads.

3b. Interdependence on One Another. In the last mile school, teachers teaching in these schools need each other’s support. It means that they need each other. Elaborated by **TP-01** and **TP-04** that in times of difficult situations, the unity and teamwork of the teachers will lead to solving the problems quickly. This is held in some schools in remote areas wherein everyone is helping, assisting, guiding, and treating each other as a family and relieving each stress through bonding. The following statements below imply this view:

TP-01: *“One of the emerging perspectives when it comes to wellness that we have in school is our practice of good relationship with my colleagues and excellent leadership of my school head. Helping one another is our way to relieve our physical and mental stress, and most of all we care and value each other.”*

TP-04: *“We set dates where we can have bonding with my colleagues to somehow relieve our stress.”*

One of the promising emerging perspectives on the wellness of the teachers in the last mile schools was the interdependence on one another. Teachers care for one another and help their fellow in need. Participants shared their experiences that there is unity within their school community and helping whenever one of their colleagues needed it. Based on their experiences, when everyone is helping each other and have teamwork, the task becomes less challenging, and deadlines can be met easily.

Teachers who are inspired and self-assured about their work perform better. According to OECD research, teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction correlate with a higher frequency of effective practices and involvement in efficient in-service training, such as school-embedded professional development and peer collaboration (OECD, 2013). According to the study by Zakaria et al. (2021), teachers cooperate well with colleagues, trust, and feel satisfied with them. Positive feelings increase their productivity and job performance and that teachers' capacity for teamwork, consultation, collaboration, support, and trust at work may impact their general well-being. Thus, interdependence on one another allows teachers to develop and build a positive connection and bond with their colleagues, making the working environment stress-free and enjoyable.

3c. Simple Lifestyle. Maintaining a simple yet healthy lifestyle is a must. Depending on their lifestyle, a teacher can acquire or be affected by a disease or weak immune system. This holds according to **TP-05** that teaching in remote areas, where there are no proper school meals and often eating unhealthy foods such as canned goods that weaken the immune system makes them vulnerable to diseases. Also, **TP-05** expressed that to have a simple lifestyle, prioritize what is necessary for everyday living. On the other hand, **TP-04** emphasized that to enjoy the

fruits of their labor from time to time, teachers gather and bond to relieve their stress from working. The statements below posited this view:

TP-04: *“When we have time and budget in school, we set dates where we can bond with my colleagues to somehow relieve our stress. We also attend seminars that tackles mental and physical health and raise concerns on coping up from stress.”*

TP-05: *“If I can feel signs that I might get sick, I immediately take safety precautions by drinking medicines and vitamins to strengthen my immune system.”*

Like anyone, a teacher can obtain a disease or have a weak immune system due to their chosen lifestyle. Thus, having and maintaining a healthy lifestyle was one of the emerging perspectives on wellness among teachers, as stated in the participants' statements that they do not have a proper diet and self-care. Not eating healthy foods or doing exercises will weaken their bodies.

In order to promote the health of society, each person must accept responsibility and incorporate a healthy lifestyle into their everyday activities (Dhawan, 2016). Moreover, schools have traditionally played a significant role in promoting health. Building healthy school environments supplies various long-term benefits viz academic success, good health, and well-being. The author highlighted that the health of the teachers has a direct impact on classroom instruction. Health responsibility, exercise, nutrition, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and spiritual development are all acknowledged components of a healthy lifestyle. Thus, teachers in the last mile schools should be encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle for their sake, students, society, and the nation.

3d. Financial Literacy. This refers to the financial literacy and management of the teachers. Given that their situations were different compared to the teachers in the city, they paid more for their transportation fare and fuel/gas due to the inaccessibility of their schools, and the salary was only enough for their living expenses. Therefore, managing finances will lead to a successful life. Reflective of this perspective was the statements below:

TP-01: *“Avoid being extravagant and waste money on unimportant things.”*

TP-05: *“The salary may not be too high but if you know how to make use and handle your money it will be enough.”*

Being financially literate and possessing good financial management skills were one of the emerging perspectives on wellness among teachers to cope with the problems concerning their daily life expenditures. Proper financial management and budget allotment help the participants, but sometimes cannot avoid being out of budget, especially if an unexpected occurrence such as family members getting hospitalized.

One of the most influential people in our society is the teacher. Teachers serve as role models for their pupils and support their development as financially and socially responsible citizens by having a solid understanding of personal finance and handling it responsibly (Surendar & Sarma, 2017). Unfortunately, many teachers need more financial management skills. The authors reiterated that applying and comprehending basic economic principles, such as with teachers, are necessary for one's financial well-being. Concerning attitudes exist with both saving and spending. Information is not the problem; the problem is the ability to understand the information.

3e. Commitment to Service. Commitment is an emotional bond of the teachers towards their profession. All participants agreed that their burning passion enables them to go beyond their comfort zone. Despite all the challenges they faced due to their situation, they never gave up but remained positive and learned how to adapt and cope. The following statement implied this view:

TP-01: *“Teaching is my passion and my source of income.”*

TP-02: *“To meet deadlines, we look for places with a strong and stable signal/internet connections and sometimes went to town just to connect and submit the report.”*

TP-03: *“Before I go home, I prepare and do all my lessons and activities for the next day.”*

TP-04: *“We experienced Saturday or Sunday virtual meetings and webinars, but we are committed.*

TP-04: *“In terms of preparation for the lesson, we made sure to prepare the materials needed for activities and lesson ahead of time.”*

TP-05: *“One of our experiences was when I went to school and we ran out of gas, we need to wait just to ride and go to school and it is so hassle.”*

Despite all the difficulties the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao experienced they never allowed it to extinguish their burning passion for teaching. As a teacher having a great dedication and commitment to service lead to self-satisfaction.

According to Ekwulugo (2015), a teacher's commitment to teaching is a notion that captures the psychological bond that exists between a teacher and their subject matter. It also speaks to the teacher's excitement, willingness to put in extra effort, and commitment to proper instruction. A key element in raising children's success levels is teacher dedication. The requirement for high-quality learning and education is crucial since passion also motivates. Through the enthusiasm it generates, love increases learning, which is essential for both learning and teaching. In order to maximize their pupils' learning potential, enthusiastic teachers work to create effective learning environments (Altun, 2017). Thus, teachers in the last mile schools are committed to their profession regardless of where their school is situated. Their commitment was shown in good classroom management and preparation of the materials and their lesson, which will give students access to an equitable education.

5. Conclusion

With the aforementioned findings from the qualitative data gathered, following conclusions were drawn:

1. The thematic personification of the wellness issues of the teachers teaching in the district of Dumarao's last miles school were: emotional well-being, physical dimensions, environmental well-being, occupational well-being, and financial well-being. The teachers overall dealt with the identified wellness issues because of their compassion and commitment to their profession. Thus, wellness issues are concerning and warrant the attention of higher authorities for the betterment of the delivery of quality education to learners despite the undesirable situation of being in a GIDA school.
2. The essence of the transcripts brought about the thematized wellness concerns of the teachers teaching in the last mile schools in the district of Dumarao. Thus, the following themes emerge to be taken as the wellness concerns of the teachers: personal safety, school meals, weather condition, and school location were their agony and hardships that were not given emphasis and often neglected or given little attention by the educational leaders due for being situated in a GIDA. Thus, solving those wellness concerns will not only secure and protect the well-being of the remote teachers but allow them to look for the beauty and see the situations as a silver lining.
3. The emerging perspectives on wellness among the teachers teaching in the last miles were the flexible schedule, interdependence on one another, simple lifestyle, financial literacy, and commitment to service. Thus, these emerging perspectives enabled them to cope with difficult situations in geographically isolated and disadvantageous areas. Implementing wellness programs that focus on teachers' physical, psychological, and mental welfare will allow them to fulfill their duties in the best interests of delivering positive outcomes to the school and community.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were proposed:

1. The findings of this study are expected to draw the immediate attention of the educational leaders or higher authorities for possible resource allocation, additional resources, specialized protection programs, and other

supplementary support programs to ensure the wellness of both learners and teachers as well as to empower teachers to become more productive and effective in their jobs.

2. As the teachers' workloads increase and since they are assigned to geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA), they are concerned about their well-being. Therefore, this study suggests that school heads spearhead a psychological, mental, and physical health symposium/seminar for teachers to maintain their good health and positive outlook in the classroom despite their unfavorable circumstances.

3. School leaders should encourage and strengthen collaboration and teamwork among field teachers to maintain a positive relationship, an extension of support, and unity that are regarded as crucial factors in bringing positive change in the workplace.

4. Through this study, administrators and policymakers are highly encouraged to use the ideas/insights about the actual status of wellness of last mile schools' teachers, and its findings, such as personal safety, weather condition, and school location, are the basis in crafting appropriate and effective policies, practices and programs that would strengthen the wellness of teachers. Issues that pose risks and dangers to teachers in small schools may not be resolved but can be minimized with government intervention through projects such as concreting pavement to minimize road accidents and river riprap construction to prevent river overflow.

5. The study's findings have offered rich perspectives and insights that can be useful in understanding the current situations of public school teachers as they face the challenges of delivering quality education to remote schools. Furthermore, future researchers may focus on the impact of the wellness issues and concerns of the public school teachers in GIDA schools that directly affected their ways of life and teaching.

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