

Exploring Teacher Wellbeing and Performance through the Job Demands–Resources Theory Lens in Philippine Basic Education

Samuel F. Macagba III^{1*}, Kathleen M. Morales², and Junefel C. Macagba³

¹ Xavier University Junior High School, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.

²⁻³ Xavier University – School of Education, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

*Corresponding author: smacagba@xu.edu.ph

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Abstract

The sudden transition to flexible and remote teaching during the pandemic reshaped the work environment of educators and highlighted the complex relationship between job demands, resources, wellbeing, and performance. This study aimed to explore how these factors interact among basic education teachers in a private Philippine university, guided by the Job Demands–Resources theory. A quantitative research design was employed using an online survey administered to teachers. Data were analysed through descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple linear regression using Jamovi. The results revealed that high workload, ambiguity, and uncertainty negatively influenced teachers' cognitive and affective wellbeing, while remuneration, participative leadership, and collegial support enhanced their wellbeing and satisfaction. Interestingly, job demands did not significantly affect performance, suggesting that resilience, intrinsic motivation, and professional commitment sustained teaching quality despite contextual challenges. Remuneration emerged as the strongest predictor of classroom performance, underscoring the motivational power of fair compensation. The study contributes to the understanding of teacher wellbeing in flexible learning contexts and highlights the importance of supportive leadership and equitable systems in sustaining educational quality in times of transition and beyond.

Keywords: affective wellbeing, cognitive wellbeing, educational leadership, flexible learning, job demands–resources theory, teacher performance, subjective wellbeing

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly transformed education systems worldwide, compelling institutions to shift from conventional classroom instruction to remote and flexible learning modalities (Pouezevara et al., 2021). In the Philippines, this abrupt transition required teachers to assume expanded roles under constrained conditions, intensifying their workload and emotional labour (Talidong & Toquero, 2020). These shifting demands heightened stress, emotional fatigue, and role ambiguity, revealing the fragility of teacher wellbeing and the pressing need to re-examine the conditions under which teachers work (Collie, 2021; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Teacher wellbeing has long been recognised as vital to sustaining educational quality and improving student outcomes (Zhou et al., 2024), yet the pandemic context magnified how work conditions can either sustain or undermine teachers' capacity to perform effectively.

This study examines how job demands and job resources influence the subjective wellbeing and performance of basic education teachers during and beyond the pandemic. However, within the Philippine basic education sector, empirical studies that link job demands, job resources, wellbeing, and actual teacher performance remain scarce. Anchored by the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014), this study explores how the balance between workload pressures and institutional support affects teachers' affective and cognitive wellbeing, as well as their classroom performance. While several global studies have used the JD-R framework to understand employee burnout and motivation (Rendeza, 2024), there remains limited research contextualising it within Philippine basic education. Although the data were gathered during the pandemic, the study remains relevant because the conditions introduced during this period—flexible learning, digital workloads, and shifting institutional expectations—continue to shape teacher experiences today. Thus, the findings also provide a foundation for comparative or post-pandemic analyses in subsequent research (Diaz Lema, 2023). Understanding how these enduring conditions shape teacher wellbeing and performance offers vital insights for designing sustainable educational systems that are responsive, supportive, and resilient in times of both crisis and continuity.

This study extends existing JD-R applications by examining how job demands and resources operate specifically within a Philippine private basic education context — a setting that remains underrepresented in empirical literature. Unlike many JD-R studies conducted strictly during the pandemic, this research incorporates performance indicators beyond wellbeing, allowing a more holistic understanding of teacher functioning. The study also offers context-sensitive interpretations relevant to flexible learning implementation in low-resource and faith-based educational environments. Moreover, in the years following the pandemic, Philippine schools have continued to utilise flexible and distance learning modalities during unexpected disruptions such as typhoons, earthquakes, and emergency suspensions of in-person classes. This highlights the ongoing relevance of examining teacher wellbeing and performance under flexible modalities, as these structures are no longer temporary crisis responses but recurring features of school continuity planning. Taken together, these contributions demonstrate that the work goes beyond replication and provides empirical insights tailored to the evolving realities of the Philippine basic education system.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Job Demands–Resources Theory

This study is anchored on the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory, which provides a comprehensive model for understanding employee wellbeing and performance (Bakker &

Demerouti, 2014). The theory posits that all occupations have unique job characteristics classified into *demands* and *resources*. **Job demands** refer to aspects of work that require sustained effort and are therefore associated with physiological and psychological costs, such as workload, emotional strain, and role ambiguity. **Job resources**, on the other hand, refer to aspects that help reduce job demands, foster personal growth, and enhance motivation, including support from supervisors, autonomy, and fair remuneration. The JD-R model asserts that a balance between these two dimensions predicts both *wellbeing* and *performance*. When resources are sufficient to meet demands, employees experience engagement and satisfaction; when demands outweigh resources, burnout and reduced productivity occur.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the JD-R framework gained renewed relevance in education as teachers faced increasing workloads, technological pressures, and emotional fatigue while adapting to online and flexible learning systems (Collie, 2021). Studies across various contexts show that teacher wellbeing and motivation are mediated by available resources such as administrative support, collegial relationships, and access to learning technologies (Zhou et al., 2024). The theory, therefore, provides a fitting lens through which to examine how teachers maintained their professional functioning amid crisis conditions.

2.2. Empirical Studies on Job Demands, Wellbeing, and Performance

The pandemic amplified the demands of teaching, introducing new forms of workload and emotional labour. Teachers were expected to design and deliver learning materials remotely, communicate effectively with students and parents, and adjust to evolving institutional policies (Talidong & Toquero, 2020). These demands often led to heightened stress and exhaustion, negatively influencing both affective wellbeing (emotions and satisfaction) and cognitive wellbeing (self-perception and professional purpose) (WHO, 2020). In particular, emotional load, uncertainty about the future, and prolonged screen time were identified as critical stressors in teacher experiences, reducing energy levels and engagement (Martí-González, 2023).

Despite these pressures, the presence of job resources served as important buffers. Research highlights that teachers who received clear communication, supportive supervision, and adequate compensation demonstrated higher levels of job satisfaction and teaching performance (Collie, 2021; Zhou et al., 2024). These findings align with Bakker and Demerouti's (2014) assertion that resources foster motivation and protect against burnout. Within the Philippine context, the combination of emotional strain and limited institutional resources further underscored the need for organisational interventions to sustain teacher wellbeing (Díaz Lema, 2023).

Several empirical studies also highlight the central role of equitable remuneration in shaping teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and work quality (Boyce et al., 2010). These findings support the JD-R theory's proposition that resources such as fair compensation directly strengthen wellbeing and performance. In the Philippine context, compensation-related stress remains a persistent challenge, further reinforcing the need to understand how financial and organisational resources buffer high job demands. Synthesising these prior findings establishes a clearer link between international evidence and the present study.

2.3. Research Hypotheses

Guided by the JD-R framework, the study tested the following hypotheses:

- H1: Higher job demands are negatively associated with teachers' affective and cognitive wellbeing.
- H2: Higher job resources are positively associated with teachers' affective and cognitive wellbeing.

- H3: Selected job demands and job resources significantly predict teacher performance.

3. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a **quantitative, descriptive–correlational research design** to determine the relationship between job demands, job resources, and teachers' subjective wellbeing and performance. The design was appropriate for establishing statistical associations among the variables without manipulating any conditions. The study was conducted during School Years 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, a period that represented the height of the pandemic-induced transition to flexible learning in basic education.

3.1.1. Research Context and Participants

The study was carried out in a **private university in Northern Mindanao, Philippines**, focusing on its basic education unit. The institution adopted a flexible learning modality during the pandemic, combining online and modular approaches to sustain instruction. A total of **158 teachers** participated in the study. The respondents were drawn through **stratified random sampling**, ensuring representation across different grade levels and departments. Stratification was based on grade-level assignment (elementary, junior high school, senior high school) to ensure proportional representation. They included both **regular and probationary teachers**, with teaching experience ranging from one year to more than fifteen years. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from all respondents prior to data collection.

3.1.1.1. Ethical Considerations. Ethical standards were upheld throughout the study. Permissions were obtained from institutional authorities, and respondents were informed of the study's objectives, voluntary nature, and confidentiality of their responses. No personal identifiers were collected, and the data were used solely for academic purposes.

3.2. Instruments and Data Gathering Procedures

The study used **researcher-made questionnaires** adapted from validated instruments aligned with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model. The instrument was divided into three main sections: job demands, job resources, and subjective wellbeing. Teacher performance data were taken from the institution's annual performance appraisal.

3.2.1. Instrumentation

The **Job Demands and Resources Scale** was adapted from the work of Lequeurre et al. (2014) and contextualised for the Philippine basic education setting.

- The **Job Demands** component consisted of seven subscales, including workload, emotional load, mental load, physical effort, changes in tasks, uncertainty, and work-life balance.
- The **Job Resources** component included remuneration, autonomy, supervisor relationship, information, opportunities for development, and recognition. Subjective wellbeing was measured using affective and cognitive wellbeing items derived from Diener (1984) and Tov (2018). Teacher performance was assessed using institutional ratings that captured three domains: classroom performance, contributions to the school, and personal attributes. The instrument underwent content validation by experts and reliability testing, which yielded Cronbach's alpha

coefficients above 0.80 for all major scales. Prior to the main data collection, the instrument underwent pilot testing with 20 basic education teachers. Results indicated acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .82 to .91 across subscales. Feedback from the pilot group also informed minor wording adjustments to ensure clarity and contextual appropriateness.

3.2.1.1. Data Gathering and Analysis. Data were collected through online survey forms distributed via institutional communication channels. After cleaning and verifying the responses, the data were encoded and analysed using Jamovi, an open-source statistical software. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to summarise job demands, job resources, subjective wellbeing, and teacher performance. To address the research objectives, multiple linear regression analyses were performed to determine the extent to which job demands and job resources predicted teachers' affective and cognitive wellbeing, as well as their overall performance. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of $p < .05$.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Relationship between Job Demands and Subjective Wellbeing (H1)

Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). In this study, seven dimensions were examined: pace and amount of work, mental load, emotional load, physical effort, changes in tasks, ambiguities of work, and uncertainties about the future.

Multiple linear regression analyses were conducted using Jamovi to examine how these dimensions influence the subjective wellbeing of teachers, including both affective and cognitive wellbeing. Multicollinearity tests revealed a high correlation between emotional load and physical effort ($r = 0.69$); hence, the final models excluded one variable alternately to determine the best fit.

Table 1

Multiple Linear Regression Results for Job Demands and Teachers' Subjective Wellbeing

Dependent Variable	Significant Predictors	Direction of Effect	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
Affective Wellbeing	Emotional Load	Negative	0.32	68.27	$p \leq .01$
Cognitive Wellbeing	Pace & Amount of Work, Physical Effort, Ambiguities, Uncertainty	Negative	0.46	22.63	$p \leq .01$

Overall, job demands consistently showed negative associations with both wellbeing dimensions, aligning with JD–R predictions.

4.2. Relationship between Job Resources and Subjective Wellbeing (H2)

Job resources are aspects of work that support the achievement of goals, reduce job demands, and stimulate personal growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). This study assessed seven dimensions: information, communication, participation, relationship with colleagues, relationship with superiors, remuneration, and independence at work

Multicollinearity checks indicated that communication was highly correlated with participation ($r = .62$) and relationship with superiors ($r = .61$). After testing alternative models, the final one excluded communication and participation for affective wellbeing, and communication and relationship with colleagues for cognitive wellbeing.

Table 2

Multiple Linear Regression Results for Job Resources and Teachers' Subjective Wellbeing

Dependent Variable	Significant Predictors	Direction of Effect	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
Affective Wellbeing	Relationship with Superiors, Remuneration	Positive	0.18	18.11	$p \leq .01$
Cognitive Wellbeing	Participation, Remuneration	Positive	0.34	41.64	$p \leq .01$

The results show that **relationship with superiors** and **remuneration** positively predicted affective wellbeing, while **participation** and **remuneration** predicted cognitive wellbeing. This means that teachers who felt supported by their superiors and adequately remunerated experienced higher levels of happiness and satisfaction.

4.3. Job Demands and Resources as Predictors of Teacher Performance (H3)

Teacher performance in this study was assessed through indicators of classroom performance, departmental contribution, personal attributes, and overall performance. Regression analyses were conducted using Jamovi to determine whether job demands or job resources explained variations in these measures.

4.3.1. Job Demands and Performance

The regression results revealed no significant relationships between job demands and any aspect of teacher performance — classroom performance ($F = 1.07ns$), departmental contribution ($F = 1.19ns$), personal attributes ($F = 0.65ns$), and overall performance ($F = 1.16ns$).

4.3.2. Job Resources and Performance

When job resources were analysed, **remuneration** was found to significantly predict **classroom performance**, explaining 6% of the variance ($F = 8.93$, $p \leq .01$).

Table 3

Multiple Linear Regression Results for Job Resources and Teachers' Subjective Wellbeing

Dependent Variable	Significant Predictor	Direction Of Effect	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
Classroom Performance	Remuneration	Positive	0.06	8.93	$p \leq .01$
Departmental Contribution	None	—	—	1.41ns	—
Personal Attributes	None	—	—	0.51ns	—
Overall Performance	None	—	—	2.06ns	—

Remuneration emerged as an extrinsic motivator that improved teachers' classroom performance, particularly during the financial challenges of the pandemic.

4.4. Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the dual pathways of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory by Bakker and Demerouti (2014), which posits that excessive job demands lead to strain and reduced wellbeing, while adequate job resources enhance motivation and performance. Consistent with the strain pathway proposed in the JD-R model, results revealed that excessive workload, physical strain, role ambiguity, and uncertainty significantly diminished the affective and cognitive wellbeing of teachers. The demands associated with flexible learning environments during the pandemic—such as increased administrative load, unclear expectations, and prolonged screen time—likely intensified fatigue and emotional exhaustion (Alson, 2019; Cipriano & Brackett, 2020; Kazekami, 2020). These factors collectively drained teachers' psychological resources, reducing their ability to maintain a positive disposition and overall life satisfaction.

At the same time, the study validated the motivational pathway of the JD–R model, highlighting the protective role of job resources in sustaining wellbeing. Among the dimensions examined, remuneration emerged as the most influential, underscoring the financial and psychological value it holds for teachers—particularly in times of economic instability (Banu, 2025). Adequate remuneration not only alleviates financial stress but also serves as recognition of teachers' professional worth, which in turn fosters happiness and engagement. Similarly, supportive leadership was found to strengthen morale by building trust, providing clear direction, and maintaining emotional stability in periods of crisis (Banu, 2025). Leaders who demonstrate empathy and maintain open communication can reduce uncertainty and help teachers navigate organisational transitions with confidence.

Participation also surfaced as a vital component of teachers' wellbeing, especially their cognitive dimension. When teachers are invited to contribute to decision-making and institutional initiatives, they develop a stronger sense of ownership and competence (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). In the context of the research site, the collaborative culture and participatory management practices during the pandemic likely enhanced teachers' feelings of inclusion and fulfilment. This finding suggests that participatory structures—such as faculty consultations and shared planning—function as empowering mechanisms that buffer the negative impact of job demands. Altogether, job resources such as remuneration, supportive leadership, and participatory engagement serve as essential counterbalances to occupational stressors, promoting wellbeing even under challenging educational conditions.

As for teacher performance, the results revealed an intriguing pattern. Despite high job demands and the disruptions brought by the pandemic, teachers maintained consistent levels of performance. This resilience reflects their intrinsic motivation, adaptability (Yang et al., 2023), emotional intelligence (Rendeza, 2024), and coping competencies (Hidalgo-Andrade et al., 2021). Contrary to the JD-R model's prediction that high demands may impede performance, the results suggest that teachers' internal resources, such as commitment to vocation and professional identity, enabled them to sustain effectiveness.

Meanwhile, remuneration was found to significantly predict classroom performance, illustrating how extrinsic rewards can reinforce intrinsic motivation. Teachers who received bonuses and subsidies expressed gratitude and heightened enthusiasm, which translated into improved instructional delivery. This reinforces the unique relevance of financial support during prolonged educational disruptions. However, the absence of significant effects of other job resources on broader performance indicators, such as departmental contribution and personal attributes, implies that performance outcomes are shaped not only by organisational support but also by individual dispositions and institutional ethos.

Taken together, these findings underscore the nuanced nature of the JD–R framework in educational settings. While job demands clearly impair wellbeing, job resources can buffer

their effects and sustain motivation. Yet, performance appears to rely on a more complex interaction between extrinsic supports and intrinsic values such as commitment, purpose, and resilience. Thus, the results suggest that fostering teacher wellbeing and performance in flexible learning environments requires a dual focus: mitigating excessive demands while simultaneously cultivating empowering resources through fair compensation, supportive leadership, and participatory culture.

4.5. Recommendations and Directions for Future Research

Educational institutions are encouraged to strengthen leadership development programmes that prioritise teacher support, clear communication, and participatory decision-making. Policymakers and administrators should review remuneration schemes and benefit systems to ensure that teachers are fairly compensated, particularly in light of the additional workload and expenses associated with flexible learning. Teacher formation programmes may also include wellbeing and self-regulation modules to enhance coping skills and emotional resilience.

Future research could expand the JD-R model by incorporating mediating or moderating variables such as organisational climate, teacher engagement, or digital competency to better explain performance outcomes. Comparative studies across private and public school contexts or longitudinal designs could also offer deeper insights into how wellbeing and performance evolve beyond pandemic-driven educational changes.

5. Conclusion

This study underscores the profound truth that teaching is both a professional and human endeavor—one that thrives not merely on intellectual rigor but on emotional balance, institutional support, and a deep sense of purpose. The findings reveal that while job demands such as workload, ambiguity, and uncertainty can erode teachers' wellbeing, these challenges are counterbalanced by the sustaining power of job resources, particularly remuneration, participative leadership, and collegial trust. Even in times of crisis, teachers demonstrated remarkable resilience and commitment, suggesting that intrinsic motivation and community culture are as vital as structural resources. The insights drawn from this study affirm the dynamic relevance of the Job Demands–Resources framework in understanding teacher wellbeing and performance in flexible and digital learning environments. As flexible learning continues beyond the pandemic, the findings highlight the need for educational leaders to create systems that value both productivity and personhood. These insights reinforce the need for educational institutions to balance job demands with adequate resources to sustain teacher wellbeing. Strengthening support structures and compensation systems remains essential as flexible learning continues to evolve. Future research may compare teacher wellbeing and performance before, during, and after the pandemic, or examine how evolving learning modalities shape job demands and resources across different school types. Incorporating moderators such as school climate, technological readiness, or teacher engagement may also deepen understanding of the JD-R mechanisms in Philippine education.

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Conflict of Interest Statement: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Ethics Statement:

This study involved human participants using their performance evaluation records and responses from the survey provided to them, which were accessed and utilised only upon their informed consent. Ethics approval for the conduct of this research was obtained from the appropriate institutional review board prior to data collection, and all procedures adhered to ethical standards for research involving human participants.

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