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WORK ENVIRONMENT AND RESILIENCE AS PREDICTORS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHERS

Elseri Marie D. Llemit
Holy Cross of Davao College, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Psychological well-being of teachers is a serious issue. Aimed of this study was to determine the significance of work environment and resilience on early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being. A descriptive correlation design was used, and 107 samples were selected via simple random sampling. Both factors significantly predicted teacher well-being, with the work environment as the stronger predictor. Hence, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model was affirmed, stating that job demands and job resources affect employee well-being. Future research in early childhood education may explore several key areas to deepen the understanding of how the work environment and resilience impact teachers' psychological well-being.

KEYWORDS: *Work Environment, Resilience, Predictors of Psychological Well-Being, Public School, Early Childhood Education Teachers*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Problem and Its Setting

The poor psychological well-being of teachers is a global concern. Across many countries, teachers are experiencing declining psychological well-being, which not only affects their overall mental health but also contributes to unprecedented attrition (UNESCO, 2020; D'Sa et al., 2023). Yin, Lee, and Lee (2020) found that teachers consistently have low levels of psychological well-being. This trend was confirmed by the World Health Organization (2021), which highlighted educators are a population vulnerable to poor psychological well-being.

In Australia, recent findings show that more than half of the teaching workforce is experiencing poor psychological well-being (Carey, 2024; Corbett et al., 2024). Similarly, in the United Kingdom, a large-scale survey revealed poor psychological well-being among teachers (Weale, 2024; Jerrim et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, poor psychological well-being among teachers has been recognized as a serious issue over the years. Teachers have faced significant challenges to their psychological well-being. (Markow et al., 2020; Talidong, 2020; Asuncion et al., 2024). Orin et al. (2023) found that work-related burnout significantly negatively predicts psychological well-being among public school teachers in Quezon City.

The quality of teachers' instruction and practice is at risk, as those struggling with poor mental health can hardly operate effectively in the classroom (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Burić & Kim, 2020). This long-term problem leads to exhaustion, lowers teachers' confidence in their abilities, and makes it harder to manage student behavior (Carroll et al., 2021; Hester, Bridges, & Rollins, 2020; Capone & Petrillo, 2020). These negative effects on well-being pose the urgency of this study. Additionally, there is limited research published about the psychological well-being of teachers; thus, this study was conducted.

Significance of the Study

Early childhood teachers play a crucial role in the development and learning of young children. The findings of this study may provide ample understanding of the psychological well-being of early childhood education teachers, which may directly affect their ability to provide high-quality education and care. Additionally, studying teacher well-being may inform the development of better professional support systems and training programs. This may help these educators manage stress, develop coping strategies, and improve job satisfaction. Addressing well-being can reduce burnout, absenteeism, and job dissatisfaction, leading to a more productive and engaged workforce. Further, the findings of this study may provide valuable insights for policymakers and administrators to design and implement supportive policies, such as improved working conditions, mental health resources, and professional development opportunities.

Broadly, this study supported the provisions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as it highlights the critical link between teacher well-being and sustainable education systems. Aligned with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), the study emphasizes that fostering supportive work environments and building teacher resilience are essential for maintaining educators' mental health, enhancing the quality of early childhood education, and ensuring gender-sensitive and decent work conditions, particularly in a

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profession primarily comprised of women. By addressing these factors, the study may contribute to a more sustainable, inclusive, and effective educational system that supports educators and learners.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the significance of work environment and resilience on early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being. Specifically, it pursued the following objectives:

1. To determine the levels of early childhood teachers' work environment in terms of organizational encouragement, workgroup encouragement, teaching impediments, and workload pressure; the level of resilience of early childhood teachers in terms of relationships outside the school environment, relationships within the school environment; teacher values and beliefs; and emotional and behavioral competence; and determine the extent of early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being as indicated by autonomy; environmental mastery; personal growth; positive relations; purpose in life; and self-acceptance.
2. To determine the significance of the correlation between early childhood education teachers' work environment and resilience and psychological well-being.
3. To determine the significance of the combined degree of influence of early childhood education teachers' work environment and resilience to psychological well-being.

Hypotheses

To objectively answer the problem of this study, the following hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: Work environment and resilience do not significantly correlate early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being.

Ho2: Work environment and resilience do not significantly influence early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being.

Theoretical Framework

This study was viewed from the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model. JD-R theory is a unifying job design theory that integrates various job stress and motivational perspectives (Bakker & Demerouti 2017; Van Veldhoven et al. 2020). In short, the theory explains how job demands and resources influence job performance through employee well-being (including burnout and work engagement) and how employees use proactive as well as reactive work behaviors to influence job demands and resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker et al., 2014).

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model provides a robust and theoretically grounded framework for guiding the study "Work Environment and Resilience as Predictors of Psychological Well-being of Public School Early Childhood Education Teachers" by effectively capturing the dynamic interplay between job demands and available resources in shaping employee well-being. In the context of early childhood education, teachers often face high emotional, cognitive, and physical demands, including heavy workloads, emotional labor, and challenging classroom behaviors, which can jeopardize their psychological well-being. The JD-R model posits that while excessive demands can lead to burnout and stress, the presence of job and personal resources, such as supportive work environments and personal resilience, can buffer these effects and enhance well-being. By applying this model, the study can systematically examine how specific environmental and personal factors mitigate the adverse effects of job stressors, offering actionable insights for promoting teacher well-being and sustainability in the education workforce.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows that the independent variables are work environment and resilience. The work environment is indicated by organizational encouragement, supervisory encouragement, workgroup encouragement, teaching impediments, and workload pressure. Resilience is indicated by relationships outside and within the school environment, teacher values and beliefs, and emotional and behavioral competence. The dependent variable is the psychological well-being of early childhood education teachers as indicated by autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

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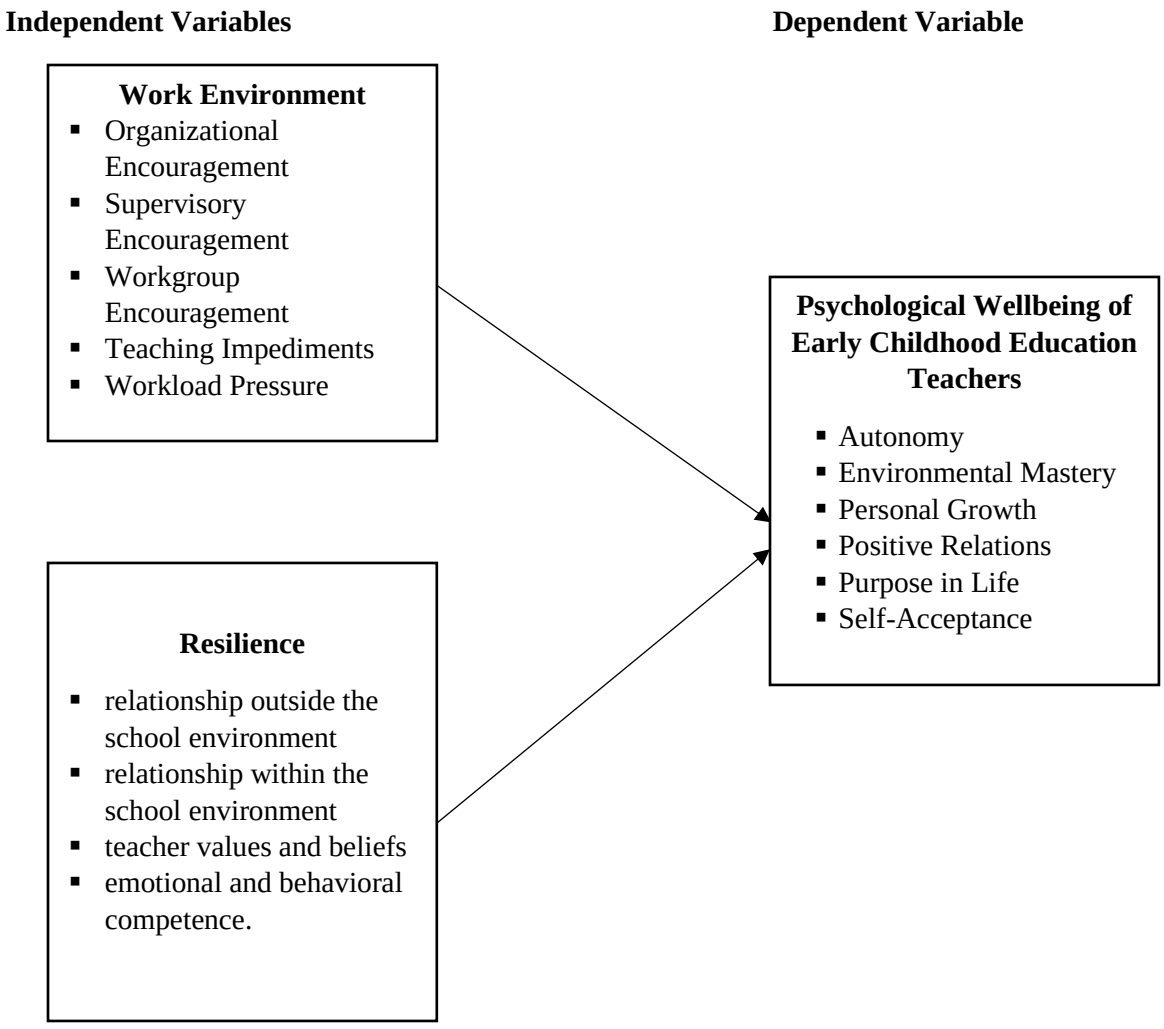


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

This section presents the researcher's approach to conducting the study. The scope of the discussion includes the research design, research respondents, research instruments and methodologies used in data gathering, and the statistical tools for analysis.

Research Design

The study employed a non-experimental quantitative research design with a descriptive-correlational approach. This approach was suited for the study because the researcher described the level of early childhood education teachers' work environment, resilience, and psychological well-being. Additionally, the researcher investigated the relationship between the variables in a natural setting without any manipulation or control. A descriptive research design was used for various research methods to investigate one or more variables (Combes, 2023). Descriptive research was an appropriate choice when the research aim was to identify mean and standard deviation. On the other hand, correlational research assessed the strength and direction of associations between variables by analyzing how changes in one variable were related to changes in another (Williams, 2011).

Locale of the Study

This study on the well-being of early childhood education teachers conducted in Digos City, Davao del Sur, aimed to explore the factors that impacted educators' professional and personal wellness in this urban area. Digos City's unique blend of urban and rural characteristics presented a distinct context for understanding how local educational practices, community expectations, and resource availability influenced teachers' overall psychological well-being. By focusing on this locale, the research sought to uncover challenges and stressors specific to this locality, such as workload, job satisfaction, and access to professional development opportunities. Additionally, the study examined the support systems in place, including administrative backing and community involvement, and how these affected teachers' psychological well-being.

Sample and Sampling

The research respondents of the study were 107 early childhood education teachers who were trained in public schools under the

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supervision of the Department of Education, Digos City Division. They were selected using simple random sampling. This type of sampling allowed each member of the population of early childhood education teachers to have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This technique provided an unbiased and better estimate of the parameters since the population was homogeneous.

Research Instruments

The study utilized an adapted 5-point Likert survey questionnaire. The first part of this data-gathering tool was an adapted work environment questionnaire by Masoom (2021). The scale, mean range, description, and interpretation of the scaled responses are subsequently shown.

Scale	Mean Range	Description	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very High	The work environment is excellent.
4	3.40 – 4.19	High	The work environment is very good.
3	2.60 – 3.39	Moderate	The work environment is good.
2	1.80 – 2.59	Low	The work environment is poor.
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	The work environment is very poor.

The second part of this data-gathering tool was an adapted resilience scale developed by Daniilidou and Platsidou (2024). The scale, mean range, description, and interpretation of the scaled responses are subsequently shown.

The third part of this data-gathering tool was an adapted Psychological Well-being Scale by Ryff (1989). The scale, mean range, description, and interpretation of the scaled responses are subsequently show

Scale	Mean Range	Description	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very High	Psychological well-being is excellent.
4	3.40 – 4.19	High	Psychological well-being is very good.
3	2.60 – 3.39	Moderate	Psychological well-being is good.
2	1.80 – 2.59	Low	Psychological well-being is poor.
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	Psychological well-being is very poor.

The survey questionnaires were subjected to experts' validation and subsequently pilot-tested. Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and performs as it is designed to perform (Biddix, 2024). The data from the pilot test was subjected to reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha as the reliability index. The reliability results were acceptable (Tavakol et al., 2008) since the test index for the work environment is .910, resilience is .909, and psychological well-being is .962.

Data Gathering Procedure

The following procedures were observed to obtain sufficient information from the research respondents:

Asking for Permission to Conduct the Study. The researcher acquired the certificate of approval from the Research and Ethics Committee (REC). Additionally, an endorsement letter from the Office of the Dean of the Graduate was secured, which was attached to the letter of intent to conduct a study submitted for the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the Department of Education Davao City Division. The approved permission letter was then attached to the letter for school heads to facilitate the administration of the survey questionnaires to the study's respondents.

Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered through Google Forms. Before this, the researcher explained the purpose and contents of the questionnaires to the respondents through a virtual platform, ensuring that they fully understood the purpose of the study and their rights before responding to the online survey. The researcher then secured the informed consent. In responding to the online survey, the respondents were given sufficient time to comprehend and complete the survey questionnaires. After the respondents answered all the items, the researcher saved the collected survey questionnaires in a password-protected computer file.

Gathering and Tabulation of Data. After gathering data from the respondents, the researcher sorted, tallied, and organized all the information. The data was then statistically analyzed to extract meaningful insights. The resulting statistical findings were examined and interpreted. Finally, the researcher derived conclusions from the statistical information and offered recommendations.

Data Analysis

The statistical methods used for data analysis and interpretation included the mean, which was employed to gauge the work environment, resilience, and psychological health of early childhood education teachers stationed in public schools. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was also applied to ascertain the correlation between work environment, resilience, and psychological health. Multiple linear regression was used to test the significance of the combined influence of work environment and resilience on psychological health.

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Measuring the strength of the correlation. In measuring the strength of correlation, this study utilized the standard scheme. For the r-value, the following scheme is used:

Computed r	Descriptive Interpretation
+/- 1.00	Perfect correlation
Between +/- 0.75 - +/- 0.99	High correlation
Between +/- 0.51 - +/- 0.74	Moderately high correlation
Between +/- 0.31 - +/- 0.50	Moderately low correlation
Between +/- 0.01 - +/- 0.30	Low correlation
0.00	No correlation

Measuring the statistical significance. In measuring the statistical significance of the results, the significance level of 0.05 was used. Indicating that if $p>0.05$, the results are extremely less than 5% of the time. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected, hence results are statistically significant. On the other hand, if the $p<0.05$, the results are extreme more than 5% of the time. This means that the null hypothesis is accepted; hence, the results are not statistically significant.

Ethical Considerations

This study highlighted several ethical concerns regarding informed consent, confidentiality, and potential psychological impact. It was important to ensure that respondents fully comprehended the purpose and procedures of the study before agreeing to take part, emphasizing that their involvement was voluntary and they could opt out at any time without facing the consequences. Preserving confidentiality was crucial, as respondents might have disclosed sensitive information about their experiences and difficulties; therefore, data should have been de-identified to safeguard their identities. Moreover, the research needed to be attentive to the potential emotional impact on respondents when discussing their psychological well-being, ensuring access to support resources if the study triggered distressing emotions or reflections. Hence, prioritizing these ethical considerations promoted a respectful and supportive research environment.

CHAPTER 3

Results

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. Specifically presented here are the descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, as well as the summary of findings.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 is the descriptive Analysis. Contained in the tables are the variables, including their corresponding indicators. The variables are organizational encouragement, supervisory encouragement, workgroup encouragement, teaching impediments, and workload pressure. Specifically, contained also are the number of samples, standard deviation, mean, and descriptive level.

Table 1. Descriptive Table

Variables	n	Std. Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Level
Work Environment		**.51**	**4.17**	**High**
Organizational Encouragement		.50	4.52	Very high
Supervisory Encouragement		.51	4.37	Very high
Workgroup Encouragement		.44	4.60	Very high
Teaching Impediments		1.01	3.77	High
Workload Pressure		1.08	3.58	High
Resilience		**.47**	**4.36**	**Very High**
Relationship Outside the School Environment		.59	4.34	Very high
Emotional and Behavioral Competence		.50	4.40	Very high
Teacher Values and Beliefs		.51	4.54	Very high

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Relationship Within the School Environment	.68	4.17	High
Psychological Well-being	**.74**	**3.78**	**High**
Autonomy	.76	3.90	High
Environmental Mastery	.75	3.83	High
Personal Growth	.81	3.82	High
Positive Relations	.68	4.13	High
Purpose in Life	.89	3.32	Moderate
Self-Acceptance	.54	4.19	High

The table shows that the work environment variable obtained an overall mean of 4.17, which is described as high level. It denotes that the work environment is very good. All its indicators, organizational encouragement, supervisory encouragement, and workgroup encouragement obtained a mean described as very high level. Teaching impediments and workload pressure obtained a mean described as high.

The resilience variable obtained an overall mean of 4.36, which is described as a very high level. It denotes that resilience is extremely strong. All its indicators, relationship outside the school environment, emotional and behavioral competence, teacher values and beliefs obtained a mean described as very high level, and the relationship between the school environment obtained a mean described as high level.

The psychological well-being variable obtained an overall mean of 3.78, which is described as a high level. This indicates that early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being is very good. One of its indicators obtained a corresponding mean described as moderate level, while the other obtained a corresponding mean described as high level.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 is a correlation table. It contained the predictive variables involved in the study, namely work environment, resilience, and early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being. It also contains the r-values, p-values, the decision on the hypothesis, and the corresponding descriptive level.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

Predictor Variables	**Psychological Well-being**			
	***r*-value**	***p*-value**	**Decision on Ho**	**Interpretation**
Work Environment	.688**	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Resilience	.455**	.000	Reject Ho	Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Specifically, the table shows a correlation between work environment and psychological well-being obtained a p-value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that the correlation between these two variables is statistically significant. Furthermore, the r-value of .688 obtained indicates a moderately high correlation.

On the other hand, the correlation between resilience and psychological well-being also obtained a p-value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This signifies that the correlation between these two variables is statistically significant. Furthermore, the r-value of .455 obtained indicates a moderately high correlation.

Finally, the positive correlation between the predictive variables and criterion variable implies that the very unit change in the first, there is a corresponding positive unit charge in the latter.

Regression Analysis

Table 3 is a regression table. It contains the predictive variables involved in the study, namely work environment, resilience, and early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being. It also contains the r-values, p-values, the decision on the hypothesis, and interpretation.

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Table 3. Table of Degree of Influence

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
	B	Std. Error				
(Constant)	-.792	.522	-1.516	.133		
Work Environment	.889	.119	7.494	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Resilience	.199	.130	1.530	.129	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Note: R= .696; R-Square = .485, F = 48.949; p = .000

Table 3 is the Regression Table. It shows that the work environment obtained a coefficient of .889, signifying that it has an 88.9% degree of influence on the early childhood education work environment. With a p-value of .000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that the 88.9% degree of work environment is significant. This implies that for every unit increase in the work environment, there is a corresponding .889 unit increase in early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being.

Additionally, resilience obtained a coefficient of .119, signifying that it has a 19.9% degree of influence on early childhood education teachers' resilience. With a p-value of .000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that the 19.9% degree of resilience is not significant. This implies that for every unit increase in early childhood education teacher's resilience, there is a corresponding .199 unit decrease in early childhood education teachers' psychological well-being.

Overall, with the R-squared measure of 0.485, it is indicated that the two predictive variables have a 48.5% combined degree of influence on psychological well-being. With the corresponding obtained p-value of 0.000, which is less than the confidence level, it indicates that said combined degree of influence is significant.

Summary of Findings

1. The work environment is very good, resilience is extremely strong, and psychological well-being among early childhood teachers is very good.
2. There is a significant moderately high correlation between work environment and psychological well-being, and between resilience and psychological well-being.
3. Work environment significantly influences, while resilience does not significantly influence psychological well-being among early childhood education teachers.

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

The results of the study are discussed in this chapter. The following is the sequence of presentations: Very Good Work Environment of Early Childhood Teachers, Extremely Strong Resilience of Early Childhood Teachers, Very Good Psychological Well-Being of Early Childhood Teachers, Very Good Work Environment of Early Childhood Education Teachers on Psychological Well-being, Extremely Strong Resilience of Early Childhood Teachers on Psychological Well-being, and Significant Influence of Predictor Variables on the Criterion Variable. Included in this chapter are the conclusion and the recommendations.

Very Good Work Environment of Early Childhood Teachers

The teacher has a very good work environment. This study affirms the study by Kwon et al. (2020) and Adamopoulos and Syrou (2022), who found that teachers who view their work environment as supportive and empowering report higher psychological well-being. Additionally, Jones et al. (2020) emphasized that when teachers' psychological needs are supported, their overall workplace well-being significantly improves.

However, this finding contradicts the study of Aden et al. (2022), who found that the work environment had a slight effect on teachers' psychological well-being compared to factors like leadership and motivation. Similarly, the findings contradict the study of BMC Psychology (2025), which showed that intrinsic motivation and personal fulfillment mattered more for teachers' mental health than the work environment.

Extremely Strong Resilience of Early Childhood Teachers

It is found in this study that early childhood education teachers have a high level of resilience, which affirms the findings of Diab and Green (2024), who noted that teachers could cope with stress and maintain a positive outlook. It also aligns with the study of Fullerton et al. (2021), who defined resilience as the ability to recover from hardship, an essential factor for maintaining psychological well-being.

On the other hand, this finding contradicts the recent research of Berger et al. (2022), who found that despite showing resilience, early childhood educators still experienced high levels of stress during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating that resilience alone is insufficient without broader support. This finding also contradicts the study of Fulchini (2022), who stated that resilience-building programs had minimal impact on educators' psychological well-being due to issues such as long program durations and participant dropout.

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Very Good Psychological Well-Being of Early Childhood Teachers

This study corroborates the study of Harju-Luukkainen et al. (2021), who said that teachers working in nurturing and collegial school environments exhibited higher psychological well-being. Likewise, the study of Whitaker et al. (2021) showed that teachers with strong self-efficacy and professional support are more engaged and mentally healthy. All these were affirmed by the result of this study that early childhood education teachers have high levels of psychological well-being.

On the contrary, these findings contradict the study of Lee et al. (2022), who found that even teachers who were resilient and had a good work environment still reported only average or low psychological well-being. These findings also contradict the study of Leung and Shek (2021), who showed that teachers may still feel mentally and emotionally exhausted during long-term challenges, such as education changes or the COVID-19 crisis.

Very Good Work Environment of Early Childhood Education Teachers on Psychological Well-being

A very good work environment for early childhood education teachers on psychological well-being corroborates the study of Byun and Jeon (2022), who found that a supportive work environment helps reduce stress and increases teachers' professional commitment. Furthermore, these findings agree with the study of Kim and Park (2021), who revealed that positive workplace relationships significantly enhance early childhood teachers' psychological well-being, promoting resilience.

Conversely, the findings contradict the study of Jeon et al. (2022), who found that the connection between psychological well-being and work environment differs depending on the country, suggesting that culture and other outside factors may affect the results. Moreover, it also contradicts the study of Bezie et al. (2025), who stated that despite the presence of supportive work environments, many early childhood education teachers experienced significant work-related burnout, which affected their psychological well-being.

Extremely Strong Resilience of Early Childhood Teachers on Psychological Well-being

Extremely strong resilience of early childhood teachers on psychological well-being aligns with the study of Gómez-Herrera et al. (2025), who stated that higher levels of resilience, especially when paired with emotional intelligence, lead to better mental health and psychological well-being among early childhood professionals.

However, these findings contradict the study of Halliday, Kern, and Turnbull (2021), who found that programs designed to build resilience often had weak or short-term effects, meaning resilience alone might not improve well-being. Additionally, it contradicts the study of Whitaker, Dearth-Wesley, and Herman (2023), who also found that teachers with difficult childhood experiences felt worse over time if they did not get support, even if they were resilient.

Significant Influence of Work Environment and Resilience on Early Childhood Education Teacher's Psychological Well-being

This study found that the work environment and resilience significantly influence the psychological well-being of early childhood education teachers. This study affirms the study of Byun and Jeon (2022), who found that a positive and supportive work environment significantly predicts professional commitment and well-being among ECE teachers. Similarly, it also aligns with the study of Cumming and Wong (2019), who emphasized that psychological well-being is shaped not only by individual resilience but also by the broader workplace context.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that the work environment, having a 48.5% combined degree of influence, is a significant determinant of the psychological well-being of early childhood education teachers. The other predictive variable, resilience in the work environment, is not a significant predictor. Hence, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model was supported, stating that job demands and job resources affect employee well-being.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the replication of this study may be done utilizing other variables to account for the remaining 51.5% variance in psychological well-being. Furthermore, the enhancement of professional development programs on work environment and resilience in the work environment may be prioritized in the educational field. These prioritizations may improve the psychological well-being of teachers. Qualitative research may be undertaken to find additional themes to be used as potential variables needed in accounting for the remaining variance.

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