



Expatriate Teachers' Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace – An Overview of Strategies for Improved Brain Health and Mental Wellbeing

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1.INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce the concept of brain health and the focus group of teachers for the purpose of this thesis. It will also introduce the research questions which will be central to this study.

1.1 Background

Moving abroad can be a daunting task. For teachers, they must settle into new schools, curriculum, customs and routines that can be in stark contrast to their lives at home. Settling into a new country comes with many challenges and this can impact the mental health and wellbeing of anybody. Teachers are no different.

In 2018, teachers in Dubai reported some of the highest stress levels across countries participating in the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). Some of the factors contributing to this included heavy workloads, significant pressure from school management and parents and employment instability. (OECD, 2021)

Happy teachers lead to happy students. Teachers' and students' well-being can be considered two sides of the same coin. It is considered by a lot of researchers as an essential ingredient for building human capacity in a first-rate educational

system. Therefore, the need to improve teacher's well-being is essential within the education industry. (Bashaireh and David 2019).

Job satisfaction will lead to increased motivation and contentment in the workplace. Not only this but the OECD reports that teachers with high levels of well-being tend to have better job performance and are better able to support school improvement (OECD, 2019). In contrast, teachers that experience high levels of stress report lower levels of self-efficacy, job satisfaction and commitment and are more likely to leave the profession (OECD, 2021)

Teacher well-being is an intricate and multifaceted concept. It has been construed not only as the absence of negative conditions like stress, demotivation, and burnout (Huertas and Dávila, 2020; Bastías, 2021) but has also been explored in relation to coping strategies, engagement, and post-work recovery (Pöysä et al., 2021) (García-Álvarez, D., Soler, M., and Achard-Braga, L., 2021).

1.2 Teacher attrition in the UAE

In international schools, transience is a common characteristic as educators often return to their home countries or seek new horizons in other destinations. Notably, teacher attrition in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a prevalent concern, with fewer than one-third of educators (29%) remaining at the same school for six years or longer (KHDA, 2021).

According to TALIS 2018 data, the desire to switch to a different school is expressed by 41% of teachers in Dubai, exceeding the UAE average (38%) and doubling the OECD average (20%) (OECD, 2020). Moreover, 26% of teachers under the age of 51 in Dubai aspire to leave the teaching profession within the next five years, significantly higher than the OECD average of 14%. While it is beneficial to introduce newly qualified teachers each year, high turnover rates can often be associated with issues such as poor leadership and challenging working conditions.

A 2011 study revealed that the retention of school principals in the Middle East is among the lowest globally, with an average longevity of three years, compared to a worldwide average of 3.7 years. Interestingly, Africa outperforms the Middle East in this regard, with an average of 3.5 years (Which School Advisor, 2022).

1.3 Research Context

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the mental health and well-being of expatriate teachers in the UAE and explore how the cultivation of self-leadership skills can provide support and improvement in this context.

The Sustainable Brain Health Project is a three year multidisciplinary project coordinated by Tampere University of Applied Sciences (hereafter TAMK). TAMK

is partnering in the project with Oulu University of Applied Sciences (OAMK), Pirkanmaa Hospital District and the Behavioural Neurology Research Unit at Tampere University Hospital (TAYS). The project runs from 1st March 2020 to 31st August 2023 and is funded by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health from the European Social Fund's (ESF) Programme for Sustainable Growth and Jobs 2014 – 2020 Finnish Structural Fund. Masters students at TAMK were offered the opportunity to carry out comparative studies in their own countries to compare to Finnish results of this project.

The project's primary goal is to improve the well-being of employees in the workplace, with a specific focus on managing cognitive, mental, ethical, and information-related burdens. This initiative is primarily directed toward teachers, healthcare professionals, and IT professionals. Key objectives include empowering participants to take charge of their own well-being and establishing protocols to foster lasting brain health. (Kestävä aivoterveys, 2022)

1.4 Research Questions

This thesis aims to explore the workplace mental well-being of expatriate teachers in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and to identify strategies for its enhancement.

This involves the promotion of self-leadership skills and the cultivation of a sense of community among expatriate teachers. The central focus of this thesis is to address the following inquiry: **"What factors contribute to the well-being of expatriate teachers in the UAE workplace?"**

Subsequently, the study will delve into the following sub-questions:

- 1.How do expatriate teachers perceive their self-leadership skills?"**
- 2.What are the motivators that drive expatriate teachers in their work?"**
- 3.How can understanding of brain health improve the happiness of expatriate teachers?**
- 4.What leadership actions contribute to the positive wellbeing of expatriate teachers?**

A mixed methods research approach is adopted in this study. The perceptions of expatriate teachers are explored through survey research and analysis.

Closed-ended questions are subjected to quantitative analysis through survey questions, while qualitative methods are employed through open-ended survey questions. This thesis seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing expatriate teachers' mental well-being in the workplace, both hindrances and supports and equip teachers with self-leadership strategies to improve their brain health.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis will establish a theoretical framework for the research topic by defining the concept of mental well-being in the workplace and analysing the psychosocial workload factors that can detrimentally impact brain health and occupational well-being. Additionally, the thesis will provide comprehensive definitions of essential constructs, including self-leadership, intrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy. Furthermore, it will offer insights into measures fostering a supportive

work community, such as shared leadership and leadership practices that promote a sense of community. Once the theoretical foundation is laid, the thesis will proceed to outline the methodology utilized in the study, subsequently presenting the findings derived from the collected data. Finally, the thesis will engage in a discourse regarding the primary discoveries and their potential implications for enhancing the mental well-being of expatriate teachers in the workplace. The study's limitations will be acknowledged, and recommendations for future research will be deliberated.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section will discuss and review the published literature and theories related to brain health, self-leadership and wellbeing and how they can be applied to the education sector.

2.1 Defining Mental Well-Being at Work

This section discusses the current research in defining mental well-being in the education sector workplace.

The World Health Organisation describes mental health as a “state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (WHO, 2022).

The OECD conceptual framework defines teacher well-being as “teachers’ responses to the cognitive, emotional, health and social conditions pertaining to their work and their profession” (Viac and Fraser, 2020). This is based on the concept of “occupational well-being”, which refers to the meaning and satisfaction that individuals get from their work. (OECD, 2021)

The teacher occupational wellbeing framework identifies four dimensions of teachers' wellbeing:

Cognitive well-being: this encompasses processes such as attention, the development of knowledge, judgement and evaluation, problem solving and decision-making.

Subjective well-being: this refers to good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives and the affective reactions of people to their experiences. It addresses topics such as satisfaction with the working environment and sense of purpose with the work.

Physical and mental well-being: this addresses psychosomatic symptoms and complaints experienced at work.

Social well-being: this refers to the quality and depth of teachers' social interactions with their peers, school management staff, parents and students.

As outlined above, number of **external factors** shape teachers' working conditions and can affect their well-being. This includes, primarily, the quality of teachers' working environment, which can be broken down into job demands (e.g. workload, performance evaluation) and job resources (e.g. training opportunities, level of autonomy). Factors at the system level, such as the teaching career structure and material conditions, also matter for teachers. Policies and practices must therefore act on and take into consideration the external factors that support (or hinder) teachers' well-being. (OECD, 2021)

According to a 2015 WHO report, the UAE recorded the highest level of depression among all countries at Eastern Mediterranean Region with 5.1% of the population suffering from the disease and around 354,000 cases of anxiety recorded in the same year. Studies performed in the UAE however indicate anxiety and depression are the leading cause of 75% of the mental health disorders in the country (World Health Organisation, 2017).

2.2 Psychosocial workload factors

Teaching in an international setting can be a highly stressful job. Most schools are private with parents paying high fees and the demands on teachers are high. On average, in 2018, teachers in Dubai reported some of the highest stress levels cross countries participating in the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), and many complain of heavy workloads, significant pressure from school management and parents, as well as employment instability. (OECD, 2022)

Psychosocial workload factors refer to factors relating to the content of work and work arrangements as well as the social dynamics of the work community that can have a harmful impact on employees' health. Factors that can contribute to work-related strain include, for example,

- workloads that are either too high or too low

- unreasonably tight deadlines
- irregular working hours, such as shift work, night work or constantly having to be on call, excessive work-related travel outside of working hours or not having a fixed place of work,
- inappropriate work equipment or working conditions, and
- unclear job descriptions, targets or responsibilities or an unclear division of responsibilities.

(Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, 2022)

These stressful factors, many of which are present in the fast-paced world of international private schools can lead to teacher burnout and high levels of teacher attrition.

The organisational characteristics that predict teacher's burnout include:

- environmental conditions such as crowded classrooms and constant noise
 - factors related to the education system, such as bureaucracy and limitations on teachers' autonomy
 - social factors such as decreased professional prestige and low income
- (Schneider-Levi et al, 2021)

The concept of burnout has been defined as a response to persistent emotional stress leading to reduced coping resources of an individual. The three components of burnout are emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment and depersonalisation. Emotional exhaustion is the main component and it represents a lack of mental resources due to emotional overload. Depersonalisation refers to the feeling of alienation and negative attitude towards the surroundings. Decreased personal accomplishment refers to a person's inability to produce desirable results due to a lack of external resources (e.g., feedback and evaluation) as well as internal resourcefulness (e.g., enthusiasm and interest). Burnout was found to be a chronic and progressive state, unlike temporal exhaustion, which passes after a short rest (Schneider-Levi et al, 2021).

2.3 Workplace measures promoting mental well-being.

Research suggests teacher's well-being impacts student's academic outcome and well-being and is affected by the school's leadership. In a city that strives to have happy citizens and be among the best countries in the world, teacher's well-being is essential for schools to succeed and achieve a first-rate education and fulfill Dubai's vision and educational agenda. (Bashaireh and David, 2019)

Before a Dubai school's yearly inspection (by the Knowledge, Health and Development Authority – the governing body of education in Dubai), all staff are sent an anonymous wellbeing survey.

This provides all staff at school with a tool to help them understand their own wellbeing and how to take responsibility for it. Summaries of the survey results provide school leaders with an understanding of the wellbeing of their staff to use as evidence in their school improvement plans. A focus on staff wellbeing will drive improvements in student wellbeing and help Dubai in its vision to be the happiest city in the world. (KHDA, 2022)

It is unclear whether staff really are honest in this survey knowing that results as a whole will be sent to school leadership. Is it worth reporting your low sense of wellbeing if you don't feel that it will change?

2.4 Self – Leadership

The idea of self-leadership was first coined by Charles Manz in the 1980s. Before that, leadership research focused on how leaders influence followers.

Self – leadership involves a self- involves a self- directed influence process and a range of tactics that tackle both the “what”, “why” and “how” of accomplishing tasks. This approach integrates intrinsic motivation and places a heightened emphasis on cognitive processes. (Stewart, Courtright and Manz, 2010.)

Self-leading employees have more positive experiences at work. They also tend to have higher productivity and more fulfilling careers. (Stewart, Courtright, Manz, 2010).

Behavioural strategies for self-leadership serve to direct and regulate individual performance and behaviour (Marques-Quinteiro & Curral, 2012).

These strategies involve setting oneself goals independently, self-observation of performance towards those goals, regulation of behaviour, and provision of self-reward (Neck & Houghton, 2006). As strategies for self-management of performance, these strategies are consistent with theories of goal setting (Latham & Locke, 2007) and self-regulation (Bandura, 1991).

A study by Dolbier, Soderstrom and Steinhardt (2001) revealed that self-leadership was significantly related to a more effective coping style, favourable personality characteristics, in addition to enhanced health and work outcomes. (Dolbier, Soderstrom and Steinhardt (2001). Teachers who apply self-leadership to their roles can seek to take charge of their own well-being by doing so.

2.5 Intrinsic Motivation

Teachers' narrow goals and school's biased emphasis on the teaching results will make teachers experience low levels of efficiency and reduce the possibility of intrinsic motivation. (Liu, Li and Zou, 2018) This is challenging for teachers in Dubai as private schools are data driven schools competing for top results.

Intrinsic motivation is a fundamental driving force behind human behavior, and when it comes to teachers, it plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education delivered. This thesis will explore the concept of intrinsic motivation among teachers, drawing upon the Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) and the Reiss Motivation Profile (Reiss, 2001, 2004). It also highlights the unique challenges faced by educators in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), specifically in Dubai, where emphasis on narrow teaching goals and data-driven outcomes can significantly affect intrinsic motivation.

At the heart of intrinsic motivation is the inherent drive that individuals possess to engage in activities for the sheer joy and satisfaction they derive from the process itself. In the context of teaching, intrinsically motivated teachers are those who find genuine pleasure in facilitating learning, without requiring external rewards or pressures to fuel their commitment.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan in 1985, serves as an influential framework for comprehending intrinsic motivation. According to SDT, there are three basic psychological needs that influence intrinsic motivation: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Teachers who feel they have the autonomy to make decisions about their teaching methods, possess the necessary skills to excel in their roles, and maintain positive relationships with students and colleagues are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation.

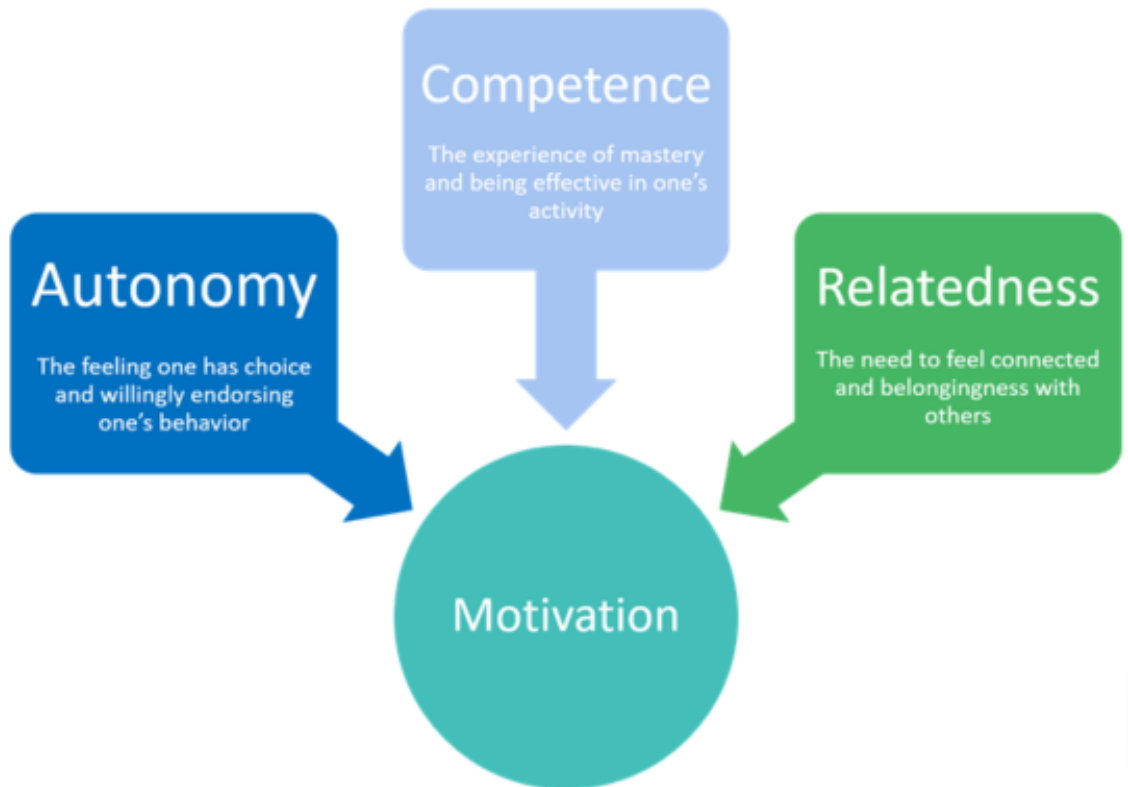


Figure 1: Self Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan, 1985. Source: University of Rochester, 2023.

Reiss's Motivation Profile, on the other hand, offers a more detailed perspective on intrinsic motivation. It emphasizes that each individual has a unique set of basic desires, which can encompass a wide range of motivations. For teachers, these may include the desire for mastery (competence), the desire for meaningful relationships with students and colleagues (relatedness), and the desire for autonomy in the classroom.

2.6 Linkage to self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, as proposed by Albert Bandura, is the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 2009). This belief plays a pivotal role in shaping how teachers think, behave, and feel about their work.

Albert Bandura's work (1989, 1985) underscores the profound impact of self-efficacy on teacher performance and mental health. Improved teacher self-efficacy not only enhances their overall job satisfaction but also has a positive ripple effect on students' academic performance (Bandura, 1977). The interplay between self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation is particularly significant in the UAE's competitive educational culture.

Within the UAE's unique educational environment, characterised by high-pressure, fast-paced school settings and annual inspections, the development of self-leadership strategies becomes imperative for expatriate teachers (Neck & Houghton, 2006; Manz, 1989). These strategies are essential for managing the mental well-being and overall health of teachers as they navigate long working hours and increased administrative demands. Self-efficacy, coupled with intrinsic motivation, can empower teachers to effectively cope with these challenges and contribute positively to their mental health and overall job satisfaction.

Self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in enhancing job satisfaction among educators. Albert Bandura's research has demonstrated that individuals with high self-efficacy beliefs tend to approach their work with greater confidence, persistence, and enthusiasm (Bandura, 1977). This increased sense of efficacy empowers teachers to overcome challenges, adapt to new situations, and achieve better outcomes in their professional roles, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction.

Supporting and developing educators' self-leadership skills is integral to promoting their mental well-being. Skaalvik and Skaalvik's research (2010) has emphasized the significance of providing teachers with the tools and strategies to take control of their professional lives. By nurturing self-leadership skills, educators gain the ability to set goals, manage stress, and navigate the demanding educational landscape more effectively. This, in turn, contributes to a heightened sense of well-being and job satisfaction, ensuring that teachers are better equipped to face the challenges presented in their roles. Self-efficacy and self-leadership skills are essential components needed for educators' mental well-being and job satisfaction.

2.7 Supportive work community

In the field of education, the importance of a supportive work community cannot be overstated. Community plays a vital role in promoting the well-being of educators (Lampien, Viitanen, & Konu, 2013, p. 71). This is a sentiment echoed in many educational settings around the world, where the challenges and demands placed on teachers can often be overwhelming.

The Concept of a Supportive Work Community

McMillan and Chavis (1986) offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the concept of a supportive work community. They define it as a place where individuals feel a sense of belonging, trust, and mutual support (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Regardless of the specific educational context, this concept remains relevant and relatable to educators globally. The need for a safe and supportive space where teachers can connect, collaborate, and seek support is universal.

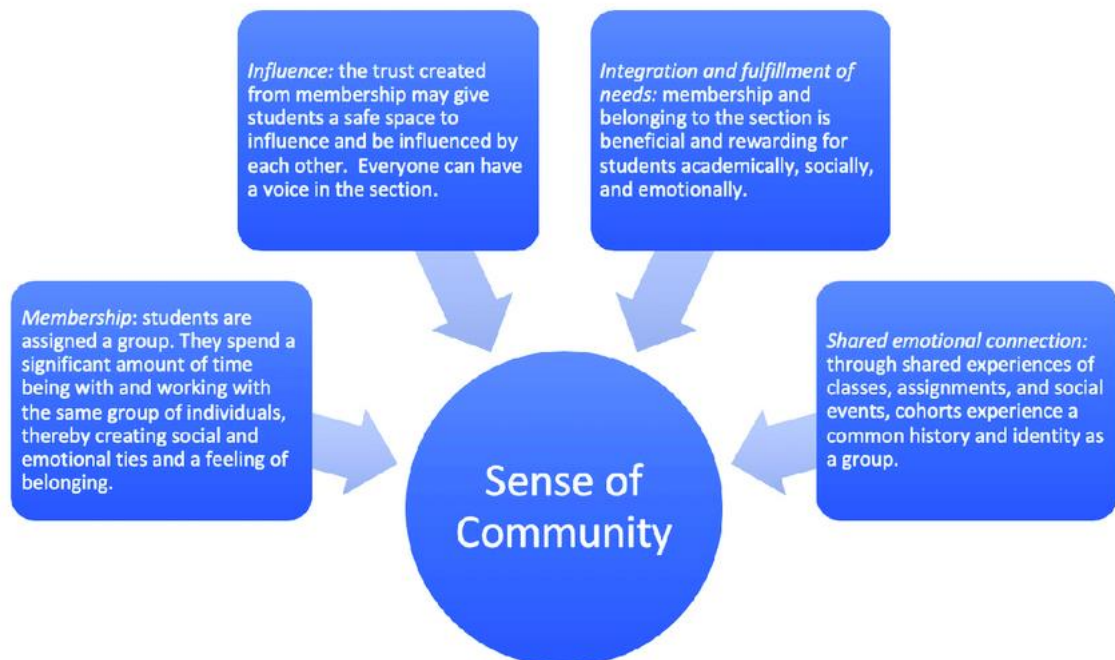


Figure 2: Proposed dimensions of Sense of Community by McMillan and Chavis, 1986. Source: Research Gate, 2023.

Mentoring relationships, as highlighted by Burroughs and Eby (1998), are instrumental in fostering a supportive work community (Burroughs & Eby, 1998, pp. 511-512). Within educational institutions, mentoring relationships offer experienced educators the opportunity to guide and support their colleagues, particularly newcomers. This guidance is not limited by geography or educational system; it serves as a valuable resource for teachers worldwide.

Additionally, professional development, as emphasized by Burroughs and Eby (1998), provides teachers with the tools and skills they need to excel in their roles (Burroughs & Eby, 1998, pp. 515-516). Regardless of the country or educational environment, continuous growth and learning are essential aspects of a teacher's career. The availability of opportunities for professional development is crucial for ensuring educators remain effective and motivated.

Lampinen et al. (2013) emphasize that a supportive work community has a significant positive impact on teachers' well-being. This includes reduced stress and increased job satisfaction, as noted in their research (Lampinen et al., 2013, pp. 81-83). Such findings are highly relevant to educators globally, as they highlight the tangible benefits of positive and supportive community in the workplace.

A supportive environment fosters a sense of belonging, trust, and mutual support among educators. It provides a framework for mentoring relationships and professional development, offering teachers the guidance and resources they need to thrive in their roles. The positive impact of a supportive work community on teachers' well-being and job satisfaction is a consistent finding across diverse

educational settings. It is evident that irrespective of location, educators benefit greatly from a supportive work community, which not only enhances their mental health but also improves the quality of education they provide.

2.8 The role of Leadership

Pusvitasari, Viriyavejakul, and Sumettikoon (2020) outline the critical link between leadership styles and teacher wellbeing, highlighting the vital role of effective leadership in promoting educators' mental health in the workplace. The study detailed the positive effect of transformational leadership on teacher well-being, which, in turn, played a pivotal role in improving student achievement, highlighting the significance of leadership styles in influencing teacher well-being and student outcomes.

This section examines the varying leadership styles, practices, emotional intelligence, and self-leadership, offering insights into their intertwined effects on teachers' mental well-being.

2.8.1 Leadership Styles

Leaders in educational settings exhibit a range of leadership styles, each with distinct implications for brain health and wellbeing. Research by Van der Vyver, Kok, and Conley (2020) suggests that professional development programmes for principals and leaders, including workshops, forums, and seminars, can enhance awareness of the impact of leadership styles. Transformational leadership, rooted in the work of Downton (1973) and Burns (1978), is characterized by passion,

enthusiasm, and a commitment to fostering motivation, confidence, trust, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose. This approach has been linked to increased performance, job satisfaction, and reduced burnout among teachers (Ugochukwu, 2021; Merritt & Procter, 2022). Nevertheless, it is crucial to maintain equilibrium and clearly defined expectations in this leadership style.

Instructional leadership focuses on outcomes, curriculum development, and teaching improvement but may not prioritize relationships among teams or staff members. (Hallinger, 2003) Similarly, transactional leadership, characterized by a defined leader-follower structure, can restrict teacher autonomy, elevate stress levels, and diminish collaboration. In contrast, distributed leadership shares responsibilities among the team members, fostering trust, teacher autonomy, and job satisfaction. Positive leadership, grounded in positive psychology, emphasizes positive emotions, relationships, and meaning, resulting in reduced stress levels and a supportive work environment (Murphy & Louis, 2018)

2.8.2 Leadership Practices

Kouzes and Posner's framework comprises five key leadership practices, each designed to inspire and empower individuals within an organization (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. 2017). These practices have demonstrated the power to create a positive impact not only on organizational success but also on the well-being of teachers and the achievement of students. In this section, we explore each of these practices, analysing into their significance and potential effects on teacher well-being and student achievement. By understanding and implementing these

practices, educational leaders can foster environments where both educators and learners thrive.

2.8.3 Model the Way:

This leadership practice involves setting a positive example for others to follow. Leaders must define and communicate a clear set of values, principles, and expectations and then model those behaviors themselves. By demonstrating commitment to these values, leaders inspire trust, engagement, and shared purpose within their teams. When leaders lead by example, they encourage their followers to do the same, fostering a culture of accountability and alignment with the organization's core beliefs. (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. 2017)

2.8.4 Inspire a Shared Vision:

Inspiring a shared vision is another fundamental practice outlined by Kouzes and Posner. It requires leaders to articulate a compelling and inspiring vision for the future. Leaders who can clearly communicate this vision create a sense of purpose and direction that motivates their teams. When a vision resonates with people's values and aspirations, it leads to higher levels of commitment and passion. By involving team members in developing and refining the vision, leaders can foster a shared commitment to achieving meaningful goals. (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. 2017)

2.8.5 Challenge the Process:

Challenging the process involves encouraging innovation, risk-taking, and continuous improvement. Effective leaders must create an environment where their team members feel comfortable proposing new ideas and exploring different approaches to problems. This practice aligns with a growth mindset, where challenges are seen as opportunities for growth and learning. By challenging the status quo and seeking creative solutions, leaders can drive progress, adapt to changing circumstances, and promote adaptability within their organisations. (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. 2017).

2.8.6 Enable Others to Act:

This practice centers on empowering team members by providing them with the tools, resources, and support they need to succeed. Leaders who enable others to act recognize the value of trust, collaboration, and delegation. They foster a culture where individuals have the autonomy to make decisions and take ownership of their work. By trusting in their team's abilities, leaders promote a sense of competence and responsibility, which can lead to higher job satisfaction and a stronger sense of well-being among teachers, as evidenced in the study by Pusvitasari et al. (2023).

2.8.7 Encourage the Heart:

Encouraging the heart is about recognizing and appreciating the efforts and contributions of team members. Effective leaders acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and achievements of their employees. This practice helps boost morale,

build a positive and supportive work environment, and enhance motivation. Leaders who celebrate individual and collective successes strengthen team cohesion and enhance teacher well-being. Teachers feel genuinely valued when leaders embed a culture of support, which positively impacts teacher well-being. (Cann, Ridel-Prabhakar, and Powell, 2021)

These five leadership practices provide valuable guidance for leaders seeking to promote teacher well-being and positive outcomes in educational settings.

2.9 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is vital in fostering a positive and supportive work environment. A study by Goleman (1996) emphasised the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership, highlighting its relevance not only in organizational settings but also within the realm of education. In the UAE, where the educational landscape is characterised by its multicultural nature and diverse student population, emotional intelligence is paramount for educational leaders.

High levels of emotional intelligence enable leaders to navigate complex cultural dynamics and effectively manage a diverse team of teachers. Leaders who possess emotional intelligence exhibit self-awareness, allowing them to recognize their own emotions and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. Individuals, including teachers, who are equipped with high emotional intelligence are

better prepared to connect with students, create positive classroom environments, and effectively manage classroom dynamics, ultimately enhancing the overall educational experience. (Goleman, 1995)

2.10 School Culture

School culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the experiences of both teachers and students. A positive school culture fosters an environment where teachers can thrive, promoting their mental well-being, and in turn, positively impacting student learning. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the significance of school culture in education cannot be understated, especially in the context of the diverse and dynamic educational landscape.

The UAE's education system attracts teachers from around the world due to its multicultural nature. However, the adjustment to a new cultural and professional environment can be challenging. Research in the UAE (Kim & Kim, 2019) has highlighted the critical link between school culture and teacher mental health. A positive school culture that emphasizes support, collaboration, and inclusivity contributes to teachers' well-being.

In a positive school culture, students are more likely to flourish. The UAE's education system has undergone significant changes, with a strong emphasis on promoting student-centered learning (Al Marzouqi, 2019). The interplay between school culture and student learning is evident in these shifts. A school culture that

prioritises teacher mental health aligns with the UAE's educational goals. Research by Rudolph et al. (2001) outlines that teachers who are emotionally and mentally supported are more likely to employ effective self-regulatory processes in the classroom.

2.11 Synthesis of theories

The success of any educational system hinges on the well-being and brain health of its teachers. Mentoring relationships, as highlighted by Burroughs and Eby (1998), are instrumental in fostering a supportive work community. Professional development, as emphasized by Burroughs and Eby (1998), provides teachers with the tools and skills they need to excel in their roles, contributing to their brain health. Learning and growth are essential aspects of a teacher's career. The availability of opportunities for professional development is crucial for ensuring educators remain effective, motivated, and maintain optimal brain health.

Lampinen et al. (2013) emphasize that a supportive work community has a significant positive impact on teachers' well-being, including reduced stress and increased job satisfaction, enhancing their brain health. Such findings are highly relevant to educators globally, as they highlight the tangible benefits of a supportive work community, not only for well-being but also for overall brain health.

Pusvitasari, Viriyavejakul, and Sumettikoon (2020) outline the critical link between leadership styles and teacher well-being and brain health, highlighting the

vital role of effective leadership in promoting educators' mental health in the workplace. Leadership styles such as transformational leadership have been linked to increased performance, job satisfaction, and reduced burnout among teachers, thus contributing to their brain health. Instructional leadership focuses on outcomes and teaching improvement, while transactional leadership may restrict teacher autonomy, elevate stress levels, and impact brain health negatively. In contrast, distributed leadership fosters trust and teacher autonomy, contributing to their brain health, while positive leadership emphasizes positive emotions, relationships, and meaning, resulting in reduced stress levels and a supportive work environment.

Leadership practices comprises five key practices that can create a positive impact on teacher well-being, brain health, and student achievement. These practices include modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. By understanding and implementing these practices, educational leaders can foster environments where both educators and learners thrive, promoting their brain health. (Kouzes & Posner, 2017)

Emotional intelligence is a critical component in the realm of education. Teachers with developed emotional intelligence demonstrate empathy, which enables them to understand and support the emotional needs of their students, ultimately promoting their brain health. (Goleman, 1995)

A positive school culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the experiences of teachers and contributes significantly to their well-being and brain health. In the UAE, research has highlighted the critical link between school culture and teacher mental health and brain health. (Kim & Kim, 2019)

The interdependence of teacher well-being, student learning, and school culture, along with their contributions to brain health, is evident. A supportive school culture contributes to teacher well-being and brain health.

3 METHODOLOGY

In Section 3, the research methods to be employed in this thesis will be discussed, outlining a comprehensive explanation of the chosen research methodology, ethical considerations, and the planned data analysis methods, all within the context of this research.

3.1 Methodological Approach

During this mixed-methods research, data for this thesis was collected from expatriate school teachers currently working in international schools in Dubai. The aim of this thesis was to study expatriate teachers' perceptions of factors contributing to their mental wellbeing in the workplace and to discuss self-leadership strategies that can improve their brain health. In the mixed methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data collection was utilised and their results combined to form a thorough view of the research question. Mixed methods approaches are commonly used to enhance the dependability and accuracy of a research investigation (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018)

The research design utilized a combination of a survey questionnaire, which included both open and closed questions, along with semi-structured interviews. This approach facilitated a comparative examination of well-being perceptions among private school teachers in Dubai, considering various factors such as school affiliation, age, gender, and experience. The questionnaire served a dual purpose by establishing the validity of the research topic and generating common themes and trends. Subsequently, the interview questions were developed based

on the themes that emerged from the quantitative data collection, allowing participants to provide in-depth insights into their personal experiences with self-leadership actions and strategies that influenced their well-being.

The philosophical foundation underpinning this thesis aligned with a pragmatic worldview, a characteristic feature of mixed methods research. Pragmatism prioritises research questions over specific methodologies, emphasising the acquisition of a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Pragmatism (quantitative and qualitative) in which the research focuses on framing and answering the research question or problem, which is eclectic in its designs, methods of data collection and analysis, driven by fitness for purpose and employing quantitative and qualitative data as relevant, i.e. as long as they 'work' – succeed – in answering the research question or problem, and in which the researcher employs both inductive and deductive reasoning to investigate the multiple, views of the problem and the research question. (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2018, 34) This approach grants researchers the flexibility to choose methods that best suit the research requirements. Furthermore, pragmatism acknowledges the contextual nature of topics and studies, recognizing their susceptibility to influences such as politics and social dynamics (Cresswell and Cresswell, 2018)

3.2 Survey Questions

The survey questions were translated from Finnish to English and had been used in the study of teachers' brain health in New York and Finland as part of the Sustainable Brain Health project.

An anonymised online survey was created and used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from target group members (expatriate teachers in private schools in the UAE). Individual 'right to privacy' is usually contrasted with the public's 'right' to know (Pring, 1984, 2015); therefore participants were informed that their answers would remain anonymous but a random selection of people who filled in the survey could be called for interview. Respondents may be more honest if their responses are anonymous and not face-to-face, particularly if sensitive issues are being explored. Because of volunteered participation, greater authenticity of responses may be obtained (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 362, 2018)

An online data collection tool was used due to its accessibility, cost-effectiveness, accuracy and exportability. (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 362, 2018). Given the diverse and geographically dispersed population of teachers in the UAE, an online tool ensures that data can be efficiently gathered from a wide range of participants, promoting a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting teacher well-being in the region.

Quantitative data was collected via multiple-choice questions and the psychometric method of Likert scale responses.

A Likert scale, developed by psychologist Rensis Likert in 1932, is a widely employed psychometric instrument in research and surveys to gauge people's attitudes, opinions, and perceptions. Typically, it features a series of statements or

questions on a specific topic, with respondents indicating their agreement or disagreement with each statement, usually using options like "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree." These scales can also offer more response options, allowing for finer distinctions. Likert scales provide a structured means of quantifying subjective data, making it suitable for statistical analysis. They build in a degree of sensitivity and differentiation of response whilst still generating numbers (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, p480, 2018). Likert scales offer insights into the intensity of attitudes or perceptions, enabling researchers to analyze and compare responses. In the context of this thesis, Likert scales are used to gather and quantify teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding well-being and participants perception of self-leadership skills in the UAE workplace, facilitating data analysis and the exploration of trends and associations.

Qualitative parts of the survey included open-ended questions, which encouraged participants to provide in-depth insights into their experiences, feelings, and perceptions. These open-ended questions cover a range of topics, such as the factors contributing to their work-related stress, strategies they employ for effective stress management, personal motivators in their work, and ethical dilemmas they may have encountered. These qualitative responses offer valuable qualitative data that complements the quantitative Likert-scale responses, enabling a holistic understanding of participants' well-being, self-management, and self-leadership experiences in the educational context.

The survey has three sections.

Section 1: Background Information

This section collects basic demographic data and provides context for participants. It includes questions about participants' personal details, work experience, employment, and workload, among others.

Section 2: Work-Related Experiences and Well-Being

This part of the survey aims to gain insights into participants' work experiences, well-being, and work-related stress. It includes a series of Likert-scale questions designed to assess factors such as workload, decision-making, work-related stress, the impact of technology, and the support participants receive from colleagues and managers. Additionally, this section seeks to understand the respondents' ability to manage stress, their self-leadership skills, and the motivation factors driving their work.

Section 3: Lifestyle and Health Habits

In this section, the survey delves into participants' lifestyles and health habits. It gathers data on their physical activities, exercise routines, dietary choices, and other factors that may impact their well-being. The questions aim to assess exercise frequency, sleep patterns, activities like yoga and meditation, dietary preferences, recovery during free time, alcohol consumption, and what factors contribute to well-being at work.

These three sections collectively provide a comprehensive picture of participants' work environments, personal well-being, and health-related habits, allowing for a deeper understanding of the factors that may influence educators' self-management and self-leadership skills.

The survey questions were adapted from questions developed by the Sustainable Brain Health Project, measuring teacher perceptions of work well-being experience, self-management, motivational factors, emotions and ethical load. Participants were asked to evaluate claims based on a scale, respond to multiple choice and open-ended questions about the aforementioned topics

3.2.1 Research Participants

The participants in this study are primarily composed of expatriate educators working in either primary or secondary schools in the Dubai, UAE. A total number of 80 participants completed the survey. It was shared through professional email and social media reach. This diverse group reflects a significant proportion of female respondents (75%), which is common in the field of education. In terms of their educational qualifications, the majority of participants hold bachelor's degrees (70%), while a significant portion (30%) have pursued further studies and attained master's degrees. The vast majority of respondents (95%) hold indefinitely valid employment contracts, ensuring long-term job security. A notable minority (20%) occupy teaching leadership roles.

3.3 Data Analysis

Closed -ended survey questions were analysed using a quantitative approach. These questions encompassed various aspects, from work-related stress to self-awareness and self-management competencies. Statistical analysis methods were used to gain insights into participants' experiences and perceptions. The data derived from these closed-ended questions was analysed to provide a quantitative understanding of the participants' perspectives.

Following a convergent parallel research design allowed for the concurrent collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The survey employed a combination of closed-ended questions for quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative insights. By independently analysing these datasets and subsequently merging the results, a comprehensive perspective on the research subject was achieved, enhancing the overall depth of the findings.

The qualitative data was analysed using the thematic analysis approach outlined by Braun and Clark (2006). After becoming familiar with the dataset, distinct patterns were identified and organized into thematic categories based on similarities.

3.4 Research Ethics

The participants in this study, expatriate teachers in Dubai, willingly took part in the research. A minimal amount of personal information was gathered, ensuring its secure handling in accordance with the ethical research standards of Tampere University of Applied Sciences, the Sustainable Brain Health Research Project,

and the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Every participant granted informed consent to engage in the study, being fully aware of their rights, the research's objectives, the data to be collected, and the comprehensive security measures employed for data collection, storage, and processing, all in compliance with GDPR 2016/679/EU. All collected data was anonymised, and the researcher was authorized to use segments of the initial Sustainable Brain Health Project survey solely for the purpose of this thesis, with no intention of using it elsewhere. The researcher had permission to use a translated version of the Sustainable Brain Health survey questions and to adapt them to a UAE setting.

4 RESULTS

This thesis aims to gather insights into various factors influencing expatriate teachers' mental well-being in the workplace. The research utilised a combination of closed and open-ended questions to examine their perspectives on self-leadership skills, motivation, perceived support from the work community, and occupational well-being. The results of the survey will be analysed in this chapter.

4.1 Well-being at work

Both open and closed ended questions were used to garner an overall sense of how teachers perceived their sense of wellbeing at work and factors that can enhance their occupational wellbeing.

4.1.1 Workload Congestion of Expatriate Teachers

The survey reveals that 63.2% of respondents feel that their workload is unevenly distributed, leading to occasional congestion (see figure 3). This statistic indicates a high portion of teachers experiencing challenges related to workload management. This can potentially contribute to heightened stress levels and impact overall wellbeing. This challenge of balancing responsibilities is a sentiment echoed in qualitative responses, where one teacher encapsulates the struggle, saying, "Juggling various tasks is an art we constantly refine."

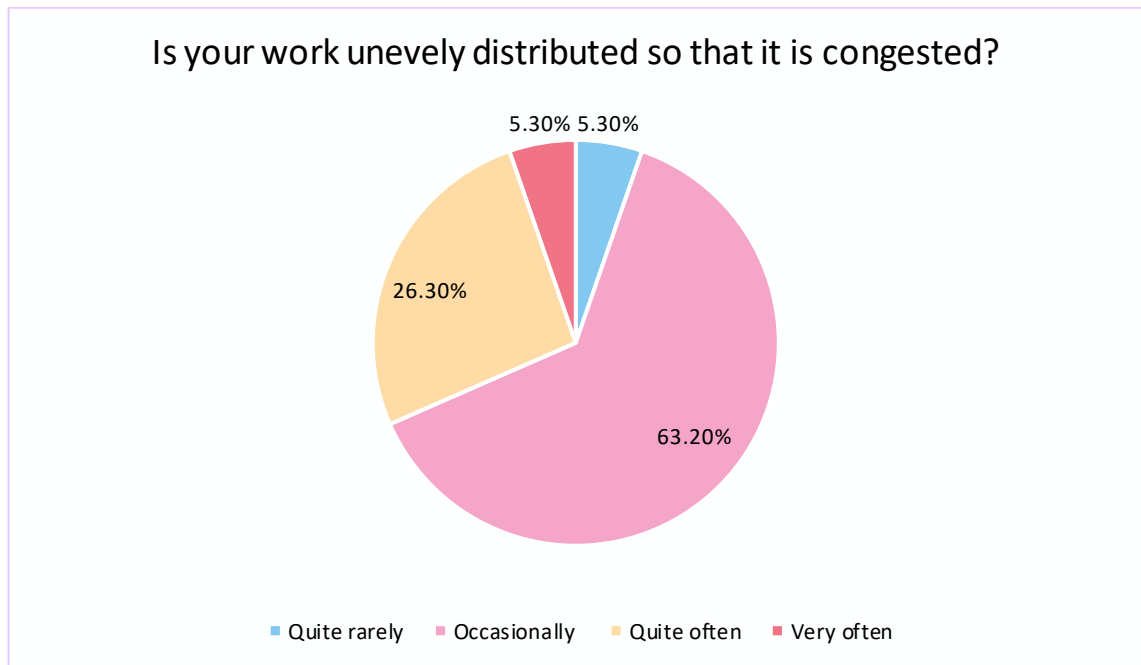


Figure 3: Expatriate teachers' reflections on congestion of workload.

The findings suggest that 55% of expatriate teachers are often busy with their work, and 35% find this very often. (see figure 4).



Figure 4: Expatriate teachers' reflections on busyness of workload.

35% of respondents indicate that they have too much work quite often, with an additional 20% facing this challenge very often (see figure 5).

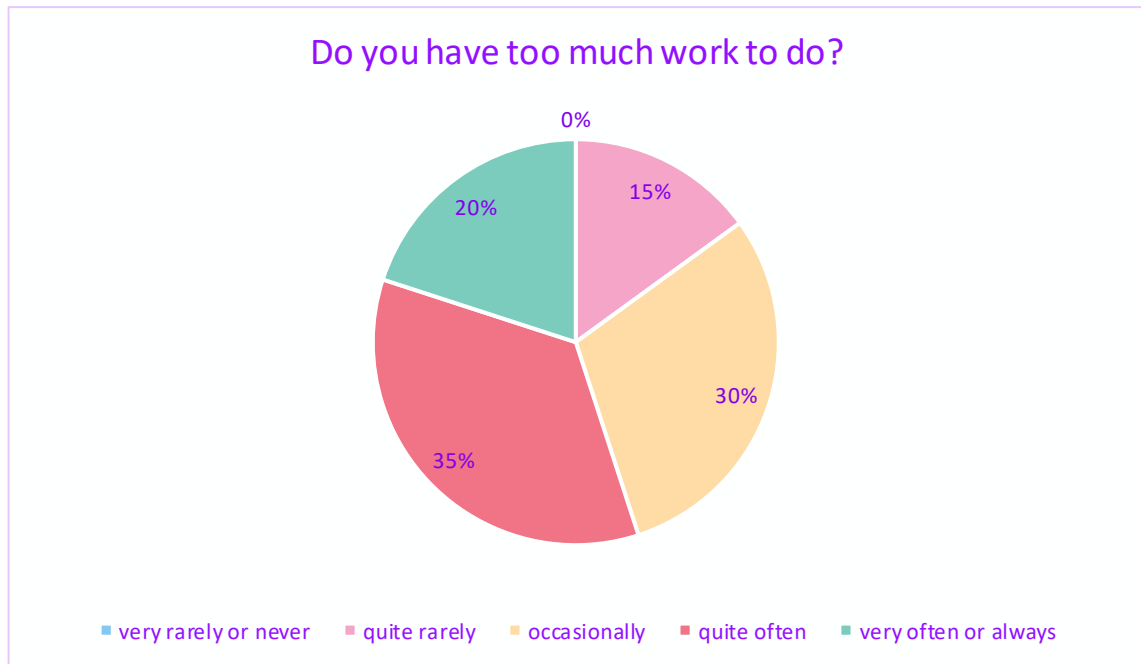


Figure 5: Expatriate teachers' reflections on having too much work and its frequency.

These statistics highlight the demanding nature of the teaching profession in Dubai, and how the prevalence of high work demands can influence the overall well-being of expatriate teachers.

4.1.2 Stress Levels of Respondents

The survey indicates that 40% of respondents experience some stress, 40% just a little bit, 10% not a lot, and 10% quite a lot (see figure 6). While the majority report manageable stress levels, the acknowledgment of varying degrees of

stress indicates the need for targeted interventions to support teachers in coping with work-related pressures. A teacher reflects, "Navigating stress is part of the job, but it becomes challenging when expectations soar."

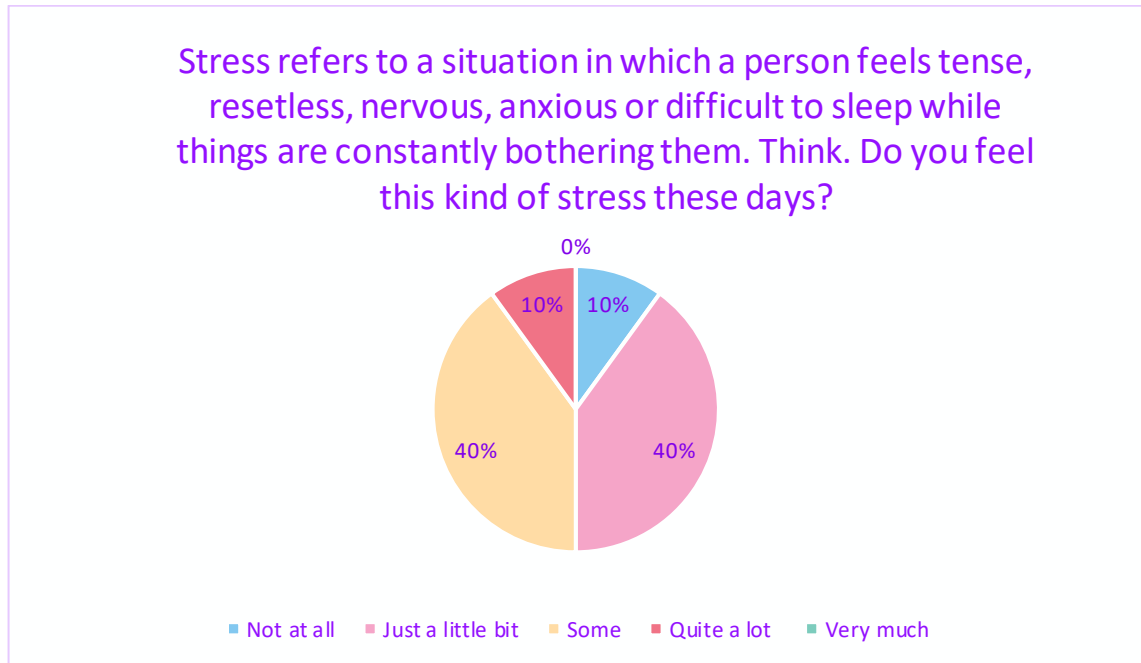


Figure 6: Expatriate teachers' reflections on stress in the workplace.

4.1.3 Brain Load Factors

The survey introduces the concept of brain load, encompassing factors that reduce the effectiveness and quality of work. Disturbances, interruptions, ambiguities, time pressure, learning new things, memory load, decision-making, and ethical load are identified contributors. The qualitative responses provide specific instances of brain load factors, such as overload of notifications and tight deadlines. One respondent says brain load is affected by "too much to do, asked to be flexible in work at my expense." Another reflects "Management, deadlines, overlapping deadlines or activities."

4.1.4 Support Systems

The survey indicates that 80% of respondents can get help and support from their colleagues very often or always (see figure 7).

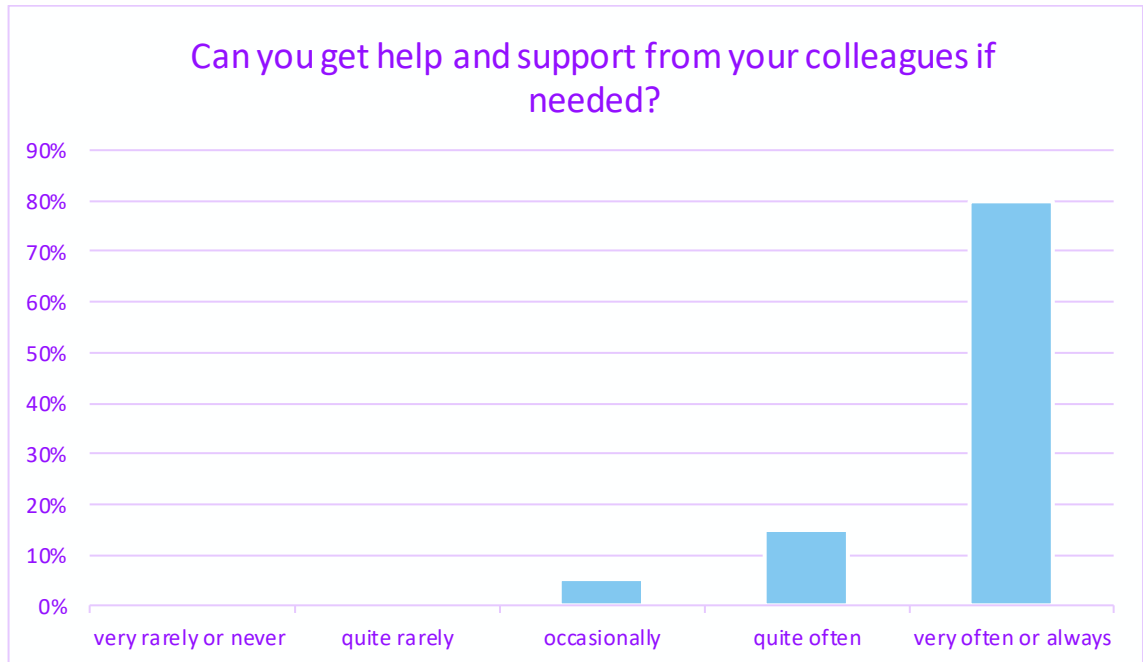


Figure 7: Expatriate teachers' reflections on colleague support network.

Similarly, 50% state they can get help and support from their managers very often or always (see figure 8).



Figure 8: Expatriate teachers' reflections on managerial support network.

These high percentages highlight the positive aspect of a supportive work community, which can contribute positively to teachers' wellbeing.

4.1.5 Autonomy and Decision-Making

Autonomy and decision-making, crucial elements in teacher wellbeing, are explored in the survey. While 45% somewhat agree that they have autonomy in the decision-making process, 30% fully agree (see figure 9). This suggests a moderate level of autonomy amongst the teachers of Dubai who participated in this survey with teachers expressing a desire for more independence. One teacher notes "Empowering teachers with more autonomy fosters a sense of trust and value."

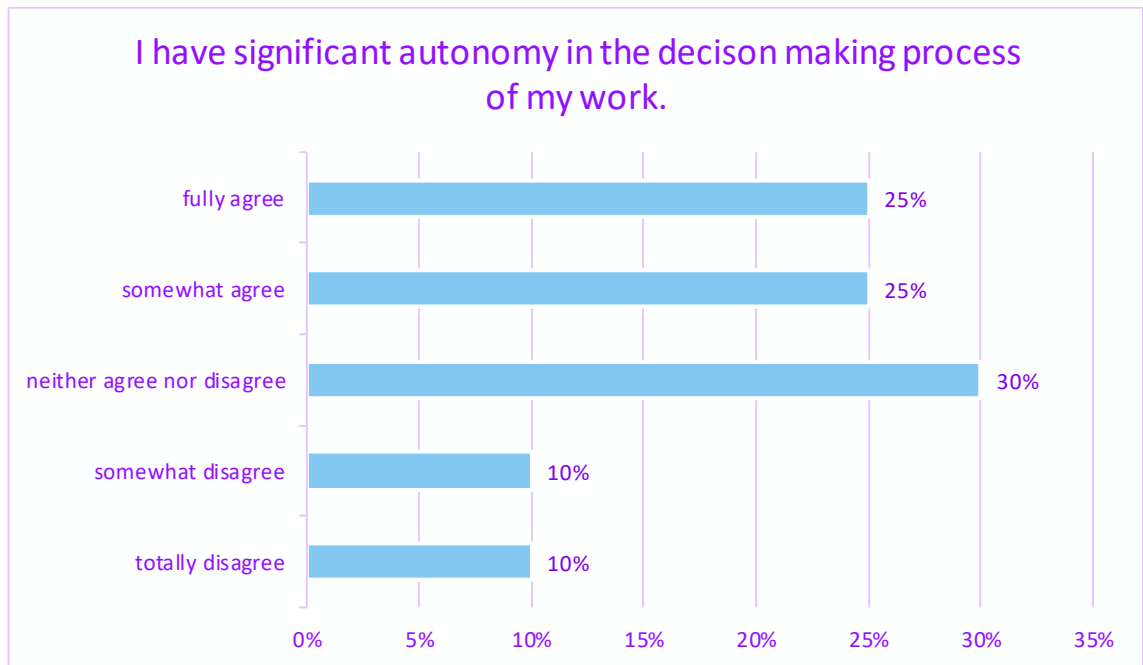


Figure 9: Expatriate teachers' reflections on autonomy in the decision making process a work.

4.1.6 Technology Impact:

Technology's role in workload and stress is evident in the survey. For example, 25% fully agree that technology forces them to work faster, and 25% somewhat agree (see figure 10).

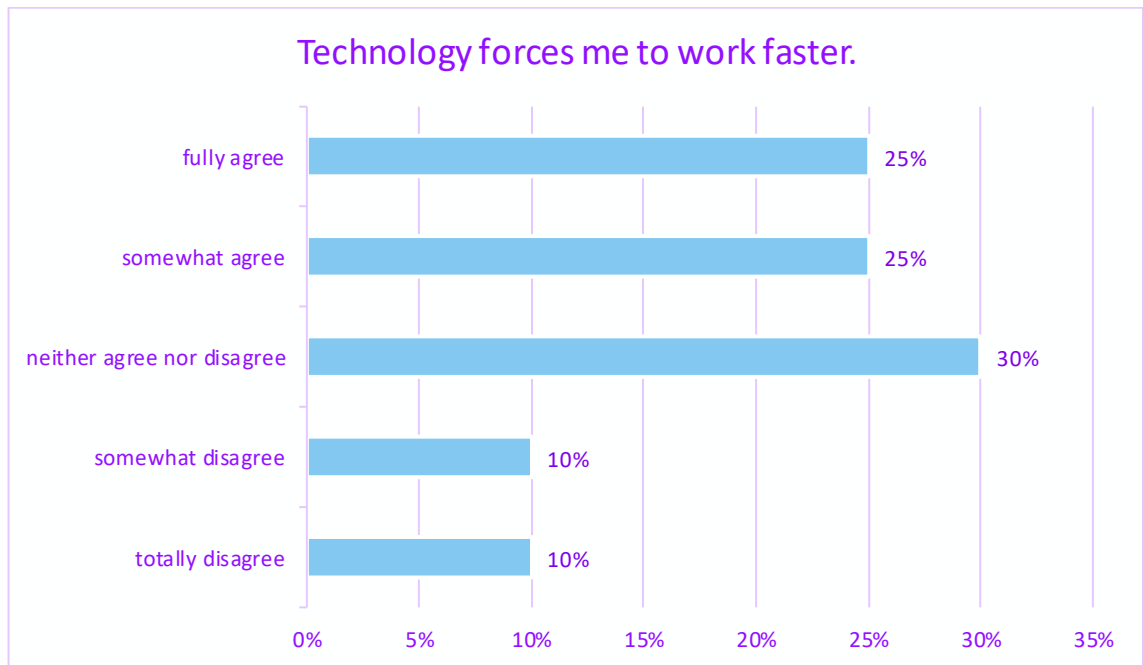


Figure 10: Expatriate teachers' reflections on if technology forces them to work faster.

Additionally, 25% somewhat agree that the complexity of technology has increased their workload (see figure 11). These statistics highlight the need for a balanced integration of technology to avoid adverse effects on teacher wellbeing. Teachers emphasise the need for strategic and mindful technology use. A teacher states, "Technology should be an ally, not an additional stressor."

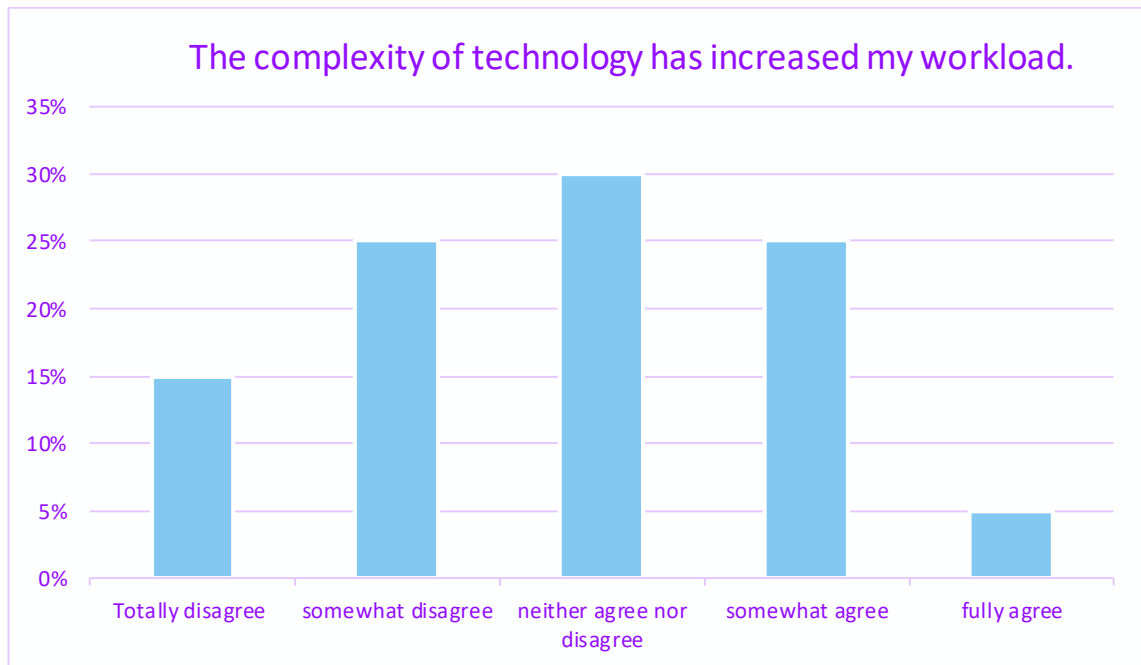


Figure 11: Expatriate teachers' opinions on the complexity of technology and its effect on workload.

4.1.7 Importance of Communication

Effective communication serves as the backbone of any thriving work community. The qualitative responses to the survey highlight the importance of community to enhance workplace wellbeing. Responses highlight the importance of communication, highlighting potential pitfalls and how they affect brain health. A teacher emphasises the centrality of communication, stating, "Transparent and open communication ensures everyone is on the same page, reducing misunderstandings." Another echoed the need for: "Clear communication, less places where communication goes out."

4.2 Causes of Brain Load

Understanding the intricacies of brain load is crucial for comprehending the challenges faced by expatriate teachers in Dubai.

4.2.1 Varied Workload Distribution:

Survey data highlights how uneven workload distribution is a significant contributor to brain load (see figure 12) as teachers navigate the complexities of managing diverse responsibilities. 55% of teachers are quite often busy with their work with an additional 35% feeling this “busyness” very often (see figure 13).

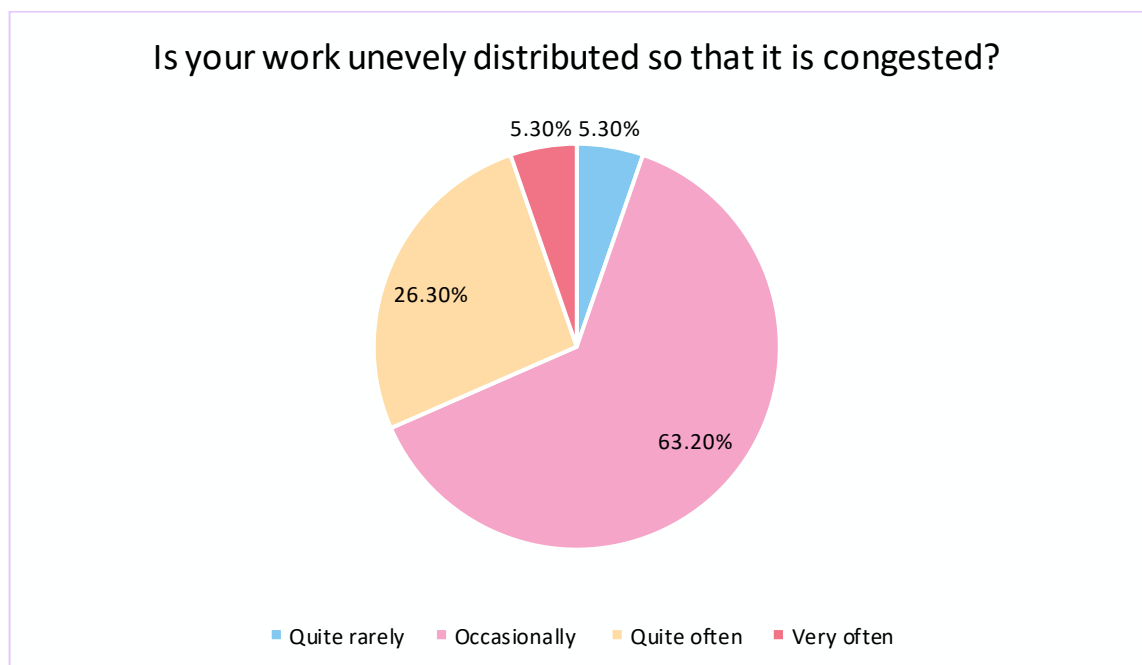


Figure 12: Expatriate teachers' reflections on congestion of workload

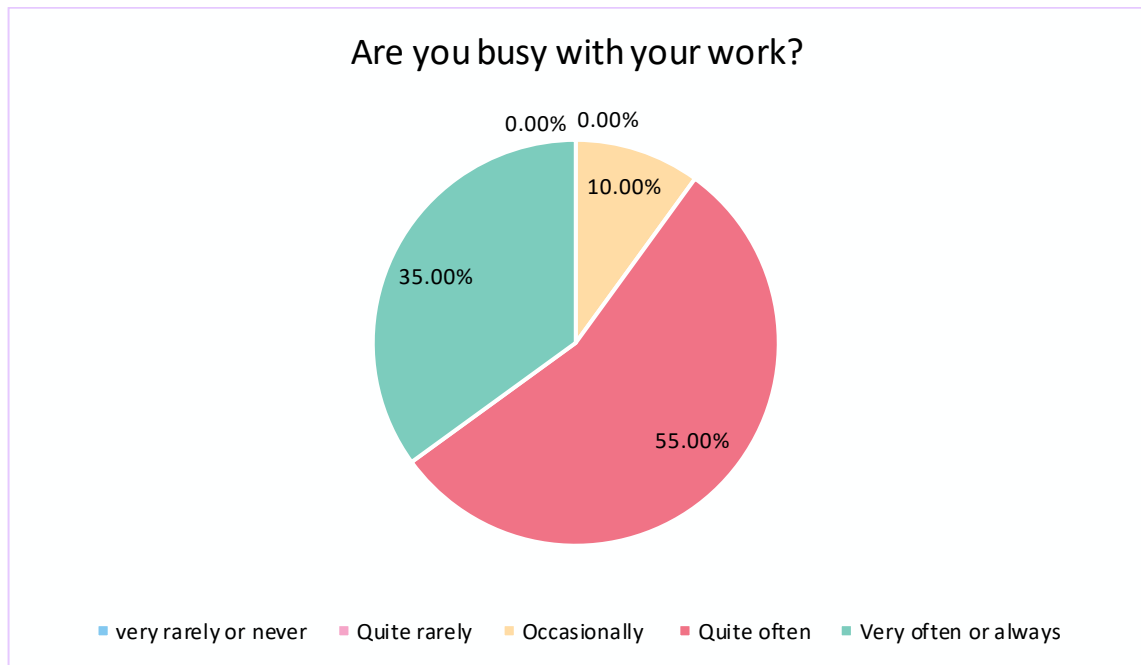


Figure 13: Expatriate teachers' reflections on busyness of workload

55% of teachers in total say they have too much work to do either quite often or very often (see figure 14).

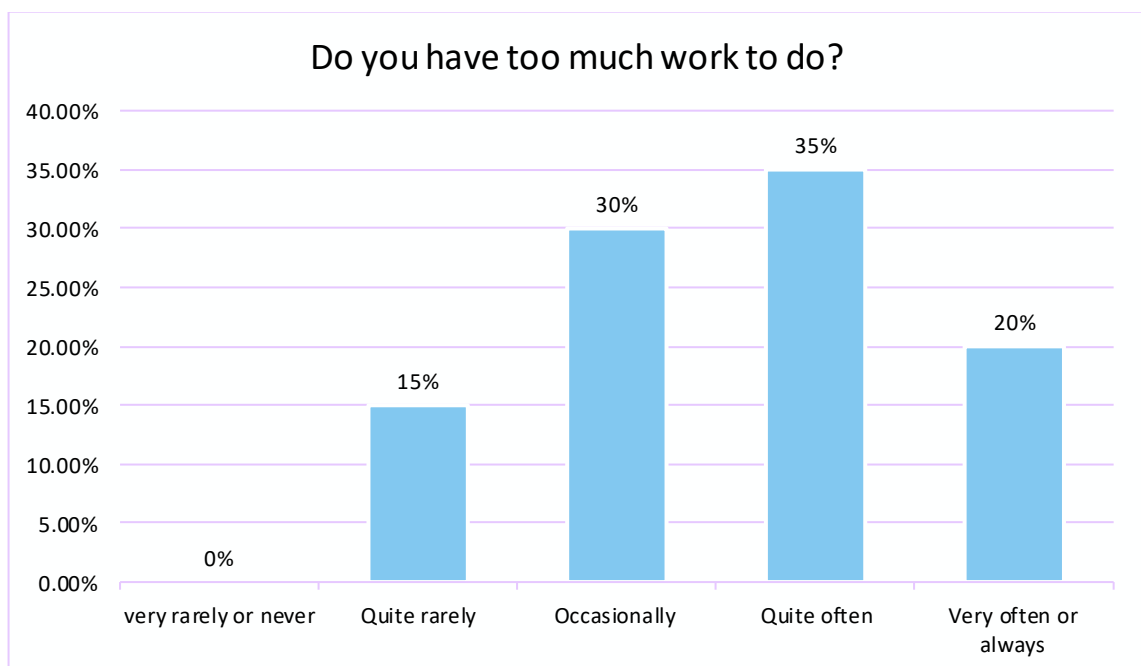


Figure 14: Expatriate teachers' reflections on congestion of workload

A respondent shares, "It's not just about the quantity of work but also the unevenness that adds to the mental strain." This congestion of workload is echoed in qualitative responses with another saying brain load is affected by "work load, last minute changes to normal routines, expectations to complete work with short deadlines."

4.2.2 Time Pressures and Deadlines

A notable percentage of teachers, 25%, express that the complexity of technology has increased their workload (see figure 15).

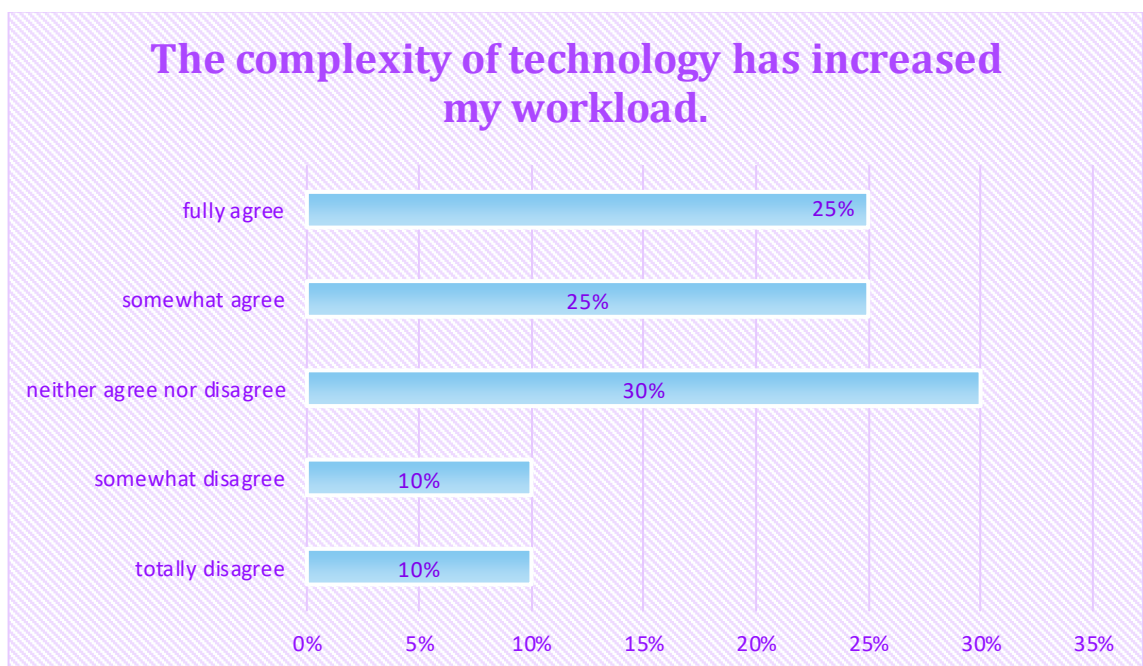


Figure 15: Expatriate teachers' reflections on how complexity of technology has increased their workload.

This insight aligns with qualitative responses where educators stress the impact of tight deadlines and the demand for quick turnarounds. One teacher elaborates, "Technology is a double-edged sword; it can be time-saving but also adds pressure when deadlines loom." Another respondent said brain load was affected by "too many messages and emails."

4.2.3 Adapting to Constant Changes

Navigating frequent changes without adequate preparation emerges as another significant cause of brain load. According to the survey, 45% of respondents expressed that their organization provides training for staff before introducing new technologies, with only 10% fully agreeing (see figure 16).

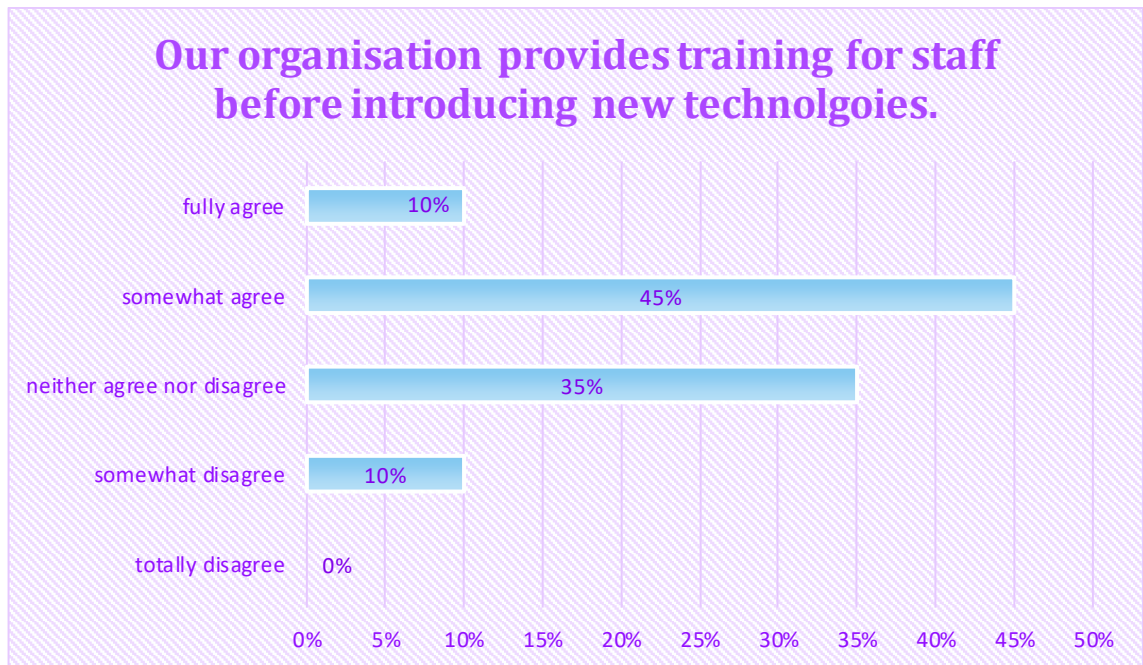


Figure 16: Expatriate teachers' reflections training for staff before introducing new technologies

Teachers emphasise the challenges associated with adapting to new technologies and systems without sufficient training. A teacher reflects, "The constant changes without proper training create a sense of unease and contribute to the cognitive load we bear."

4.2.4 External Expectations and Pressures

Beyond internal factors, external pressures also play a role in elevating brain load. According to the survey, 40% of respondents at times feel they can't meet others' expectations of their work, and 25% quite often experience this challenge (see figure 17).

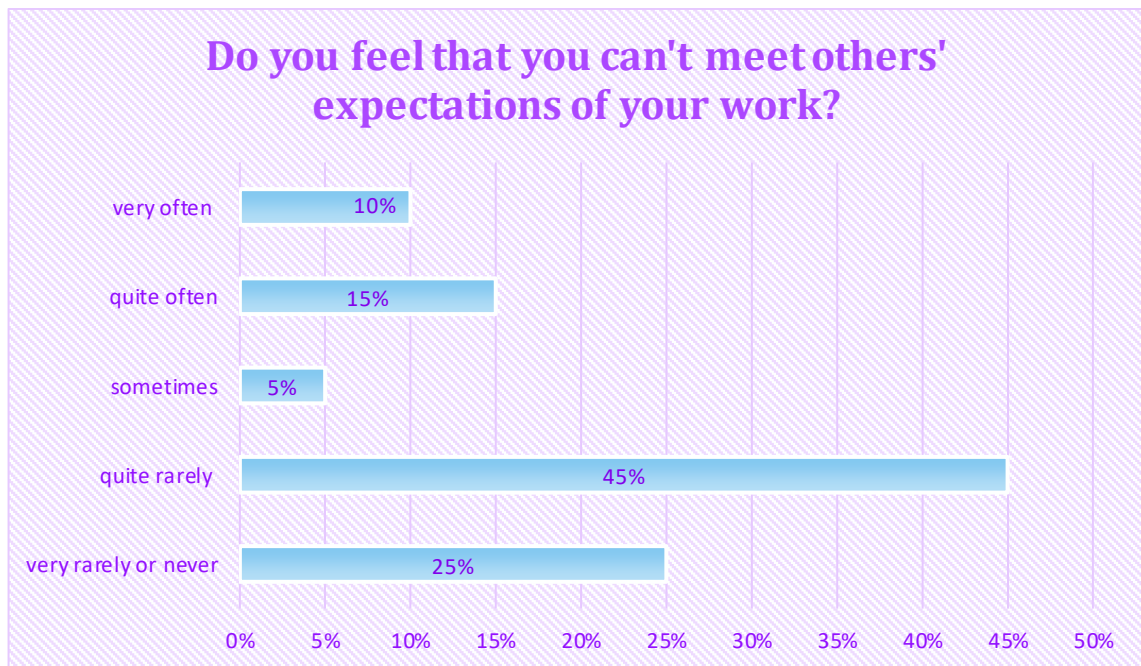


Figure 17: Expatriate teachers' reflections on how they can't meet others' expectations of their results.

Parental expectations and the pressure to meet school goals contribute to the cognitive burden. One teacher articulates, "The weight of parental expectations and the need to fulfill school goals can be overwhelming, adding to the mental load we carry."

4.2.5 Multitasking Challenges

The need to multitask can add to the cognitive demands of teachers and is referred to in qualitative responses. Educators express the challenges of balancing various technological tools and platforms simultaneously. A teacher notes, "Multitasking becomes a necessity, and it's mentally taxing to switch between different platforms seamlessly." Another comments on the challenges associated with this: "Lots of deadlines all at once with no extra time given to carry out deadlines. Taking on too many changes at one. Disturbances – starting a job but not always being able to finish it."

4.2.6 Importance of Clear Communication

A lack of clear instruction or communication emerged as a theme in qualitative data. Respondents highlight the impact of unclear instructions and the challenges arising from a "leak" and "he said/she said" culture within the work environment. A teacher emphasises, "Clarity in communication is crucial; otherwise, it adds unnecessary mental strain." Another responds: "Ensuring that communication is clear and straightforward reduces mental clutter and contributes to effective workload management." Another viewed it from the perspective of lacking allocated communication time: "No set time for communication – forced to multitask to communicate, inefficient as harder and more time consuming."

4.2.7 Autonomy in the Workplace

While autonomy is recognised as a positive aspect, unfortunately 30% of respondents somewhat disagree and 5% totally disagree that they have autonomy in the decision-making process of their work. (see figure 18). Limitations on teachers' autonomy is listed as a significant factor in predicting teacher burnout in Chapter 2 (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, 2022).

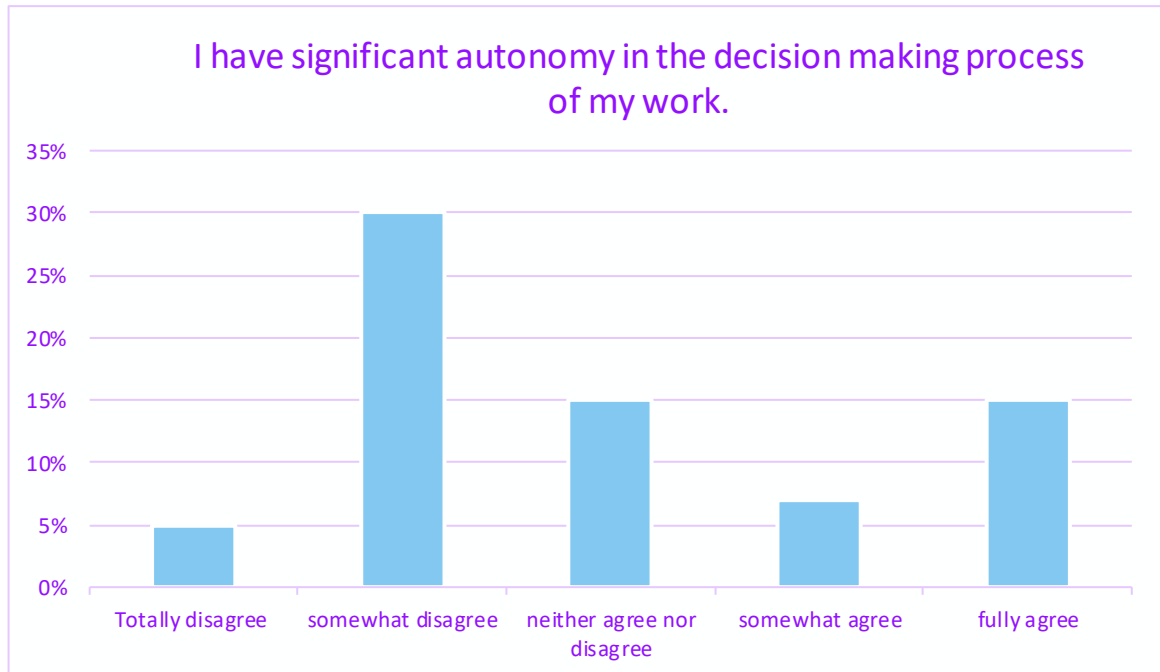


Figure 18: Expatriate teachers' reflections on autonomy in the workplace.

45% of teachers surveyed fully agree that they can use their own initiative and discretion in the workplace (see figure 19). Teachers, while appreciating autonomy, express the need for clear guidelines to prevent decision-making from becoming a source of cognitive strain. A teacher states, "Autonomy is great, but it comes with its own set of challenges. Clarity is key."

Another teacher reflects "Having the autonomy to make decisions allows me to streamline my work and manage the cognitive load more efficiently." This aligns with Self-Determination Theory explored in Chapter 2. Teachers who feel they have the autonomy to make decisions about their teaching methods, possess the necessary skills to excel in their roles, and maintain positive relationships with students and colleagues are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation. (Deci and Ryan, 1985)

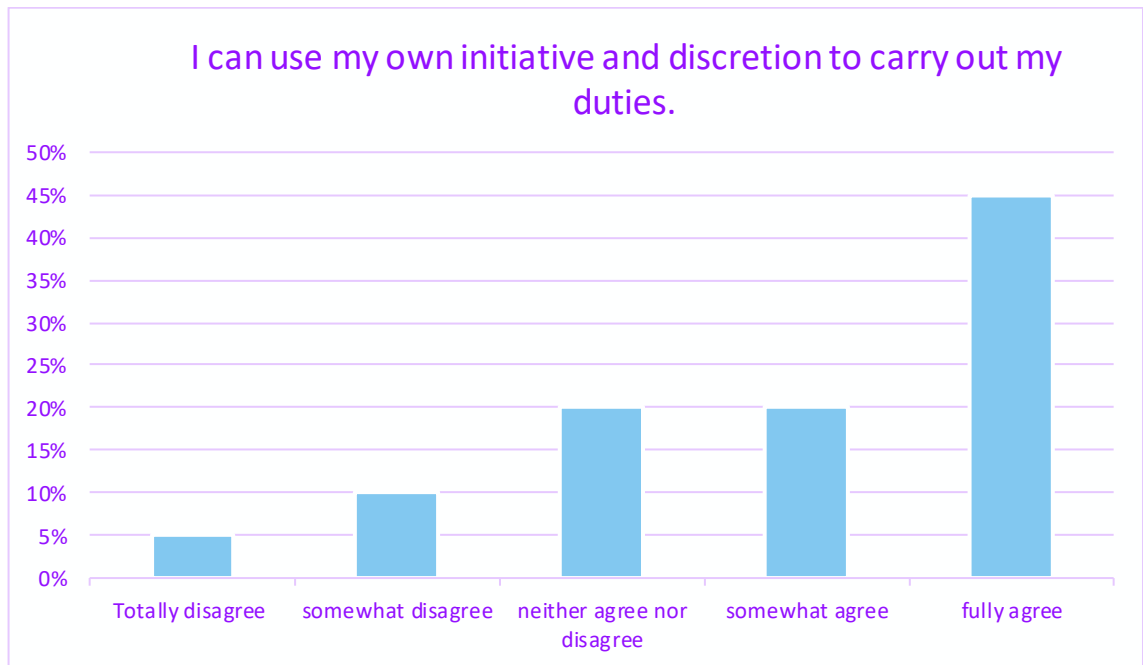


Figure 19: Expatriate teachers' reflections on use of initiative in the workplace.

4.2.8 Lack of Recovery

A theme that has emerged from survey results highlights how teachers are not recovering from workload pressures, which can increase brain load. The ability to balance work and personal life is integral to wellbeing. Survey results indicate that 55% rarely or hardly ever feel they recover enough in their free time. (see figure 22). Offering more flexible work policies could positively impact teachers' ability to strike a healthy work-life balance, thus enhancing their overall sense of wellbeing.

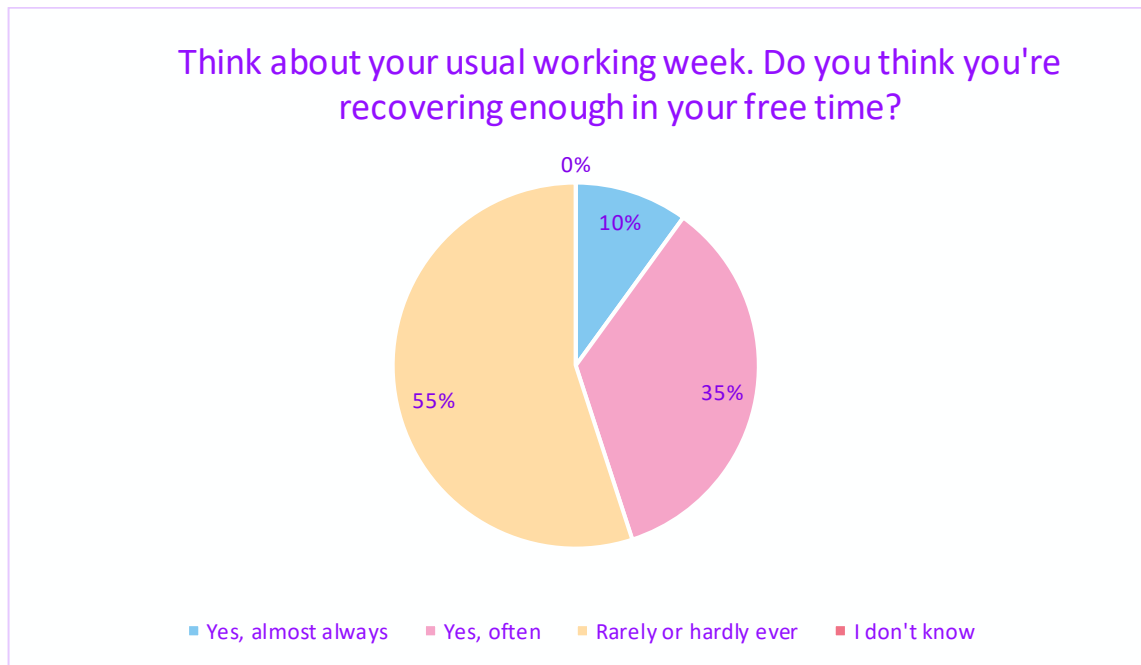


Figure 20: Expatriate teachers' reflections on recovery from work.

4.3 Managing Brain Load

Addressing the challenges posed by brain load is pivotal for fostering a positive work environment for expatriate teachers in Dubai. In this analysis, we draw upon survey statistics to explore effective strategies employed by teachers to navigate and manage their cognitive burdens.

4.3.1 Strategic Workload Allocation

A significant 55% of teachers find themselves often immersed in their work, and an additional 35% experience this intensity very often (see figure 13). Despite the demanding nature of their roles, teachers exhibit resilience by strategically allocating their time and efforts. One teacher states, "Prioritising tasks and setting realistic goals are crucial in managing the workload effectively."

4.3.2 Utilising Support Systems

A robust support system plays a pivotal role in mitigating brain load. As discussed earlier in the chapter, survey results indicate that 80% of teachers can access help and support from colleagues very often or always (see figure 7).

This importance of this collaborative approach is echoed in qualitative responses, with teachers emphasising the value of teamwork. A teacher states, "Having a supportive team where we can share responsibilities lightens the individual cognitive load." This echoes the sentiments shared by Lampinen et al (2013) explored in Chapter 2 about how a supportive work community has a significant impact on teachers' well-being including reduced stress and increased job satisfaction, enhancing their brain health. This sense of belonging is foundational, contributing to a positive and collaborative professional environment. A teacher articulates this sentiment, stating, "Being part of a community fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose."

4.3.3 Mindful Integration of Technology

The integration of technology, acknowledged as a source of increased workload by 25% of teachers, (see figure 15) can be managed effectively through mindful usage. Teachers emphasise the need for strategic deployment of technology. A teacher notes, "Rather than letting technology control our pace, we should control how we use it to prevent unnecessary cognitive strain."

4.3.4 Recognition and Motivation

Motivational factors, including recognition and a sense of purpose, are integral to managing brain load. Recognition, as expressed by one teacher, is simple yet impactful: "Acknowledgment and appreciation fuel our motivation and make the workload more manageable." Another echoes this sentiment by saying they are motivated by "The children, positive words of encouragement and feedback

from colleagues/ senior leaders when lessons/ activities go to plan and hard work has paid off.” This aligns with the research in chapter 2 about Encouraging the Heart. Leaders who celebrate individual and collective successes strengthen team cohesion and enhance teacher well-being. (Kouzes & Posner, 2017)

4.4 Self- Leadership Skills

The dynamics of teaching demand not only expertise in the subject matter but also a keen sense of self-leadership. Expatriate teachers in Dubai exhibit a varying range of self-leadership skills that significantly impact their professional journey.

4.4.1 Setting Personal Goals

50% of teachers somewhat agree and 35% fully agree that they set clear goals for their own work performance (see figure 21). This data points to a proactive approach to self-leadership, where teachers articulate and pursue their objectives. One teacher reflects, "Setting personal goals keeps me motivated and provides a roadmap for my professional growth."



Figure 21: Expatriate teachers' reflections on goal setting.

4.4.2 Reflective Practices

Reflecting on one's beliefs and assumptions is a cornerstone of effective self-leadership. Survey results indicate that 50% fully agree, and 45% somewhat agree that they reflect on their beliefs when facing challenging situations (see figure 22). This approach allows teachers to continually refine their practices. A teacher shares, "Reflection is a powerful tool; it helps me evolve and adapt in different situations."

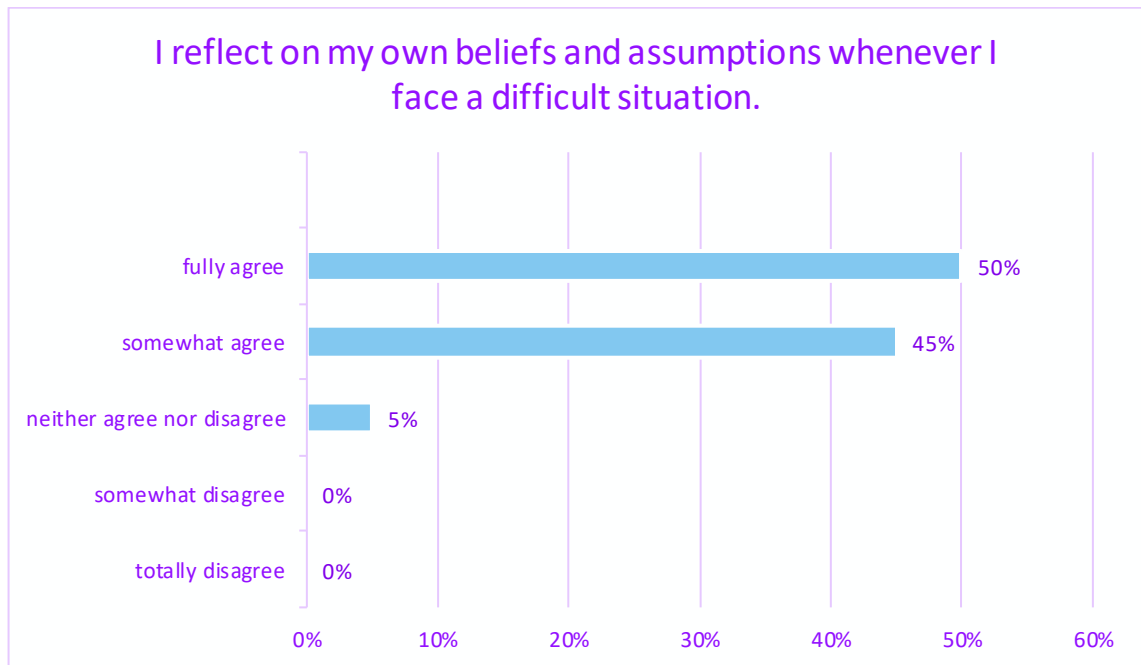


Figure 22: Expatriate teachers' thoughts on reflections after difficult situations.

4.4.3 Assessment of Self-Leadership Skills

When asked to rate their self-leadership skills, teachers presented a diverse array of perspectives. Some highlighted areas of strength, such as goal setting, reflection, and effective time management. Others acknowledged the need for improvement, especially in areas like consistency and prioritisation. One teacher states, "While I excel in goal setting, I recognise the need for more consistency in my self-leadership journey."

4.4.4 Challenges in Self-Leadership

Several teachers pointed out challenges in maintaining self-leadership, often citing personal and family stresses as potential deterrents. Balancing personal and professional commitments emerged as a common struggle. A teacher expresses, "While I prioritise self-leadership at work, external pressures sometimes make it challenging to maintain this balance."

4.4.5 Motivation as a Self-Leadership Driver

Motivation, intricately linked with self-leadership, surfaced as a prominent theme. Teachers identified passion for education, opportunities for growth, and positive team environments as key motivators. Recognition and appreciation from colleagues and leaders further fuel their self-leadership journey. A teacher articulates, "Motivation is the fuel for self-leadership; it keeps me inspired and committed to continuous improvement."

This aligns with the research in Chapter 2 by Skaalvik and Skaalvik which emphasised the significance of providing teachers with the tools and strategies to take control of their professional lives. By nurturing self-leadership skills, educators gain the ability to set goals, manage stress, and navigate the demanding educational landscape more effectively. This, in turn, contributes to a heightened sense of well-being and job satisfaction (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2010).

4.4.6 Consistency in Self-Leadership

Consistency in applying self-leadership skills emerged as an area for growth. Some teachers acknowledged that while they demonstrate self-leadership in specific contexts, maintaining this consistency across diverse situations remains a challenge. One teacher reflects, "Consistency is the key to effective self-leadership; it's an ongoing journey of refinement."

4.4.7 Cultivating Self-Awareness

A theme echoed in qualitative responses is the importance of self-awareness in effective self-leadership. Teachers expressed the need to understand their strengths and areas for improvement. A teacher emphasises, "Knowing myself allows me to leverage strengths and address weaknesses, a crucial aspect of self-leadership."

4.5 Ethical Load

This exploration delves into the moral dilemmas faced by teachers, shedding light on their perspectives, challenges, and the strategies employed to navigate this sensitive topic.

4.5.1 Unraveling Ethical Load

The survey highlights that 45% of expatriate teachers in Dubai quite rarely find themselves in situations where they feel they can't meet others' expectations of their work (see figure 23). This statistic indicates a moderate level of ethical challenges, suggesting that teachers, for the most part, feel equipped to meet expectations. One teacher reflects, "Striking the right balance between meeting expectations and staying true to ethical principles is a delicate dance."

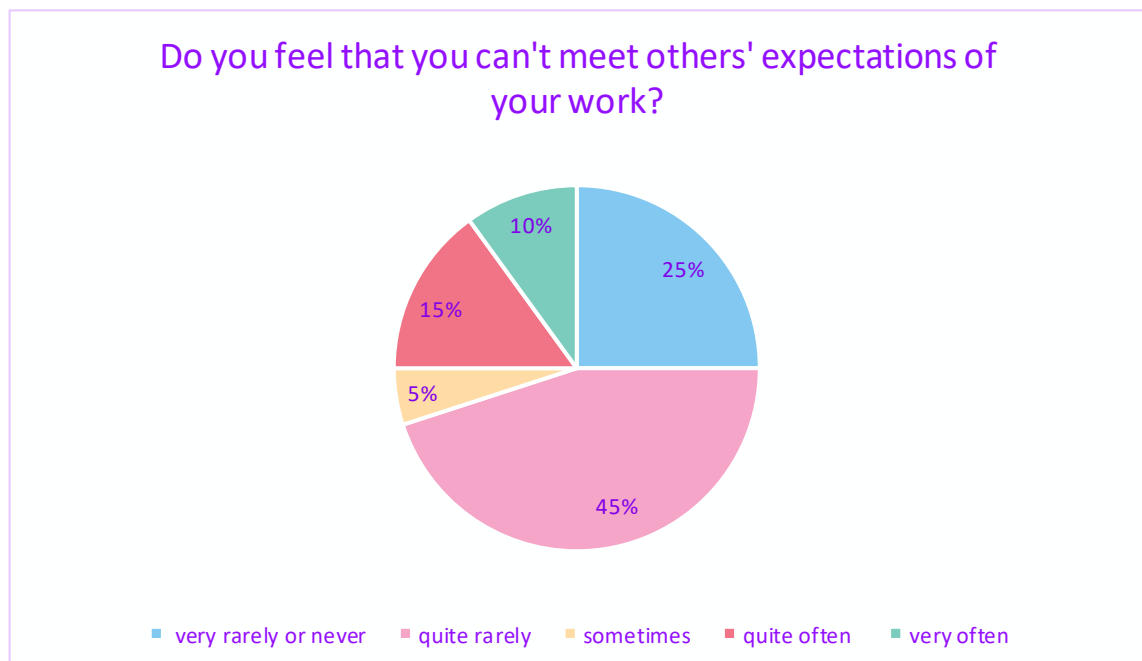


Figure 23: Expatriate teachers' reflections on meeting others' expectations of their work

4.5.2 Moral Challenges in Teaching Practices

Qualitative responses delve into specific ethical challenges teachers face in their day-to-day practices. Altering grades after moderation feedback, using inappropriate assessments, and changing data to meet the school's needs emerge as recurrent themes. These scenarios reflect the delicate balance teachers must navigate to uphold their ethical standards amid institutional demands. A teacher shares, "There are times when I feel torn between doing what's right and meeting the school's expectations." When asked about unethical practices in the workplace one teacher shared that a negative experience was "changing data to meet school's needs. It can be unfair to mislead parents and other teachers."

4.5.3 Conflicting Pressures

Survey responses illicit conflicting pressures that contribute to teachers' ethical load. Heavy administrative tasks, tight deadlines, and the sense of guilt stemming from prioritising paperwork over teaching time create internal conflicts. Qualitative data showed how teachers expressed guilt when focusing on paperwork over teaching responsibilities. A teacher articulates, "Balancing administrative demands and preserving quality teaching time is an ethical tightrope; sometimes, compromises feel inevitable."

4.5.4 Impact on Wellbeing

The intertwining of ethical load with overall occupational wellbeing becomes apparent through teacher reflections. 55% of teachers recognise the impact of negotiating ethical challenges on their stress level (see figure 24). Negotiating ethical challenges can contribute to stress, as teachers strive to maintain integrity while meeting diverse expectations. A teacher acknowledges, "Ethical dilemmas add an extra layer of stress; it's not just about teaching but navigating complex moral landscapes."

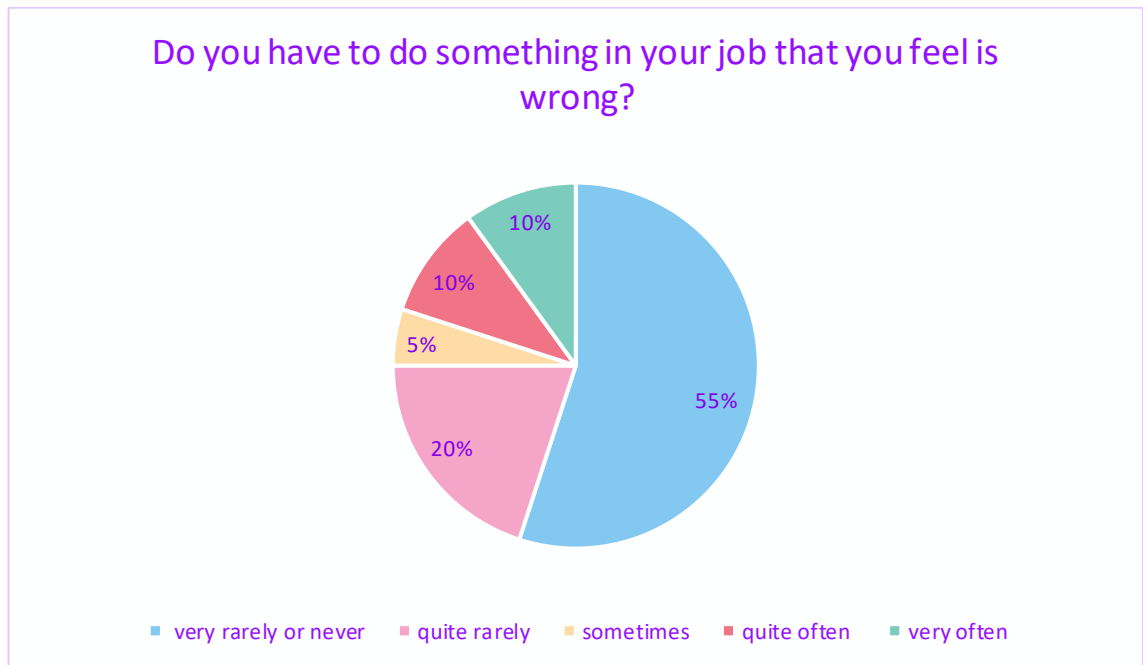


Figure 24: Expatriate teachers' reflections on ethical load in the workplace.

4.5.5 Lack of Clarity in Ethical Expectations

Survey findings indicate that 35% of teachers find themselves in situations where there is no clear, correct answer in their work (see figure 25). This lack of clarity in ethical expectations contributes to the complexity of the ethical load teachers bear. A teacher expresses, "Ambiguities in ethical expectations make decision-making challenging; there's a constant need for clarity."

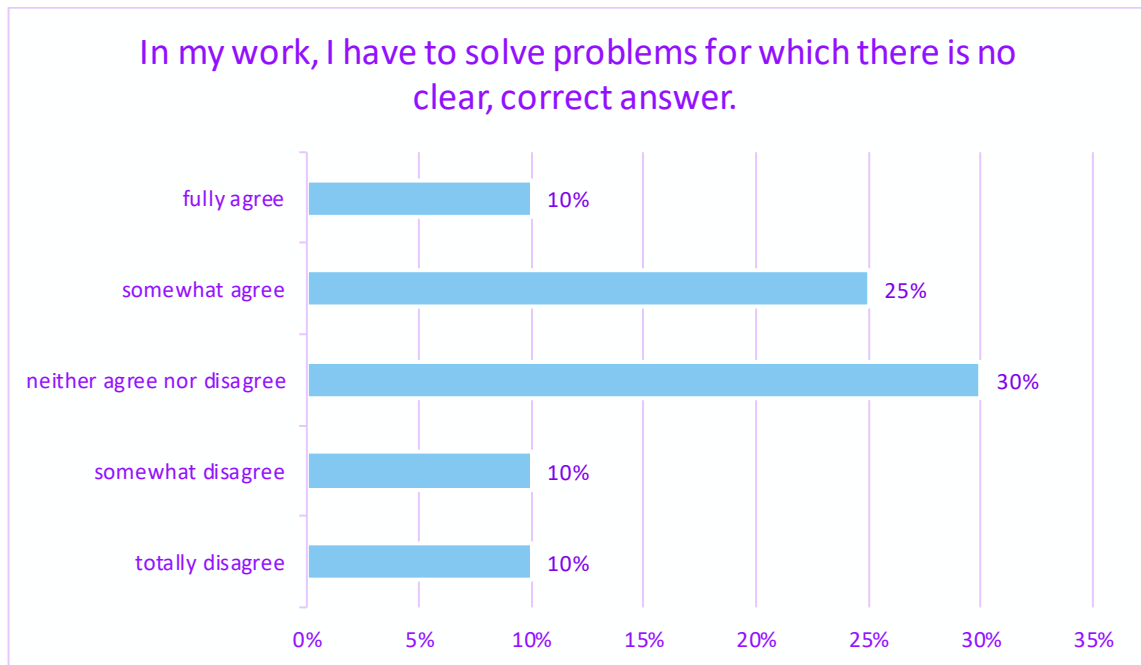


Figure 25: Expatriate teachers reflections on ambiguities when solving problems.

4.5.6 Coping Strategies and Solutions

Teachers, when faced with ethical challenges, employ various coping strategies. Seeking guidance from colleagues, relying on personal principles, and advocating for ethical training emerge as common approaches. A teacher suggests, "Having open conversations about ethical challenges and providing ongoing training can equip teachers to navigate dilemmas more effectively."

5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, both survey results and theoretical framework will be compared to see if survey respondents' answers are in line with the research studied. The research questions this thesis is based on will be answered and limitations of the study will be examined.

5.1 Research Questions

The aim of this thesis was to study expatriate teachers' occupational wellbeing and aspects affecting it. The final part of this thesis will examine the research questions outlined in Chapter 1 and analyse the findings related to the research questions, in light of the theoretical framework and survey analysis. A mixed methods research approach was utilised through open and closed ended survey questions and response analysis.

5.1.1 Central Research Question

The central research question was: **What factors promote expatriate teachers' mental wellbeing in the workplace?**

The central research question was related to expatriate teachers in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. As there are many layers to this question, it was further divided into four sub questions.

The four sub questions were:

1. How do expatriate teachers perceive their self-leadership skills?

2.What are the motivators that drive expatriate teachers in their work?

3.How can understanding of brain health improve the happiness of expatriate teachers?

4.What leadership actions contribute to the positive wellbeing of expatriate teachers?

The answers to these questions explore the themes of self-leadership, motivation, leadership strategies and mental wellbeing which are key to this research.

5.1.2 How do expatriate teachers perceive their self-leadership skills?

The results were varied when teachers rated their self-leadership skills, although data shows that goal setting is important to participants and this is a key feature of self-leadership. Areas of strength mentioned included goal-setting, reflection and effective time management. Others highlighted the need for improvement in areas such as consistency and prioritisation. 50% of teachers fully agreed that they actively work on improving self-awareness, a key component of self-leadership skills. Some teachers acknowledged that while they demonstrated self-leadership in specific contexts, maintaining this consistency across different situations was a challenge. Challenges in self-leadership skills emerged as balancing personal and family stresses with professional commitments.

As outlined in Chapter 2, self-leadership occurs when teams and individuals perceive a situation, choose to engage in behaviour to align actions with standards, monitor activities and cognitions to encourage the desired behaviour, and then assess how the behaviour influences the situation (Manz, 1986). 50% of

teachers surveyed somewhat agree and 35% fully agree that they set clear goals for their own work performance, highlighting a proactive approach to self-leadership.

Self-leading employees have more positive experiences at work. They also tend to have higher productivity and more fulfilling careers. (Stewart, Courtright, Manz, 2010). Strategies for self-leadership involve oneself setting goals independently, self-observation of performance towards those goals, regulation of behaviour and provision of self-reward (Neck & Houghton, 2006). 50% of teachers surveyed fully agree that they actively work on improving self-awareness.

The results of the open and closed ended survey questions triangulate with the research in Chapter 2, highlighting the importance of self-leadership skills. Although how teachers rated their own self-leadership skills varied, it is evident that having their own goals to work towards is important in the expatriate workplace in Dubai.

5.1.3 What are the motivators that drive expatriate teachers in their work?

The key motivating factors for teachers surveyed were autonomy, praise and student progress. 45% of teachers somewhat agreed they have autonomy in the decision-making process and 30% fully agreed. This indicates moderate levels of autonomy evident with teachers expressing a desire for more independence. Teachers expressed the simplicity, yet high impact of recognition for a job well done, stating how it can make a heavy workload more manageable.

Student progress was also mentioned as a motivating factor, highlighting passion for the teaching profession by respondents.

The importance of praise as a motivating factor aligns with the research in chapter 2 about Encouraging the Heart. Leaders who celebrate individual and collective successes strengthen team cohesion and enhance teacher well-being. (Kouzes & Posner, 2017)

Motivation is a key aspect in successful self-leadership. Motivations mentioned by expatriate teachers included “passion for education” “opportunities for growth” and “positive team environments” as key motivators.

Self- Determination Theory (SDT), as outlined in Chapter 2, is a framework for comprehending intrinsic motivation. According to SDT, there are three basic psychological needs that influence intrinsic motivation: **autonomy, competence and relatedness.**

Teachers reflected on their autonomy and decision making in survey feedback. As mentioned above, 45% somewhat agreed that they have autonomy in the decision-making process while 30% fully agreed. A teacher reflects: “Empowering teachers with more autonomy fosters a sense of trust and value.”

Competence: Feeling that individual skills and abilities are valued contributes significantly to wellbeing. Survey data reveals that 30% of teachers somewhat agree and 50% fully agree that their skills are recognised and utilised within the team.

Relatedness is the need to feel connected and belongingness with others which is a recurring theme in the survey responses. The importance of a positive work community is highlighted in survey responses with 80% of respondents saying that they can get help and support from their colleagues very often or always. 50% state they can get help from their managers very often or always. This highlights the importance of a supportive work community and a sense of belongingness. It also highlights a gap in the data where senior management need to improve their relatedness with staff members.

5.1.4 How can understanding of brain health improve the happiness of expatriate teachers?

Understanding brain health can improve the happiness of expatriate teachers in the workplace. From survey results, factors contributing to brain load include congestion of workload, deadline/ time pressures, lack of clear communication, lack of autonomy and lack of recovery. These responses link with understanding the psychosocial workload factors that contribute to brain load as mentioned in Chapter 2. In addition to self-leadership skills and Self-Determination Theory, if psychosocial workload factors are adequately managed, it will have a positive effect on the mental health of teachers.

This consists of striking a balance between workloads that are either too high or too low and unreasonably tight deadlines. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, 2022). This emerged as a concern from many teachers surveyed. "It's not just about the quantity of work but also the unevenness that adds to the mental strain," reflected one expatriate teacher. 55% of teachers

find themselves often immersed in their work, with an additional 35% experiencing this intensity very often.

McMillan and Chavis created a comprehensive framework for understanding the concept of a supportive work community where everyone has a voice and a shared emotional connection. (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). One respondent stressed “Having a supportive team where we can share responsibilities lightens the individual cognitive load.” 70% of teachers somewhat agree that they feel part of a community at work.

Other areas highlighted in the responses from teachers not outlined in the literature include:

- The importance of clear communication – 20% of respondents fully agree and 30% somewhat agree that they face challenges due to a lack of clear instruction on expectations. This is also highlighted when teachers reflect on the impact of a lack of clarity when there are no clear, correct answers in work. “Ambiguities in ethical expectations make decision-making challenging; there’s a constant need for clarity.”
- Flexible work policies – respondents noted balancing professional and personal obligations as a source of stress with 55% of respondents rarely or hardly ever recovering enough in their free time.
- Mindful integration of technology – 25% of teachers surveyed acknowledged technology as a source of increased workload.

5.1.5 What leadership actions contribute to the positive wellbeing of expatriate teachers?

Although this thesis focuses on the role of self-leadership, the role of senior leaders is a key component in promoting positive mental wellbeing amongst expatriate teachers in Dubai. As covered in Chapter 2, Pusvitasari, Viriyavejakul and Sumettikoon (2020) outline the critical link between effective leadership in promoting educators' mental health in the workplace.

The importance of The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B.2017) comes to light in the answers of survey respondents.

Inspire a Shared Vision consists of involving team members in developing and refining the vision allowing leaders to foster a shared commitment to achieving meaningful goals which aligns with the importance of goal setting to the survey respondents (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B.2017).

Enable others to act – leaders who enable others to act foster a culture where individuals have the autonomy to make decisions and take ownership of their work. (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B.2017). By trusting their team's abilities, leaders promote a sense of competence and responsibility, which can lead to higher job satisfaction and a stronger sense of well-being amongst teachers (Pusvitasari et al. 2023) Recognition is important to respondents with one teaching saying "Acknowledgement and appreciation fuel our motivation and make the workload more manageable."

Encourage the heart is about recognising and appreciating the efforts and contributions of team members. This boosts morale, builds and supports a positive

and supportive work environment and enhances motivation. (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B.2017). One teacher noted “A positive work environment with supportive colleagues and a sense of energy elevates my mood and contributes to my overall wellbeing.”

5.2 Conclusions

It is clear from the survey responses that the research highlighted in Chapter 2 gives a thorough explanation of factors to promote positive brain health in expatriate teachers. Suggestions to enhance brain health of expatriate teachers will be outlined in this chapter, in the context of responses elicited from survey data.

Through answering of the research questions in section 5.1, the key elements for brain health/ mental wellbeing of expatriate teachers emerge as follows:

5.2.1 Self- Leadership Skills

With varying degrees of competency and confidence in the pursuit of self-leadership skills, senior leadership of Dubai schools could run professional development for staff with training on how to master this area. Senior leaders need to lead by example to promote this. As mentioned in chapter 2, the presence of effective external leadership (focused on empowering and facilitating individual and team self-leadership) can not only be consistent with but is usually a necessary component of effective self-leadership in practice (Manz, 1991; Manz & Sims, 1987, 1990, 1991).

5.2.2 A Positive Work Environment

The importance of a positive work environment is highlighted by teachers in this study and is an integral part of supporting brain health of employees. As discussed in Chapter 2, implementing a supportive work community can increase brain health and well-being of employees. McMillan and Chavis (1986) offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the concept of a supportive work community. They define it as a place where individuals feel a sense of belonging, trust, and mutual support (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Senior leaders who are unsure about how their employees feel about their work environment could ask staff to fill out a survey, gather feedback and use a change model to improve their work environment, if necessary.

One change model that could be used is the Beckhard and Harris, change formula: *organism* (Cameron, E., and Green, M. (2012). Beckhard and Harris' Change Equation shows that, for change to work, there has to be sufficient dissatisfaction with the old way of doing things. But people also need to feel confident that the new approach will be better – and that there's a clear route to get there. (Cameron, E., and Green, M. (2012).

The change model is as follows:

C = Change

A = Level of dissatisfaction with the status quo

B = Desirability of the proposed change or end state

D = Practicality of the change (minimal risk and disruption)

X = Cost of changing

Applying this to creating a positive work environment could look as follows:

C = survey staff at the end of the academic year and find out their levels of satisfaction with work community. From this, find areas that are lacking and make them the change priorities.

A=even though management may feel their school community is happy and thriving, it is important to be open to hearing criticism but knowing that it will increase staff brain health can be a motivating factor.

B=the end state is for all teachers to be satisfied that they work in a supportive work environment

D=training may be needed at senior leadership level about brain health and the benefits of a supportive work environment. Teaching staff too will have some professional development in their allocated professional development time devoted to team building activities.

X= there may be costs involved in upskilling senior leadership and focusing on well-being initiatives but it will benefit the community at school which will lead to less teacher attrition, so it is a worthy investment.

5.2.3 Recognition of Individual Contributions

This can be adapted to schools by focusing on *The Five Practises of Exemplary Leadership* (Kouzes, J. and Posner, B.2017). School leaders need to be reminded of the high value of a small thing such as recognition and praise. Senior leaders could have a focus on each of the leadership actions: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Hear to enhance staff wellbeing. Leaders can be encouraged to have more open conversations with staff to encourage and motivate them in the workplace, ensuring to acknowledge and praise ongoing hard work and commitment to the profession.

5.2.4 High Levels of Autonomy

Teachers who feel they have the autonomy to make decisions about their teaching methods, possess the necessary skills to excel in their roles, and maintain positive relationships with students and colleagues are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1985). School leaders need to understand the value of autonomy in the profession and allow their staff to feel autonomous in the decision-making process. If school leaders feel that this is an area in which they are unsure how to implement change, they can use to Kotter's Model of Change as a guideline. There are 8 steps involved in the change process which include: creating a sense of urgency, forming powerful guiding coalitions, developing a vision and a strategy, communicating the vision, removing obstacles and empowering employees for action, creating short-term

wins, consolidating gains and strengthening change by anchoring change in the culture (see figure 26). (Cameron, E., and Green, M, 2012).



Figure 26: Kotter's 8 Step Model for Change Management. Source: Visual Paradigm Online, 2023.

The areas which arose from the study that also contribute to optimum brain health are:

5.2.5 Mindful use of technology

Receiving communication through multiple means was listed as a factor that contributed negatively to brain health of teachers. By reducing professional contact to during working hours only, this can positively impact brain health of expatriate teachers (Cashin, Cottam, Drew & Coulter, 2021). This is related to the psychosocial work factors outlined in Chapter 2 as it outlines that irregular working hours or having to be on call outside of working hours can have a harmful impact on employee health. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in

Finland, 2022). Establishing a policy with clear boundaries about communication will resolve this issue for teachers.

5.2.6 Flexible work policies

The need for flexible work policies was drawn upon by teachers surveyed as they sought to strike a balance between personal and professional commitments. School leaders can support staff with this by reducing the frequency of face – to – face meetings and establishing flexible school timings if staff have personal commitments that need to be adhered to at the end of the working day (Cashin, Cottam, Drew & Coulter, 2021).

5.2.7 Clear Communication in the Workplace

This was a common theme that emerged from the voices of teachers surveyed. The importance of clear communication cannot be underestimated. Communication promotes trust and loyalty among employees and encourages better teamwork and relationships in the workplace (Leblebici, 2012). By establishing a policy for communication, school leaders can ensure that senior management are aware of the protocols of communication and how they can support staff in ensure the clarity of this communication.

5.3 Limitations

Every effort was made to ensure the reliability and validity of the study. Potential limitations lie in the fact that 75% of survey respondents were female. This is indicative of a female-dominated profession but, if conducting research again, it could be advised to aim for more of a gender balance for un-biased results.

The original intention of the survey was to gather insights of teachers based in the UAE but after sending out the survey by email to schools and sharing on social media, as Dubai is where the researcher is based, the respondents all worked in Dubai so a larger picture of the UAE as a whole did not happen, Dubai was the focus city.

Finally, the survey was long with lots of questions for which respondents wrote detailed results and insights. As face-to-face interviews were never conducted, it is hard to gauge if responses would be the same in person or perhaps give clearer insight than reading and interpreting of responses.

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey for expatriate teachers

(Please note only questions that were relevant to the research analysis are listed below).

Is your workload unevenly distributed so that work is congested? Evaluate the requirements related to your work. Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Are you busy with your work? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Do you have too much work to do? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Do you have to make quick decisions in your work? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Does your work require solid concentration? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Does your work have clear goals? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Do you get all the information you need to perform well in your work? Evaluate requirements on a scale of 1 to 5. Scale: 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

In my work I have to solve problems for which there is no clear, correct answer. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

In my work, I often have to face problems that I have never encountered before. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

My work requires my creativity. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

My work requires unique ideas or solutions to problems. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

I can use my own initiative and discretion to carry out my duties. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

I have the opportunity to make decisions related to my work independently. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

I have significant autonomy in the decision making process of my work. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Can you use your own expertise in your work? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Do you have the opportunity to develop your skills in your work? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Is there too many new things to learn in your work? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

In my work, I have to follow a lot of information. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

My work requires a lot of thinking. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Technology forces me to work faster. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

The complexity of technology has increased my workload. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Our organisation provides training for staff before introducing new technologies. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Technology helps me improve the quality of my work. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Technology helps me identify innovative ways to do my job. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Can you get help and support from your colleagues if needed? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Can you get help and support from your manager if needed? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

If I make a mistake in my job, it's often used against me. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Taking risks is safe for our team. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

It is hard to ask our team members for help. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

My individual abilities and skills are valued and utilised in the work of our team. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

Stress refers to a situation in which a person feels tense, restless, nervous, anxious or difficult to sleep while things are constantly bothering them. Think. Do you feel this kind of stress these days?

For the purposes of this survey, brain load refers to all work-related factors that reduce the effectiveness and quality of work. The brain load is increased by disturbances, interruptions, data floods, ambiguities, time pressure, learning new things, memory load, decision making and ethical load among other things. What factors do you feel in your work cause your brain to feel overloaded in connection with e.g. work community, organisation, management, tools or your own activities?

What factors do you feel that your work helps you manage brain loads in relation to work community, organisation, management, tools or your own activities (e.g. release time/ wellbeing initiatives) How can they improve this?

I set clear goals for my own work performance. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

I reflect on my own beliefs and assumptions whenever I face a difficult situation. Scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = fully agree.

How would you rate your self-leadership skills? Justify your answer. (Self-leadership skills include goal setting, self-observation, creating natural rewards as a way to improve your own motivation and general well-being)

Describe what motivates you in your work. List the three main motivating factors. Can you implement these in your work?

Do you have to do something in your job that you feel is wrong? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

Do you feel that you can't meet others' expectations of your work? 1= very rarely or never, 2 = quite rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = very often or always.

What has been the most ethically unsatisfactory situation in your current job?

Describe related thoughts, emotions, people etc.

Think about your working week. Do you think you're recovering enough in your free time? 1= Yes, almost always, 2 = Yes often, 3 = Rarely or hardly ever, 4 = I don't know. 5 = No.

What factors increase your well-being at work?