



Wellbeing of private school teachers in international school settings

Neil Cunningham

MASTER'S THESIS
December 2022

Master of Business Administration
Educational Leadership

ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Master's Degree Programme in Educational Leadership

CUNNINGHAM, NEIL:

Wellbeing of private school teachers in international school settings.

Bachelor's thesis 134 pages, of which appendices and bibliography 23 pages
December 2022

Teaching is widely acknowledged as a demanding profession. As a result of increasing accountability, expectations and workload, teachers are under ever-growing pressures. Research has shown that more and more teachers are considering leaving the profession due to experiences of burnout, confounded by a lack of recognition or motivation. Within the private school sector, schools are under constant scrutiny from their fee-paying customers, and the inspection and grading processes applied by external bodies creates a competitive culture between schools. This study aims to understand the perceptions of teacher wellbeing in international private schools, as well as the corresponding leadership actions and practices that enhance wellbeing and promote flourishing.

This study, conducted in Dubai, adopted a mixed-methods approach. A quantitative survey which comprised of aspects from the PERMAH workplace profiler (Seligman, 2011), as well as open-response questions regarding common themes from the literature investigating school-based evaluation, climate, culture and leadership styles were utilised to gather perceptions of teacher wellbeing. Further to this, semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand the lived experiences of a range of high and low wellbeing teachers.

The results from this study indicate that teachers working in international private schools feel positively regarding the relationships that they have with their colleagues and are experiencing relatively high levels of accomplishment within their job. However, teachers are experiencing increasing stress and workloads, limited rewards and a lack of trust from their leaders in their workplaces. Teachers also indicated that inadequate personalised professional development opportunities and particular leadership practices and styles negatively impact wellbeing.

Supporting these results with published research, there is evidence to suggest that international private educational institutions need to strongly consider the provision individualised wellbeing care for their teaching staff, as well as educating staff on self-care. Further to this, research has evidenced correlations between teacher wellbeing, student outcomes and school performance. Prioritising a whole school community approach to care can play a vital role in enhancing wellbeing and outcomes for all.

Key words: teacher wellbeing, leadership, care, actions, practices, flourishing

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GLOSSARY or ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS (choose one or other)

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
UAE	United Arab Emirates
WB	Wellbeing
TWB	Teacher Wellbeing
SWB	Subjective Wellbeing
EI	Emotional Intelligence
PP	Positive Psychology
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
PD	Professional Development
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
COP	Communities of Practice
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
KHDA	The Knowledge and Human Development Authority
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

1 INTRODUCTION

In the introduction section, background information regarding the term “wellbeing” will be discussed, alongside the research context and questions to be investigated within this thesis.

1.1 Background

“Wellbeing” (WB) encompasses numerous factors, dimensions and perceptions. Definitions of the term range from the more simplistic, such as being “your ability to feel good” (The Wellbeing Lab, 2020, p.2) to the more expansive and complex, for example “stable wellbeing is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular challenge” (Dodge et.al, 2012). The covid-19 pandemic has, more than ever, brought the issue of WB further to light. In 2020, the term “self-care” was the most searched google query online (Times of India, 2020), whilst many businesses have capitalised on the growing wellness market, with the sector now valued at over \$1.5 trillion, with annual growth rates between 5 to 10% (Callaghan et.al., 2021).

Teacher well-being (TWB) is an important aspect for flourishing schools. Research in to the area of TWB has increased greatly, however despite this, clearly defining the term as well as providing realistic strategies to enhance TWB remains challenging and unclear. Current popular definitions regarding TWB include “a positive emotional state, which is the result of harmony between the sum of specific environmental factors on the one hand, and the personal needs of teachers on the other” (Aelterman et.al., 2007). Acton and Glasgow (2015) also describe TWB as “an individual sense of personal professional fulfilment, satisfaction, purposefulness and happiness, constructed in a collaborative process with colleagues and students.”

The education sector has severely been impacted recently with regard WB. As a result of the pandemic, students and teachers across the globe were thrust in to crisis distance-learning and had to work in conditions which many had never experienced. Rapidly shifting between hybrid and remote modes of instruction brought uncertainty, instability, stress and worry. Globally, many schools reacted

and implemented strategies to support their student's navigation through these challenging times, however little evidence has been provided regarding the provision of WB care that was available for the educators (Cann, 2019). Some studies indicated that during this time teachers were much more stressed teaching online than off-campus (Collie, 2021), whilst leaders and principals demonstrated increasing levels of anxiety due to unprecedented working conditions, lack of experience and resources (Allen, Jerrim & Sims, 2020).

Preceding to the pandemic, TWB had already been highlighted as a growing issue. The OECD (2019) raised concerns over the number of teachers leaving the profession early due to feelings of stress, burnout and a lack of support or recognition. Other reports state that as high as 40% of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of full-time employment (Le Cornu, 2013). Those teachers that choose to remain as educators and active in the sector face increasing challenges that impact TWB which could lead to disengagement, poor performance and health issues, whilst higher levels of TWB has been shown to improve staff retention, positive emotions and resilience (Cameron & Lovett, 2015; Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011).

1.2. Research Context

This study investigates perceptions of TWB, leadership actions and practices impacting TWB care within private international schools, conducted in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). Within the private education sector in Dubai, standards and expectations are continuously rising. The nations' leaders admirable desire to provide their residents with the highest quality of life. Through Vision 2021, as part of the UAE National Agenda, the provision of a first-rate education system is prioritised. Achieving and evidencing this involves regular assessment, benchmarking and inspection for quality control of the provision. For private schools, annual inspections take place from the governing education body, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), where institutes are graded in a range of criterion from "very weak" to "outstanding."

Student enrolment in Dubai private schools has increased by 4.9% in the last academic year, resulting in over 300,000 students attending private institutions in

2021 (Rayner, 2022). The financial benefits of this increased enrolment, as well as being graded as an outstanding school are evident in Dubai, with average annual student fees for these schools equating to over 40,000AED (\$11,000), whilst the total annual revenue accrued in private schools exceeds 8.45billion AED (\$2.3 billion) (Invest in Dubai, 2022; PwC Middle East, 2019). Due to this economic trend, school leaders and teachers are under increasing pressure from financiers and CEO's to improve ratings of their schools. Combine this pressure with working in and adapting to a new culture, increased time away from families, longer working hours and increased administrative tasks, teachers in international schools are under increasing risk of stress, demotivation and exhaustion (Dharamshi, cited in Rizvi 2020a).

KHDA have identified TWB as a growing concern and they have “encouraged school leaders, teachers, parents and students to better understand the concept of wellbeing” (KHDA, 2022). Since 2018, they have conducted an annual survey with the education force, titled “Adults @ Work” and investigates many aspects of job satisfaction. Schools can opt to take part in this research study and from the results, some positive trends can be seen since its inauguration. This includes an increase in the percentage of teachers that feel that they are “living well.” However, from the most recent report (KHDA, 2021), some arguably concerning results have been generated, including:

- The percentage of teachers who feel that they are “consistently striving” has decreased from 23.6% to 19.4%, whilst 6% of teachers feel that they are “really struggling.”
- The percentage of teachers who feel that they get a “good night’s sleep” has decreased by almost 7%.
- 63.1% of teachers and 61.5% of school leaders felt that they work longer hours than previous years.
- Only 58.3% of teachers felt “highly able to manage their wellbeing.”
- Almost half of the teachers surveyed did not feel “strongly motivated” to improve their wellbeing.

1.3 Research questions

With TWB being negatively impacted as a result of increasing workload, expectations and circumstances, poor TWB has also shown to be a detrimental factor in achieving school improvement (Parker et.al., 2012). Having a workforce of educators that are motivated to achieve and happy in their environment could have direct implications on school performance and inspection results, and therefore financial returns for private sector investors. Thus suggesting that positive TWB is beneficial for all. Therefore, with evidence indicating that increasing demands are impacting TWB, teachers feel unable to manage their own WB and that positive TWB leads to enhanced productivity and outcomes, this poses the following research questions:

- 1. What is the current status of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers?**
- 2. What are the current perceptions of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers?**
- 3. What strategies have been implemented in Dubai private schools that are effective at supporting and enhancing TWB?**
- 4. What leadership actions are effective in supporting and enhancing TWB in Dubai private schools?**

1.4. Research aims and methods

Within this thesis, the overall aim is to gather appropriate and realistic actions, practices and strategies that can be applied by private school teachers in international private schools to support and enhance TWB. To do this, a mixed methods approach was adopted incorporating a questionnaire comprising of quantitative response questions, with responses provided on a Likert scale from 0-10. Supplementary open-ended response questions were also included to further support the data collected. This questionnaire was implemented to ascertain the current perceptions of TWB amongst private school teachers across a range of schools within Dubai. 83 respondents took part in this questionnaire and this data was further supplemented with follow up semi-structured interviews with 4 of these participants. These interviews generated additional qualitative data and

also enabled participants to further elaborate into their lived experiences regarding effective strategies that have enhanced TWB. From this data and the published research analysed, specific effective actions and practices were recommended that can be implemented by schools, teachers and leaders across Dubai private schools to enhance TWB.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will discuss and review the published literature and theories regarding wellbeing and its application to the education sector.

2. 1 Wellbeing as a concept

Wellbeing (WB) as a concept has developed over recent years. Within the concept of WB, many dimensions are now considered in a multifaceted definition. It can simply be viewed as “complex combination of a person’s physical, mental, emotional and social health factors” (Better Health Channel, 2020). A more recent societal trend focusing on WB is evident, manifested largely due to the covid-19 pandemic, and as the media displays WB more prevalently, this enhances engagement in the topic, sparking conversation and debate over a seemingly sensitive area. However, WB as a theoretical concept is not a new area of discussion and its original framework has many different conceptualisations and theories, rooted predominantly with hedonic and eudemonic theory.

With an emphasis on happiness versus sadness, a hedonic theory viewpoint with regard to WB focuses on enjoyable experiences, pleasure and expression of ideas and interests in contrast to pain and suffering (Carter & Anderson, 2019). Effectively, happiness is considered as a positive emotion and conversely sadness is bad. This concept is broad and covers a range of sensory stimulating episodes, as well as valued experiences. However, within this theory, positive and negative experiences are treated equally regardless of where, when or by whom they are experienced or the actions that caused these emotions (MacAskill, 2021).

Meanwhile, a eudemonic approach considers other mitigating factors in one’s life, including conditions in which they are exposed, as well as the circumstances that an individual is subjected to. Perceptions of these environments and in-turn, the resultant behaviour or actions demonstrated, consequently influence and determine a person’s WB. Where hedonic wellbeing focuses on feelings and emotions, eudemonic wellbeing emphasises control and choices (Vanhoutte, 2015). This relates to self-determination theory as outlined by Deci and Ryan (2000), as well

as Maslow's concept of self-actualization (McLeod, 2022). The concept of eudemonia is further discussed with regard the education sector in the OECD "How's Life" report (2015), defining it as a "sense of meaning and purpose in life, or good psychological functioning." WB can be best understood as the "complex interplay between internal and external factors and how individuals respond to these. It is changeable over time and is dependent on circumstances" (Falecki, 2022). To strengthen WB, we must understand and address it as a holistic concept.

Further to this, research continues to aim to define WB as a concept. In addition to the definitions previously provided, other regular associations are made with terms including "flourishing", "satisfaction" and "fulfilment." WB can also be referred to as "wellness," however this is a misconception, as *actions* and *aspects* of wellness help to *contribute to* the concept of positive WB (Carter & Anderson, 2019). Others argue that WB does not solely consider experiences of joy and positivity, but the balance between negative emotions and interpretation of feelings. WB can be modified and should be viewed as individualised, thus explicitly defining the term is a challenging task. Alternative approaches and interpretations of WB have resulted in the term "subjective wellbeing" (SWB) being utilised, encompassing life satisfaction in relation to pleasant affect and unpleasant affect (Diener et al., 1999). This further led to a tripartite model of subjective wellbeing (Diener and Ryan, 2009) which measured WB in the 3 mentioned components (see Figure 1).

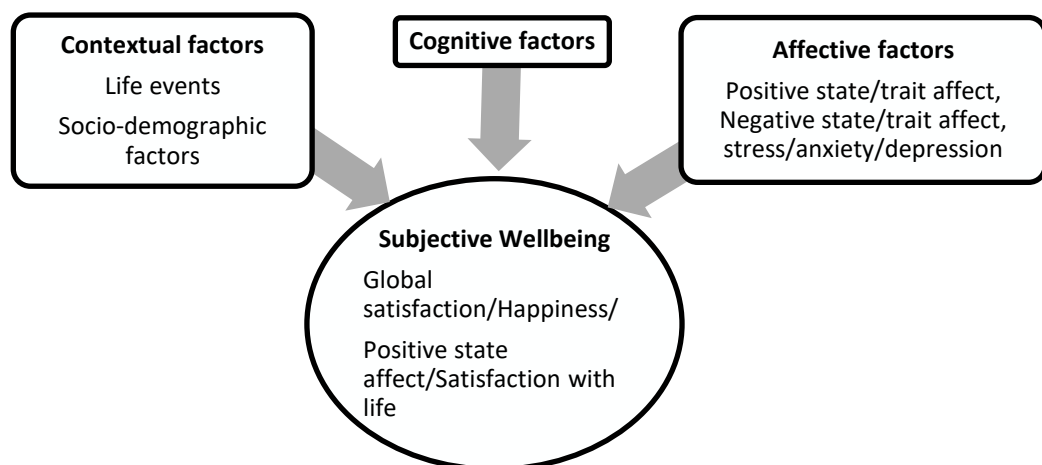


FIGURE 1: Tripartite model of subjective wellbeing adapted from (Galiha and Pais-Ribiero, 2011), cited in Carter and Andersen (2019).

SWB encompasses greater understanding of individualisation within WB. Aspects such as mental health and friendships are positive contributors to one's WB, however do not necessarily cause happiness and fulfilment. Further research supports the idea that WB resides within an individual, noting it as a "dynamic state" (Day & Qing, 2009) and "an individual's capacity to manage ...the range of inputs...that affect a person's emotional, physical and cognitive state in response to a given context" (Gillet-Swan & Sargeant, 2014).

As well as this, other determining factors such as culture and age need to be considered when discussing the factors that influence an individual's happiness (Diener, 2000; Diener 2006). For example, eastern cultures can view harmony as a vital component for happiness (Snyder & Lopez, 2007). Culture is area to be strongly considered regarding WB in schools in cosmopolitan cities such as Dubai, as 85% of the population is expatriate. It is important to consider these multiple aspects and ensuring a balance to achieve the desired outcome regarding one's WB. This balance can be achieved when an individual has the resources and capabilities to manage the challenges faced, as outlined by Dodge et.al, (2012) in their model of wellbeing (see Figure 2).



FIGURE 2: Model of wellbeing as outlined by Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012), cited in McCallum, Price, Graham and Morrison (2017).

WB is comprehended in many other different frameworks as research continues to evolve. Further developing on the hedonic and eudemonic theories, different approaches are researched, for example, Ryff and Keyes (1995) stated that psychological wellbeing can be divided into six different areas including; personal growth, purpose in life, positive relationships, self-acceptance, autonomy and environmental mastery. This also suggests that in order to flourish, high levels of

positive emotions from these domains must be experienced. To further assess and define flourishing, Huppert and So (2013) described ten components that are the opposite of the common symptoms of mental illnesses, such as anxiety and depression.

The PERMA model, as outlined by Seligman (2011) is a widely utilised and recognised wellbeing framework. This divides wellbeing into five pillars (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishments). The origins of this theory are rooted within the concept of positive psychology, and for the purpose of this thesis, will form part of the main theoretical framework.

2.1.1 Positive Psychology

Positive psychology (PP) aims to promote the positive aspects of an individual's life and the subsequent cause and effect of these. PP practices encourage the development of positive mindsets and habits and the development of positive qualities, rather than changing or altering negative aspects of an individual's personality (Seligman, 2011). In a paradigm shift, emphasis is placed on strengths and thriving as opposed to suffering or negativity, however it is not simply experiencing positive emotions or having positive thoughts (Peterson, 2006). The concept of positive psychology (PP) also indicates that a lack of negative feelings is not the same as a presence of positive emotions. The aim of this theory is to identify the determining factors that lead to flourishing in individuals.

PP focuses primarily on perceptions of wellbeing and involves a blend of eudemonic and hedonic dimensions (Ryan & Deci, 2001). In addition to the underpinning PP research, Wong (2011) aimed to rid the positive versus negative connotations of psychological emotions and WB by promoting the positive outcomes that are as a result of negative emotions. Prior to PP, the majority of psychological research targeted negative emotions, illnesses and limitations. PP was developed to apply a more optimistic and constructive approach to psychological research (Maslow, 1954, cited in McLeod, 2022). For example, worry and self-doubt in a task can lead to further trust and interaction with others.

PP aims to transform WB into a concept that is measurable, attainable and relevant. Subsequent aspects of this approach include growth, acceptance and autonomy, which all link closely to TWB and the education sector. The application of PP in schools can be seen through the modifications to school curricula and a focus on the holistic learning of a child and the learning environment, as opposed to subject specific academic attainment (Kern & Wehmeyer, 2021).

Developing from this was the concept of positive education (PE), which is considered a sub-discipline of PP. This theory is the science of teaching about PP, WB and happiness. Research conducted by Seligman et al., (2009) at Geelong Grammar School adopted the teaching of PP to teachers, who in turn relayed this to their students. Over time this led to a culture whereby teachers were reinforced and encouraged to develop their own PP by applying it in their own lives and then teaching this to the students, promoting everyday practice. This evolved to the creation of school policies that embedded WB into all facets of school life. This approach predominantly followed Seligman's PERMA model of wellbeing, also leading to the introduction of additional health (H) dimension, leading to PERMAH. Considering all elements of subjective WB, the PERMAH model will provide the main research framework for this thesis.

Many schools worldwide have since taken this approach of PE and PP through a whole school approach, particularly since the covid-19 pandemic. This was in order to equip their students with skills such as resilience and commitment, as well as generating greater awareness of and relationships between health and academic performance. The PERMAH model can be an approach that can be greater utilised in private schools in Dubai to promote WB and TWB.

2.1.2 PERMAH model of wellbeing

"Flourishing" can be defined as an "optimal state of psycho-social functioning that arises from functioning across multiple domains" (Butler & Kern, 2016). The original PERMA framework model by Seligman (2011), is used to support flourishing in regard to WB. The original model included three dimensions focusing on positive emotions, engagement and meaning within a hedonic approach (Seligman, 2002). As the model developed, additional pillars were added (relationships and

accomplishment) followed by the health (H) dimension to incorporate a more eudemonic approach to WB. However, at times in some studies this particular health aspect is discounted, or alternatively the model is often referred to as PERMA(H), PERMA-H or PERMA+H. Supplementary aspects can also be investigated in further recent modifications of PERMA profilers, which include additional measurements of happiness, negative emotions and loneliness (Kern, 2014).

The PERMA model has been used successfully in a range of research studies to investigate and measure WB in schools and TWB. High levels of WB as per the PERMA model have correlated to positive school environments, student attainment and teacher flourishing (Turner, Thielking & Meyer, 2021). A study of WB and the perception of stress amongst 53 teachers from Saudi Arabia, measured by the PERMA framework, indicated a significant relationship between physical health, positive emotions and low levels of stress (Alqarni, 2021). Kun and Gadancz (2019) investigated TWB amongst Hungarian teachers also using PERMA and stated the importance of perceiving work as meaningful and engaging. They emphasised the correlations between positive perceptions of relationships, school culture, resilience and self-efficacy and how this appears to positively impact teacher productivity and therefore student progress.

Positive Emotion

The first pillar in this framework is positive emotion. Experiencing positive emotions regularly helps individuals to flourish. These feelings lead to open-mindedness and resourcefulness. A greater awareness of positive emotions and the associated feelings often results in positive outcomes, such as enhanced relationships, job satisfaction and even increased life expectancy (Kern, 2020). However, experiencing positive emotions does not always guarantee these positive outcomes. Short term benefits of positive emotions may be felt following certain actions, but may have damaging effects in the long term (Kern, 2020).

Individualisation regarding positive emotion considers dynamic circumstances and situations that each person experiences and their subsequent actions that determine the outcome. These outcomes allow individuals to reflect on the positive or negative emotions experienced at the time and allow for behavioural modifications in future challenges (Kern, 2020). The presence of positive emotions

also does not however guarantee that negative emotions are not being felt simultaneously. In fact, positive emotions can be felt as a product of negative experiences, for example overcoming grief following a bereavement, or persevering through a painful episode (Lovett & Lovett, 2016).

Engagement

The second pillar is engagement, an abstract term that can range from application in a working environment to personal relationships. The term can also be divided into multidimensions such as behavioural engagement, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement. Within the PERMA framework, psychological engagement is a key component and promotes internal motivation and satisfaction (Kern, 2020). Within education, increased student engagement in academics results in improved attendance and attainment in school. This is further enhanced when a sense of meaning and passion are experienced when learning (Appleton Christensen & Furlong, 2008). Maintaining levels of engagement for students and teachers can be a challenge once mastery is experienced, further augmented by other diminishing factors that impact an individual's ability to engage, such as time availability, as well as depleting levels of energy and focus (Lovett & Lovett, 2016).

Relationships

Relationships are a vitally determining factor regarding WB. Direct correlations between the perceptions of the quality of relationships and WB are evident, as happiness has shown to be impacted once relationships are diminished (Lovett & Lovett, 2016). Humans as pack animals require human contact and interaction for flourishing. Without regular contact, the resulting isolation can increase symptoms of mental and physical illness (Kern, 2020). Interpretations of relationships can range from the number of friends, frequency of contact with others and even the amount of social media followers. Nevertheless, research indicates a greater appreciation of genuine connectedness, rather than the quantity of acquaintances. Being heard, trusted and accepted, as well as a balance between supporting and being supported, are aspects most common in effective relationships.

Within schools, following the pandemic, the importance of parent-teacher relationships has also been heightened and additional time and opportunities should

be provided to develop these further (ISC research, 2021). Student-teacher relationships are also heightened when consistent boundaries are in place as there is a greater appreciation for fairness and equality. Whole-school behaviour and pastoral policies have shown to improve school environments, relationships as well as academic results, whilst allowing students a greater voice through student led activities improved learning. Positive classroom environments have also shown to lead to enhanced teacher self-efficacy and feelings of accomplishment, resulting in greater WB (Turner & Thielking, 2019).

Meaning

The fourth dimension of PERMA is meaning. This relates to an individual's sense of belonging, direction and purpose. Having clear connections to a task or job enhances satisfaction and motivation, and therefore WB (Seligman, 2011). Being associated to something that is considered bigger than the individual themselves creates a greater sense of purpose and desire in life. Establishing this cause or greater good is subjective for each individual and dealing with the challenges experienced through this can lead to positive outcomes and emotions (Lovett & Lovett, 2016). Having a sense of meaning has also been shown to lead to improved physical and mental health as well as enhanced job satisfaction. Promising recent research has shown that international teachers feel their work is full of meaning and purpose and they feel that they take pride in what they do (ISC research, 2021).

Accomplishment

Having a sense of accomplishment can be perceived through different lenses. This can be viewed as tangible rewards such as trophies or financial incentives, whilst intrinsic accomplishments can be experienced through achieving personal goals or targets set, overcoming adversity and developing competence or mastery (Kern, 2020). Achievement and accomplishment impact an individual's motivation to pursue further opportunities and challenges. Having appropriate support networks in schools to aid teacher accomplishment, leads to flourishing. Job satisfaction is vital in enhancing TWB and is also a key component in reducing teacher attrition, with research showing that 63% of teachers have considered leaving the profession (Education Support, 2020).

Health

The additional pillar of health was added to PERMA, leading to PERMAH, and thus considers physical and mental health aspects including sleeping patterns, activity levels, stress and diet. Combining these aspects in an individual's daily life has been found to build a solid foundation for WB (McQuaid, 2021). This additional pillar has also led to interpretation of the original five-pillar PERMA model through a physiological lens. Through this lens, individuals are encouraged to view their WB as a body system, muscle group or area of fitness that can be individually tested and targeted. This allows specific routines and programs to be developed and practiced, known as positive interventions, to grow and improve WB, tailored to each individual (McQuaid, 2021).

2.2 Teacher wellbeing (TWB) and flourishing

Research demonstrates that enhanced WB correlates to greater coping ability, relationships, immune response and creativity (Diener, 2000). Thus prioritising, promoting and enhancing WB is considered an incredibly important aspect for schools and educators in order to achieve the best possible outcomes in their institutions. Concerns over TWB have become more prevalent in the international school sector in recent years, with research demonstrating direct links between job satisfaction, dedication, commitment and overall health (Day & Qing, 2009).

Influenced by positive psychology and leadership actions, Cherkowski & Walker (p.72, 2018), developed a conceptual model for flourishing in schools. The three sectors in the model comprise of subjective wellbeing, leaderful mindsets and adaptive communities (figure 3). This model was built around the beliefs that schools consist of the people that walk in to the building each day, not just bricks and mortar (Cherkowski & Walker, 2018).



FIGURE 3: Conceptual model of wellbeing as outlined by Cherkowski & Walker, (2018).

Within schools, it is widely acknowledged that for an education system to be successful, flourishing teachers are at the core of this (figure 3). Where opportunities are provided by schools and leaders to support their teachers to flourish, this results in improved student outcomes and school performance (Cann, 2019). When a teacher is considered “well”, there is also a greater likelihood of a whole school culture of WB being embedded, labelled as a “symbiotic relationship” (Virtanen, Vaaland and Ertesvag, 2019). Teachers need to be equipped with the skills to become aware of their own WB, as well as acquire the ability to modify and control this. By arming teachers with these strategies, this also increases self-efficacy and confidence in teacher ability to share these approaches with their colleagues and students (McCallum et al, 2017).

However, there have been some criticisms and concerns raised regarding the importance and relevance of TWB, stating that it takes a focus away from core responsibilities such as sharing subject knowledge and individual student support. Others argue that by prioritising subject content over welfare, students in turn become more adept and confident and therefore are more capable of managing themselves (Clarke, 2020).

To date, several studies have been conducted which predominantly investigate levels of WB amongst students, however limited studies have assessed TWB

causes, effects or solutions. Statistics show that TWB should be a cause for concern across the globe. For example:

- almost 40% of teachers in USA quit the teaching profession within the first five years (Kidger et al, 2016).
- almost three quarters of teachers in England have experienced some degree of anxiety, with 20% of these considered to have had moderate to severe depression (NASUWT, 2016).
- 44% to 60% of teachers in Scotland frequently feel stressed in their jobs (White, 2020)
- 8% of teachers in New Zealand are clinically depressed (Bianchi et al, 2016)
- 76% of UK teachers state the workload is too high and unmanageable (Aragon, 2016).
- teachers in Norway and Sweden state work overload and negative relationships has led to feelings of exhaustion and lack of motivation which impacts their quality of life (Mykletun, 1984, cited in McCallum et al., 2017).
- stress levels experienced globally amongst the teaching community has risen 22% since 2019, whilst 42% of teachers are frustrated with their job (Education Support, 2020).
- a Facebook group for UK teachers considering leaving the profession contains over 80,000 members (Waters, 2022).

Despite this, as a result of a societal shift in interest in the area of TWB, there is some evidence of a trend towards improvement. The ISC research report titled “wellbeing in international schools” (2021), has shown:

- 94% of teachers feel proud of the work that they do most of the time.
- 70% of staff felt a strong sense of belonging in their school.
- 68% of teachers felt that their school has increased its support and awareness of TWB since the pandemic.
- 74% of leaders felt that their WB was strongly considered during the pandemic.

Even with these promising findings, a greater understanding of TWB within Dubai is needed as research is currently limited. Further research is also required to identify realistic strategies to support teachers and leaders with the challenge of

TWB, which will form the main objective of this thesis. In order to do this, the symptoms, causes and effects of negative TWB first need to be identified. Research has shown that there are multiple factors that comprise of and impact TWB, and the most common themes from the literature will be discussed in greater detail below.

2.2.1 Burnout and Stress

Burnout is where an individual is unable to complete their required tasks and fulfil their responsibilities effectively due to exhaustion (Freudenberger, 1974). This is becoming a common trend amongst teachers and is a key reason for attrition, with between 25% and 40% of teachers in the western world considering leaving the profession due to experiences of burnout (Pillay, Goddard and Wilss, 2005). Cognitive symptoms of burnout can include feelings of a lack of worth, anger, intense anxiety and guilt (Luk et al., 2009; Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012). Somatic symptoms of burnout can also be experienced such as headaches, increased blood pressure, rapid weight loss and heart conditions (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012).

Concerning research has shown that for many years, these symptoms were experienced more frequently by teachers in comparison to other professions (Travers & Cooper, 1993). Burnout can be caused and magnified by multiple different stressors within teaching such as workload, parent pressures, student behaviour, remuneration packages and organisational culture. Being unable to manage these stressors effectively, nor having the support mechanisms in place to enable this to happen, leads to teachers feeling overwhelmed and thus impacts TWB.

Some studies have investigated burnout across the teaching profession, with many utilising the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). These authors are frequently referenced in published research regarding burnout and have defined this phenomenon as a “psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment.” Interesting results from studies measuring burnout via the MBI have shown that those more experienced teachers were better at accurately identifying and controlling their feelings and emotions (Mendes, 2003). Burnout levels were

exacerbated amongst teachers who were younger, unmarried and considered themselves without religious beliefs (Lau, Yuen & Chan 2005). However contradictory to this, research conducted within the UAE has indicated that variables such as gender, age and marital status had less significant implications on burn-out levels. UAE teachers who felt that they had greater support from colleagues also felt better equipped to manage burnout episodes (Bataineh & Alsagheer, 2012).

Teacher stress is defined as “physical and psychological negative responses, such as anger or depression, to events pertaining to a teacher's job as a result of an imbalance between risk and protective factors” (Prilleltensky, Neff & Bessell, 2016). Research has shown links between higher levels of perceived stress and mental health illness. Luk et al. (2009) mention 2 surveys measuring stress amongst teachers in Asia. The first was conducted by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (2001) which stated that almost half of teachers in Macau felt stress or extreme fatigue due to their job. The second study discovered that teachers in Hong Kong were overworked, with expected working hours more than double in comparison to neighbouring cities, including Beijing and Shanghai (Ng, 2002).

2.2.2 Accountability

Within education, teachers are under increasing pressure to meet high expectations and are scrutinised for their performance. In the current “era of accountability” (Murphy, Hallinger and Heck, 2013), private school teachers in Dubai in particular are subject to regular appraisals, evaluations and observations, as results from these directly impact a schools overall grading from KHDA. The private school educational marketplace is extremely competitive and the KHDA ratings play a key role in how each school is perceived regarding the quality of education provided. Student places and teaching positions in “outstanding” schools are at a premium and this can place additional stress on staff as they may be at risk of not meeting the standards set by their organisations, or these external inspection bodies. As a result of this, some could be placed at risk of consequences such as not receiving rewards or potentially not having their contract renewed.

Being placed on short-term contracts that are commonly provided in Dubai private schools, usually of one or two-year duration, has also placed additional stress amongst teachers. The objective of these contractual terms from an employer perspective allows flexibility for change within their workforce, however the employee can fear being perceived as not being trusted, rewarded and easily dispensable (OECD, 2021).

The impact of accountability is impacting education globally. In the USA, teachers have cited frustrations with regular observations and assessments as a key reason for considering leaving the profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Within the UAE, 50% of teachers stated that they were involved in observations between two to ten times per year, which is above the OECD average of 23%. Further to this, 9% of UAE teachers stated they were observed more than once per week (OECD, 2020).

Within the current paradigm of accountability in the UAE, the focus can be viewed to be prioritising judgement, as opposed to assessing reasons why expectations are not being met (Warner, 2020). UAE based teachers have expressed their disregard of the formal evaluation systems and accountability measures that they are subject to. Many are of the opinion that there is a bias and subjectivity towards teacher observations, alluding to a lack of consistency in observer credibility, application of gradings, feedback and frequency (Goe, Alkabbi & Tannenbaum, 2020).

2.2.3 Time and workload

Increasing teacher workload has impacted the ability to have an effective work-life balance, thus diminishing relationships, life satisfaction, overall health and therefore WB amongst teachers. Increasing workloads and having to manage multiple tasks have in-turn left teachers disregarding self-care (Turner & Braine, 2016). Several international studies have cited evidence of increasing working hours, with over one-third of teachers in Australia stating they work over fifty hours per week (AEU, 2010) and almost 25% of teachers in England are working up to sixty hours per week (Allen, Jerrim & Sims, 2020). Further to this, 76% of UK educators cited unmanageable workload as the main reason that they would

consider leaving the profession (Education Committee, 2017). Within the UAE, teaching working hours are capped at 48 per week, but these guidelines are being exceeded in some circumstances, with some teachers claiming to work up to seventy hours per week. Consequently, this has led to greater attrition from the private sector to government schools, despite lower salaries and less holidays (Rizvi, 2020b).

As well as increasing working hours, teachers are at times left feeling aggrieved by unfair workload allocation, growing levels of accountability, expectations and administrative tasks, as well as too frequent integration of new strategies and technologies. Teachers also feel they engage in much more additional work outside of their school in comparison to other professions, due to tasks such as marking, lesson planning and data analysis, and believe that greater time should be made available for this within the allowance provided on their daily working timetable (Sugden, 2010). The time-consuming tasks of marking and grading student work in particular are also perceived as less important or ineffective in supporting student outcomes and progress (Elliot et al., 2016). Suggestions have been made that in order to reduce teacher workload, marking and lesson planning should be the main areas to be reduced due to the substantial time that is spent on these, and school leaders should devise policies to support teachers in more efficient planning and marking practices (Jerrim & Simss, 2021).

It is important to consider different perceptions of workload. An increase in working hours does not necessarily indicate a direct linear relationship with negative TWB (OECD, 2014). How teachers perceive the task at hand with regard its worth and benefit is important, as partaking in additional work that is viewed as valuable may actually increase TWB and job satisfaction (Kyriacou, 2001). The amount of time spent on a task also does not directly link to TWB levels. Increasing workload due to managerial and leadership responsibilities can be associated to increasing levels of achievement, whilst other tasks that are not deemed as important often leads to feelings of frustration. Rewards and recognition for increasing working leads to more positive perspectives of these additional tasks, and these subsequent rewards received can enhance TWB.

Whilst some tasks may increase the number of hours spent on work, they may not actually impact TWB due to the amount of responsibilities or workload that a teacher may already be subject to. However, adding additional stressors to a teacher who is already feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope is very likely to impact TWB. For example, partaking in staff meetings and professional development opportunities may be deemed by some as important and required tasks in order to further enhance one's competencies, however others may view these as unnecessary and time consuming when they have other tasks that require completion and multiple deadlines to meet (Jerrim & Simss, 2021).

The covid-19 pandemic is identified as a further cause of a perception of increasing workload amongst teachers. Managing different modes of lesson delivery has been acknowledged as a great challenge and stressor amongst international teachers as new methods and styles had to be learned and modifications made to previous plans on short notice. These feelings of stress were magnified during the pandemic with the restrictions on travel limiting ability to visit family and friends during this time, leaving many individuals feeling isolated and without support. More recently despite seemingly overcoming the pandemic, some teachers feel that the workload is even greater now than at the height of the pandemic, with school leaders feeling that teachers have demonstrated an ability to cope with increasing demands and have therefore continued to place these on staff (ISC research, 2021).

Prior to the global covid-19 pandemic, an "epidemic of stress" was proclaimed as research stated over 3,750 teachers in the UK were signed-off on long term sick leave as a result of increasing workload. Further to this, between 2013 and 2018, over 1.3 million sick days were taken by teachers citing stress and mental health reasons (Asthana & Boycott-Owen, 2018). Increased workload increases the likelihood of teachers experiencing physical and mental illness, including stress and burnout (Jerrim & Sims, 2021). This in turn impacts schools as organisations, who are under increasing pressure to cover staff who are absent on sick leave. TWB is further impacted as a result as those staff who are present in school may then be at risk being overloaded with additional lessons, larger class sizes or teaching outside of their specialist area, thus increasing stress due to increased workload and accountability (Post Primary Teachers' Association, 2016).

Regular absence, as well as increased staff turnover results in reduced standards, productivity and school performance (Sugden, 2010, ISC research, 2021). In Dubai, there has been a stark increase in staff turnover within private schools, with some experiencing annual rates of up to 40% (Rizvi, 2021). Ensuring the health and WB of teachers is catered for should be a priority in order to reduce this turnover. Reducing workloads could play a key role in this, potentially leading to greater commitment, consistency, standards and outcomes.

Recently, steps have been taken by the UAE government to reduce working hours within the private sector industry, with the working week being shortened to four and a half days. Effective 1st January 2022, schools are required to finish lessons at 12pm on Friday afternoons, with no additional extra-curricular activities permitted after this time. It is reported that this was introduced to “boost work-life balance and enhance social wellbeing”, however additional benefits are associated to this change as the transition to a Saturday-Sunday weekend also enables the trade and financial sectors to align with their global neighbours who follow the same weekend format (Mansoor, 2021). Further to this, schools in Sharjah have placed a ban on teachers completing administrative tasks due to complaints from teachers citing burnout due to excessive workloads (Ahmed, 2022).

2.2.4 Trust, autonomy and empowerment

The aspects of trust, autonomy and empowerment are interlinked within the literature. Those school leaders who empower their teachers are effectively enabling autonomous practice, which allows for professional independence of teaching styles and strategies. This demonstrates high levels of trust between leaders and their staff and helps to establish an effective, cohesive and productive learning environment. Positive experiences of autonomy, trust and empowerment lead to greater job satisfaction due to experiences of achievement, which directly links to an increased desire to stay in the profession.

This is supported through research conducted amongst Norwegian teachers which demonstrated correlations between autonomy and job satisfaction, as well as increased levels of burnout where autonomy was limited (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2014). Similarly, recent studies in the UK have also indicated a lack of

job satisfaction amongst teachers where autonomy is restricted. Participants in the same study also felt that they have lower levels of autonomy in comparison to similar professions (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020).

By constraining autonomy and creativity, teachers conform to a set of regulations that may not be suitable for the needs of the children in their classes, or for the needs of the teachers themselves. These restrictions are demotivating for educators and impact overall happiness. When teachers feel empowered, they feel that they have the capabilities to work productively and effectively. Higher levels of autonomy have shown to directly link to proactive and innovative approaches to work and teaching, leading to greater pleasure and enjoyment and therefore enhanced TWB (Yusoff & Tengku-Ariffin, 2020). Subsequently, ineffective teaching has been linked to cases where teachers feel under-appreciated or even victimised by their school leaders (Day, 2008).

Teachers should be able, and feel empowered to, make decisions regarding the approaches, resources and strategies utilised to enhance student learning (Kangas et al., 2017). Teachers must feel respected by their colleagues within their community and should be involved in whole-school processes, as being trusted to make important decisions increases TWB. In Finland, teachers indicated that they have high levels of WB and autonomy in their occupation. Schools in Finland also regularly achieve highly on international benchmark tests such as PISA and TIMSS (Kola & Gbenga, 2015).

Teachers from other nations within the top 10 of the 2018 PISA results, namely Estonia, Japan, Canada and Denmark, have much higher perceived levels of autonomy in their practices in comparison to other countries (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2016). The UAE is currently ranked in 47th position for PISA and improving this performance was one of the key targets outlined in Vision 2021. Considering this, traditional top-down approaches to leadership and decision-making, such as the Eiffel Tower model, are not deemed to be as effective as a collaborative approach. However, realistic time allowances and opportunities for this collaboration must be provided to establish trust networks that empower teachers if the UAE is to improve its performance in PISA.

2.2.5 Motivation

Motivation can be defined as the “drive to act, think and develop” (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Research has shown that higher levels of motivation amongst teachers not only leads to improved student outcomes, but lower attrition rates and reduced emotional fatigue (Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012, cited in Collie, 2014). Within the UAE, a lack of school leadership support and increased work stress levels are two key areas cited by teachers that severely impact their motivation and desire to remain working in the sector (Goe, Alkabbi & Tannenbaum 2020).

Suggestions have been made to focus prioritising research on the reasons for and factors that influence sustained motivation amongst teachers that are staying in the profession, as opposed to investigating causes for increased attrition rates (Day, 2008). Teachers with perceived high levels of motivation and WB have stated that their school principals inspire the entire staff cohort as their communication is clear, directed and positive (Cann, 2019). With this, and further to previous areas discussed, suggestions have been made that in order to motivate teachers, leaders should promote a culture of autonomous practice, linked to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002, cited in Collie, 2014). When teachers feel supported and motivated, this leads to positive outcomes and correlates directly to TWB (figure 4).

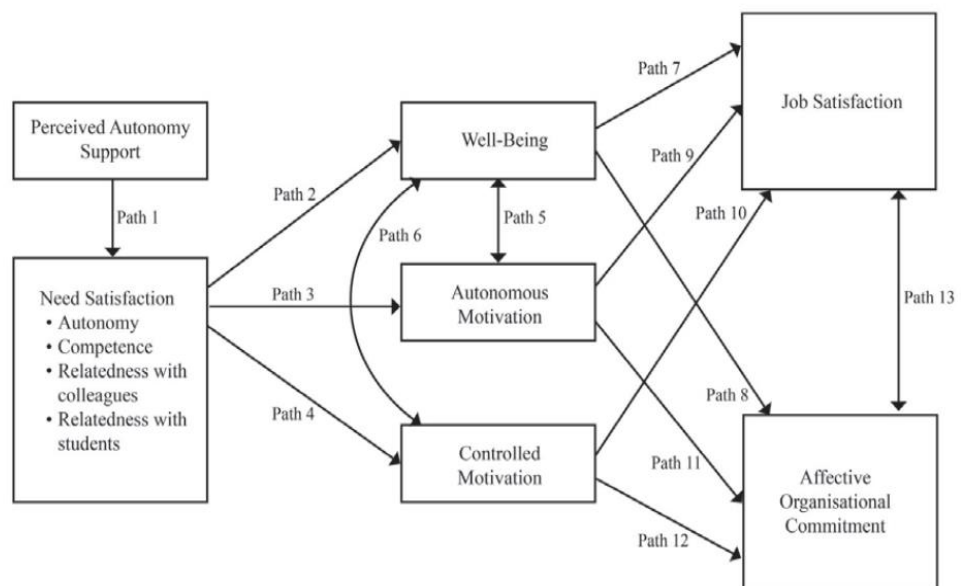


FIGURE 4: A model of teacher wellbeing, motivation, autonomy, job satisfaction and organisational culture as outlined by Collie (2014).

It is important to consider that motivation is a characteristic that is individual and personal. In order to motivate, determining factors including personality, context, beliefs and perceptions need to be considered (Collie, 2014). For instance, providing the same reward or incentive for each teacher in return for performance may not have the same or desired effect for all with regard WB, an example being the use of extrinsic or tangible rewards, such as performance related pay. This may aid in motivating some particular teachers leading to them striving for better student outcomes, however for others, this may lead to feelings of increased pressure, fear, stress and emotional exhaustion. This may in turn be detrimental to TWB as in order to meet the targets outlined, teachers may be subject to increased working hours and workload, as well as greater levels of accountability and expectations. An alternative motivation strategy to performance related pay as applied in Singapore, identifies high performing teachers and allows them opportunities for career progression through apprentice leadership roles and promotions within their own school, or external governing bodies (Martinez, Taut & Schaff, 2016).

2.2.6 Relationships

International schools are places where people of different backgrounds, beliefs and cultures are brought together. For teachers to work effectively, developing relationships with their colleagues and students is important. Teachers who are suffering from burnout are more likely to apply less effort in to their lesson planning and display lower levels of empathy with students which can lead to diminished relationships (Leithwood, 2006).

A positive school climate not only improves student-teacher relationships, but teacher-teacher relationships (Geng, Midford & Buckworth, 2015). Cann (2019) investigated leadership actions that promote WB amongst schools in New Zealand, and this study highlighted the importance of relationships. Teachers with perceived high WB scored consistently highly in the “P” pillar of the PERMA workplace profiler. These flourishing teachers also felt listened to, understood and valued by school leaders. A substantial level of support was available for these teachers, not only from colleagues, but family and friends outside of school. As a result, these teachers stated that they felt more able to cope with increasing job

demands, stress and other symptoms of negative WB. Teachers with low levels of perceived WB stated that they would be reluctant to approach school leaders with concerns and were not involved in whole-school matters or decision-making processes. A lack of awareness, understanding or empathy from school leaders towards the workload placed on teachers was also a concern amongst teachers with perceived low WB.

Negative WB can in turn impact the quantity and quality of relationships that teachers experience. With increasing work demands, educators are noting that their relationships are suffering, according to the UK Teacher Wellbeing Index (2020). When work-related psychological, physical or behavioural problems are experienced, 44% of school leaders felt that their personal relationships suffered as a result, with 6% of relationships completely breaking down. Likewise, 40% of teachers felt their relationships with others had diminished. As workload and working hours increased, this has correlated to a reduction in relationship quality. Worryingly, education staff who were working more than sixty hours per week felt that the lack of support and damaged relationships even led to suicidal thoughts (Education Support, 2020).

Within international schools, expatriate teacher's motivations are primarily influenced by the working climate and interpersonal relationships with colleagues and superiors (Yang et al., 2018). Teachers in international schools also felt that quality peer-relationships were the most important factor regarding what helps them feel most positive in school. Teachers also feel a greater sense of belonging to their schools when they experience positive relationships with their fellow staff (ISC research, 2021). Mentoring and peer support networks, as previously discussed, can further boost these relationships.

The most recent Dubai Student Wellbeing Census (2021) has revealed that students felt they had improved engagement and relationships with their teachers, whilst the PISA 2018 results showed that UAE students valued relationships with peers and teachers higher than all but two other nations (OECD, 2020). Further research conducted in the UAE has shown where teachers were most willing to collaborate and demonstrate genuine consideration for self and peer development, they felt more committed to their job. These teachers were also more likely

to proactively care for their own happiness and WB (Goe, Alkabbi & Tannenbaum, 2020).

2.2.7 Professional development

The literature indicates that where teachers feel supported and are provided with professional development (PD) opportunities, TWB is enhanced. When equipped with a greater sense of competence and self-efficacy, teachers feel more accomplished, are better able to manage stressful and challenging situations and as a result, have enhanced satisfaction in their jobs (Acton & Glasgow, 2015). Further research supports this stating that participation in meaningful PD activities also leads to greater job satisfaction in comparison to those teachers who are not provided with these (Mostafa, 2018).

In international schools in Dubai, the demographic of the student cohort is varied, with many students having English as their second language (EAL). With this additional challenge, teachers remain accountable for student attainment and progress which is analysed and compared against benchmark standards. Schools should be responsible for providing support and training to their staff to ensure that they are capable in addressing the needs of all students. Research has shown that teachers whom teach students with EAL felt most challenged, but stressed the value in professional learning communities (PLC) that permitted peer observations, specific training from external providers and sharing of best practice (O'Sullivan, 2016). Effective PLC's also incorporate shared visions, supportive leadership and conditions including time, resources and trust, all of which can be important in promoting educator's motivation and WB (Hord, 2009).

Collaborative approaches to teaching and feedback have also shown to improve teaching practice, as well as the perceptions of the impact of PD (OECD, 2009). Internal and external training, leadership pathways opportunities and funding have been shown to be effective in increasing recruitment and retention rates amongst teachers (Aragon, 2016).

2.2.8 Resilience and self-efficacy

Teaching is widely acknowledged as a difficult and demanding profession and the majority of research argues that resilience is a key component for the maintenance and development of TWB (Hascher, Beltman & Manfield, 2021). Within the previously discussed “era of accountability,” magnified within the private school marketplace, resilience and self-efficacy can be affected. Teacher resilience research is limited within the UAE. In the KHDA report titled “Community First,” published in 2020, the term “resilience” is referred to only twice, firstly noting that the next steps to be taken should be to build upon *student* resilience in a post-pandemic world, and secondly, how can schools enhance further *financial* resilience following the pandemic. Further UAE-based research regarding resilience continued to focus on financial resilience, citing a growth of student enrolment in private schools (Government of Dubai Media Office, 2020).

Being resilient does not necessarily equate to being able to cope, and teachers should not be tested to breaking point as a judgement of their resilience. Resilience is dependent on individual needs and contexts and personalised TWB strategies should be provided to support teachers in being able to adapt and respond, not simply to cope (McCallum et al., 2017). The AWaRE model, as outlined by Hascher et al., (2021), considers this contextualisation and individualisation of resilience whilst aiming to “maintain, restore and develop wellbeing.”

Having resilience allows teachers to develop flexibility in the dynamic educational sector. Being able to persist and overcome challenges develops a greater sense of achievement and positive emotions. This increases self-efficacy as they feel better prepared for future challenges (McDonald (n.d), cited in ISC research, 2021). The recent global pandemic has shown to have increased resilience and self-efficacy levels amongst teachers and school leaders, and has also heightened a sense of belonging in school as colleagues have become more aware of the importance of communication and relationship building as they navigated through uncertain times. As a result of the pandemic, teachers have also shown to be more adept in managing stress and anxiety, demonstrating resilient tendencies (ISC research, 2021).

2.2.9 Covid-19 pandemic

The most recent research expands on the implications of the global covid-19 pandemic on WB. However, regarding TWB and the implications that the pandemic had, research has been limited, with the dominant focus revolving around student WB. Regular reference is made to the global concern of the “learning loss” that was suffered by students, despite the best efforts of educators to facilitate and adapt to the global circumstances (DfE, 2021). This casts doubt over the quality of provision of education that was delivered by teachers during this time, which could have been potentially damaging to their self-efficacy and could be at fault for an increase in a demise in TWB.

International literature has shown that a global pivot to online modes of teaching and learning left teachers feeling underprepared and overwhelmed, which has severely impacted their WB. In Argentina, during the peak of the pandemic, 60% of teachers disclosed high levels of stress due to uncertainty, workload and unsuitable working environments (Rubilar & Oros, 2021), whilst a high proportion of teachers in Spain experienced symptoms of depression and anxiety (Etxebarria et al., 2021). In the Arab nations, teachers identified stressors caused by the pandemic had led to diminished personal relationships, in some cases leading to divorce (Al Lily et al., 2020). In the UK, teachers also felt a lack of competence in the digital technologies used to deliver lessons which led to implications on the learning environment, student behaviour and motivation, all of which are difficult to control in digital settings (Coleman, 2021). Further to this, in Ecuador, those educators that had previous experiences of blended or hybrid learning presented lower levels of stress (Hermosa-Bosano, Paz & Hidalgo-Andrade, 2022).

School leaders have also suffered as a result of the pandemic, as they reported increased levels of anxiety and accountability for leading their staff despite limited resources or experience in online modes of delivery (Allen, Jerrim & Simss, 2020). Leaders within the private education sector are subject to additional financial pressures, which has resulted in job instability and lay-offs during the pandemic, causing additional stress to teachers and leaders (Aunuion & Romero 2020, cited in Etxebarria, 2022).

This uncertainty and pressure has also been experienced amongst teachers in Dubai, where 68% of teachers feel unable to “switch off” from work, whilst the number of teachers who feel that they are thriving is down 9% (KHDA, 2021). Dubai-based teachers also noted that during the height of the pandemic, accountability pressures still remained, as did expectations on students producing high standard of academic achievement, despite the disruptions to learning. The use of predicted grades to replace exam results, which were arguably inflated, has left teachers accountable for repeating these high attainment levels in future years, despite schools accepting lower ability students to maintain enrolment and income via fees (Barda, 2022). Since the pandemic, student WB has been prioritised at the expense of TWB in Dubai and the increased efforts from teachers to support students has resulted in “an emotional toll that may depleted their own wellbeing” (Spartalis, quoted in Barda, 2022)

2.3 Leadership and TWB

Further to the causes and symptoms outlined above, leadership actions can also influence TWB. The main areas of leadership to be discussed in relation TWB are leadership styles, leadership practices, self-care and self-leadership, emotional intelligence and organisational cultures and environments. These areas will form the theoretical frame of reference when identifying relevant strategies to enhance TWB amongst private school teachers in Dubai later in this thesis.

2.3.1 Leadership Styles

Leaders demonstrate different styles that may be supportive or detrimental to TWB. Suggestions have been made in published research regarding PD for principals and leaders through workshops, forums and seminars to promote a greater awareness and understanding of the impact of leadership styles (Van der Vyver, Kok & Conley, 2020, p. 99). The leadership styles referred to most commonly within the research related to WB will be discussed below and their relevance to TWB will be critiqued.

Transformational leadership

The origins of transformational leadership were founded by Downton (1973) and were further developed by Burns in 1978 (Ugochukwu, 2021). Transformational leaders can be characterised as passionate and enthusiastic. They show care and consideration for all members involved in the process. This style prioritises motivation and encouragement to enhance confidence amongst all individuals to work together to drive a common goal. This can also be used to “transform” an underperforming team or school, whereby the principal takes a “bottom up” approach to development, rebuilding and leadership actions. The aim is to evoke change in teachers as individuals, as opposed to curriculum or learning developments, through instilling a culture of trust, collaboration and direction (Slade & Gallagher, 2021).

Research shows that where teams are led by transformational leaders, members have reported higher levels of performance and satisfaction due to the development of positive psychological mindsets and a greater sense of achievement in their work. This also results in decreased burnout (Ugochukwu, 2021). Although developed originally within business settings, similar positive effects of transformational leadership have also been evidenced in school environments (Konu, Viitanen & Lintoren., 2010). Recent research in international schools has demonstrated that transformational leadership improved performance, commitment and self-efficacy amongst teachers which in turn positively influenced TWB (Merritt & Procter, 2022, p. 8). However, it is important to consider that even within a collaborative approach to leadership, leaders still need to ensure a balance and that clear expectations and boundaries are set (Goodwin & Davis, 2021).

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership, a theory developed specifically in educational settings, is a more direct approach to leading. Instructional leaders traditionally are viewed as being communicators, visible and responsible for providing resources. The main focus of these leaders is on outcomes and in an educational context, the principal would typically be seen as the leader in top-down hierarchical structure (Hallinger, 2003).

Instructional leadership has been used effectively to improve student attainment in underperforming schools. Emphasis is placed on curriculum development, learning and monitoring and improving teaching (Slade & Gallagher, 2021), therefore instructional leaders may not be as interested in developing relationships between teams or staff members. As developing teacher abilities is prioritised, this may in turn enhance TWB due to increased sense of achievement measured through student outcomes, and improved self-efficacy, but direct, specific care and attention to TWB may not be considered via an instructional leadership approach (Cann, 2019).

Transactional Leadership

Similar to instructional leadership, a transactional leadership style has a defined leader-follower structure. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined and followers obey leader demands. With this leadership style, members are clear in what they are required to do, as outlined by the leader, and therefore the leader can directly support and guide. Regarding TWB, autonomy may be restricted amongst teachers where principals deploy a transactional leadership approach (Cherry, 2021). Being subject to a transactional leadership style has shown to lead to increased stress and reduced collaboration, leading to a reduction in performance (Lyons & Schneider, 2009, cited in Goodwin & Davis, 2021). This is further supported by Van der Vyver, Kok & Conley (2020, p. 98) whose research, conducted in South Africa, stated that when adopting a transactional style to leadership, TWB was not impacted to the same extent in comparison to when a transformational style was adopted by the principal.

Distributed Leadership

Within this leadership style, responsibilities are shared amongst the team members in the community or organisation. In school settings, this involves the participation of leaders and teachers in decision-making and school improvement. With this approach, it can be viewed that leadership is an interaction but does not suggest that formal structures be replaced. Trust is a key component within distributed leadership and is directly linked to enhanced teacher autonomy. In the USA, research has shown that with enhanced trust, teachers were more likely to develop new ways of teaching, improve relationships and share responsibilities (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Further research conducted in the UK has shown that

schools rated as “outstanding” refer to their distributed leadership structure as a key driver of their improvement (Day & Sammons, 2014).

Extending responsibilities beyond those in managerial positions helps to establish more effective PLC's within schools (Morrisey, 2000, cited in Day & Sammons, 2014). An effective collaborative culture that leads to positive outcomes, achievement and job satisfaction could enhance TWB. Sharing responsibilities equally could also support in managing teachers' ever-growing accountability and workload, thus supporting their WB. Distributed leadership has also proven effective in remote settings and was evidenced as valuable during the peak of the covid-19 pandemic (Kwatubana & Molaodi, 2021).

Considerations should be made to culture and context when implementing a distributed leadership style, for example within international schools comprising of teachers hailing from different nations. Research has shown that citizens from Anglo countries are more supportive to this approach, however within Asian culture, power distance is respected and valued more highly and leaders are entrusted to lead from the top (Pittinsky & Zhu, 2005, cited in Day & Sammons, 2014). When not implemented effectively, distributed leadership can also lead to feelings of vulnerability from those in formal official leadership positions, as well as diminished clarity in communication and misguided delegation (Day & Sammons, 2014).

Positive Leadership

To promote flourishing amongst teachers, positive leadership is used to promote positive emotions, relationships and meaning. The foundations of the leadership style stem from positive psychology (Cameron, 2008). Within this approach, leaders practice gratification towards employees, praise and recognition on a regular basis. This differs from a transformational approach where the objective is to motivate and inspire (Cann, 2009). When applied in schools, positive leadership has resulted in improved school environments and a reduction in stress levels amongst teachers, as creating a supportive culture that allows teachers to flourish is prioritised by leaders (Murphy & Louis, 2018).

Cann, Ridel-Prabhakar & Powell (2021, p. 214) studied the impact of positive school leadership on TWB and evidenced strong relationships between leaders and teachers when teachers felt genuinely valued and where leaders embed a culture of support towards enhancing TWB where all stakeholders are equally involved.

2.3.2 Leadership Practices

Effective leadership can be displayed through five core practices as outlined by Kouzes & Posner (2017). These were established following substantial research conducted regarding leadership which considered variables including culture, age and gender. The five key practices are outlined below:

Model the Way

To support TWB, leaders must ensure to set an example to others in a school environment. It is important to create high expectations and standards and model this for others to follow. In order to do this, leaders need to decipher what their core values are and what type of leader they wish to be. When commitment is modelled by leaders, this creates a sense of engagement and drive amongst a staff cohort as all are focused on achieving the same common goals and practices. (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

In schools, where leaders share with and listen to others, consider different perspectives and align values, this leads to shared success, and could enhance TWB. Research has shown where principals held individual meetings with teachers, this helped in clarifying role expectations and also heightened professional interactions between leaders and teaching staff (Lummis et al., 2022).

Inspiring a Shared Vision

Where leaders are open in sharing their passion and vision with others, this enhances motivation levels of others, as well as productivity. Expressing desire and conviction as a leader has also been shown to be more effective in enhancing commitment. In order to establish a clear vision, leaders should consider and determine clear pathways to ensure that they are directing and organisation to-

wards a specific and clear goal. Effective leaders also reflect upon previous experiences to develop their practices and are open to feedback (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Allowing involvement in decision making processes improves work satisfaction and WB. This is supported by a study in Finland, where 60% of secondary school teachers felt demotivated as their opinions regarding school development were not taken into consideration (Konu et al., 2010).

Challenge the Process

As discussed, establishing a culture that supports teacher autonomy could enhance TWB. Where teachers are encouraged to take risks, to push themselves outside of their comfort zones and take new approaches to novel methods, this can inspire innovation. Celebrating achievements of new successes and new ways of working also enhances motivation and inspires others. This can be applied at all levels of an organisation and leads to greater sense of community and connectedness. As a leader, being visible in taking the initiative in new challenges and absorbing new roles and responsibilities can also improve the motivation of others (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Enable Others to Act

It is important that leaders demonstrate trust in their colleagues and do not attempt to micromanage, which could lead to a toxic work environment. Promoting collaboration, leadership and responsibility amongst others enhances confidence and empowers an individual to believe that they are supported in and capable of completing a particular task or role. Leaders need to be aware of the abilities, motivators and stressors of each individual within their team so that they can understand how to ensure greater work productivity and efficiency. To permit this, it is important that staff are invested in, from both financial and time-allowance standpoints. It is important that leaders provide individuals with the resources and support that they need to ensure they can achieve the targets and goals set for them (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Encourage the Heart

Providing meaningful work to staff and acknowledging efforts is an important aspect of leadership. Leaders should be creative and adaptable in their incentives

used to motivate and reward achievements. This can be heightened through individualised approaches to recognition as a one-size-fits-all approach can be ineffective. For example, it is important to consider the personality type of an individual as public celebrations may not inspire certain individuals in comparison to a one-to-one conversation. Allowing time away from work responsibilities, as well as opportunities for staff to interact and engage with each other in a social environment helps build a spirit of community and enhances relationships and trust, leading to enhanced commitment and WB (Kouzes & Posner, 2017)

2.3.3 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Leaders who demonstrate a transformational style to their practice demonstrate high levels of EI (Goodwin & Davis, 2021). Goleman (1996) cited in Drucker (2011), distinguished good leaders from great leaders when they demonstrated five key skills associated to EI. These are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Where leaders show consideration for their own emotions, as well as empathy towards the emotions of others, this can support their followers to achieve their required outcomes.

Research has shown that higher EI and enhanced coping skills have resulted in decreased stress levels and enhanced resilience in teachers (Stough, Saklofske & Parker, 2009). This is further supported by Chan (2008), whose research amongst teachers in Hong Kong evidenced that by developing EI, this enhances coping. To promote mental health and WB amongst teachers, it is important that individuals and leaders recognise their stressors. When this has been established, along with effective coping mechanisms, self-efficacy is improved (Vesely, Saklofske & Leschied, 2016, p. 73). Managing negative emotions and stressful experiences can also reduce burnout levels, further supporting self-efficacy (Perry & Ball, 2007) and in turn may also increase job satisfaction (Stough et al., 2009).

2.3.4 Self-care and self leadership

Further to EI, it is important to consider self-care and self-leadership regarding TWB. School staff may look to their managers to employ wellbeing leaders or

committees to provide opportunities for recovery and to develop relationships, however the responsibility and expectation for supporting TWB cannot lie solely with these. Teachers should be considerate of their own emotions and take actions in order to cope and manage their own WB, nor should they wait solely for school leaders to take action to support their WB. They should be encouraged to "put on your own oxygen mask before helping those around you" (Hannaghan, 2019).

Where teachers take responsibility for their own WB, they develop social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies. These abilities include emotional regulation, empathy and focus. Research has shown that where teachers are better at demonstrating SEL, their students learn from this by observing their methods when managing challenges and frustrations. Students in turn can develop their own abilities in self-regulation and control therefore improving behaviour, teacher-student relationships and classroom environments (Jones et al., 2013, cited in Richards, 2020).

2.3.5 Organisational culture and environment

The above-mentioned leadership styles, practices and actions effectively frame the organisational culture of a school. Organisational culture can be defined as "the way in which members of an organisation relate to each other, their work and the outside world in comparison to other organisations. It can either enable or hinder an organisation's strategy" (Hofstede Insights, 2020). The styles and practices adopted by leaders and teachers has implications on culture, productivity and outcomes.

In a review of a culture of improvement, Weston, Hindley and Cunningham (2021), cited several studies that evidenced that the culture, conditions and environment to which teachers are exposed in their job has directly shown to affect their desire to remain in the profession, particularly within international schools. Suggestions were made that in order to improve organisational culture and create a supportive professional environment, the principles of effective leadership, investment, training, time allowance, mentoring, teamwork and communication are key to this.

Creating a culture that supports TWB with these mentioned principles is challenging, particularly for private schools operating as businesses. In Dubai, private sector organisations strive to become established profitable bodies. With these pressures and expectations, sacrifices need to be made regarding expenditure. At times, TWB can be perceived as non-essential and could then be overlooked regarding direct investment. However, other cost cutting measures that also impact teacher autonomy or practices can indirectly impact TWB. Teachers should feel that they have the required resources available for them to reach their potential as educators, and in turn, support their students to reach their full capabilities. Without appropriate investment and funding, teachers may feel that they are not trusted, supported or appreciated.

Toxic positivity is an approach utilised by leaders whom try to focus on the positives of any environment, with the intention to be optimistic. The aim is to persuade staff to keep working and put the job before themselves and others. (Emerich France, 2021). Teachers being told that “it could be worse” and “look on the bright side” are examples of toxic positivity (Mason, 2021). However, this forced positivity does not directly acknowledge or address the negative issues that are at large within an organisation and no solutions are provided.

With regard TWB, introducing wellbeing initiatives and promoting TWB are not effective within a school when staff are not given enough time to participate in these. Leaders feel the issues are being addressed, but in reality, they are not being delved in to deep enough to cause real change. Recommendations are made that in order to overcome this, actions need to be taken by teachers themselves to be more aware of the concepts of self-care and self-leadership in making conscious and meaningful efforts not to become engrossed in a culture of toxic positivity (Mason, 2021).

Investment in staff welfare can also play an important role in creating an environment where teachers feel included, as it is important that educators should feel that they enjoy their job. Teachers should be viewed as humans and should have opportunities to have breaks and rest and be trusted to manage this time responsibly, without judgement. In schools, the staff room is commonly designed as a glorified classroom, containing learning materials including desks, computers and

display boards. Creating an appropriate environment where teachers can remove themselves from their regular teaching spaces to “recover” and not simply “re-charge for survival” is important to ensure teachers feel cared for, appreciated and have a sense of belonging (Rodman, Farias & Szymczak, 2020). Providing staff with an area where they can communicate and collaborate together creates a positive, supportive and healthy working atmosphere that promotes interaction and TWB (Holmgren et al., 2014, cited in Yusoff & Tengku-Arifin, 2020).

3 METHODOLOGY

The research methods to be applied in this thesis will be discussed in section 3. Further to this, ethical considerations and data analysis methods will also be explained in relation to this research.

3.1 Methodological approach

The aim of this thesis is to investigate perceptions of TWB amongst private school teachers in Dubai and to develop an understanding of the effective leadership actions and strategies that can be implemented to improve and support TWB. The nature of the research problem determines the approach to be implemented (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this thesis, a mixed methods approach was adopted which incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

Mixed methods approaches are widely utilised to increase reliability and validity of a research study (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). The use of a survey questionnaire, comprising of both open and closed questions, supplemented by semi-structured interviews, enabled a comparative study between perceptions of well-being amongst private school teachers from Dubai from different schools, age, gender and experience to support thematic interpretations and analysis. The questionnaire was also used to establish validity of the research topic and question as well as to generate common themes and trends. The interview questions were then devised based on the themes that emerged from the quantitative collection and these interviews allowed participants to elaborate on their lived experiences of leadership actions and strategies that have enhanced their WB.

In order to answer the main research questions previously identified:

- 1. What is the current status of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers?**
- 2. What are the current perceptions of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers?**
- 3. What strategies have been implemented in Dubai private schools that are effective at supporting and enhancing TWB?**

4. What leadership actions are effective in supporting and enhancing TWB in Dubai private schools?

the study needs to establish the current levels of TWB before aiming to explain how this can be improved through leadership actions and practices, as “what and how” questions (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). Through a mixed methods approach of comprising both quantitative and qualitative methods, this offers greater detail and depth in the responses provided (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The quantitative approach can be used to explore the perceptions of TWB, whilst the open-ended questions within the survey allow for greater elaboration and personal experiences to be shared, further supported by the qualitative interviews. A similar approach to researching the topic of TWB was also utilised by Cann (2019).

Within the quantitative closed questions in the survey questionnaire, responses were limited on a Likert scale resulting in set response options which allows meaningful and accurate comparison to take place. The additional open-ended responses allowed participants to develop their responses through probing. This mixed-methods approach is referred to as explanatory-sequential approach to research (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018) (Figure 5).

Similar to Cann (2019), this approach was utilised to ensure accurate selection of participants and to fully address the research questions. Phase one allowed for quantitative analysis of the levels of TWB and for categorisation of teachers into high and low levels of TWB, so that teachers from both categories could be selected in a comparative approach. Phase two is used to validate the quantitative data and trends demonstrated from phase one.

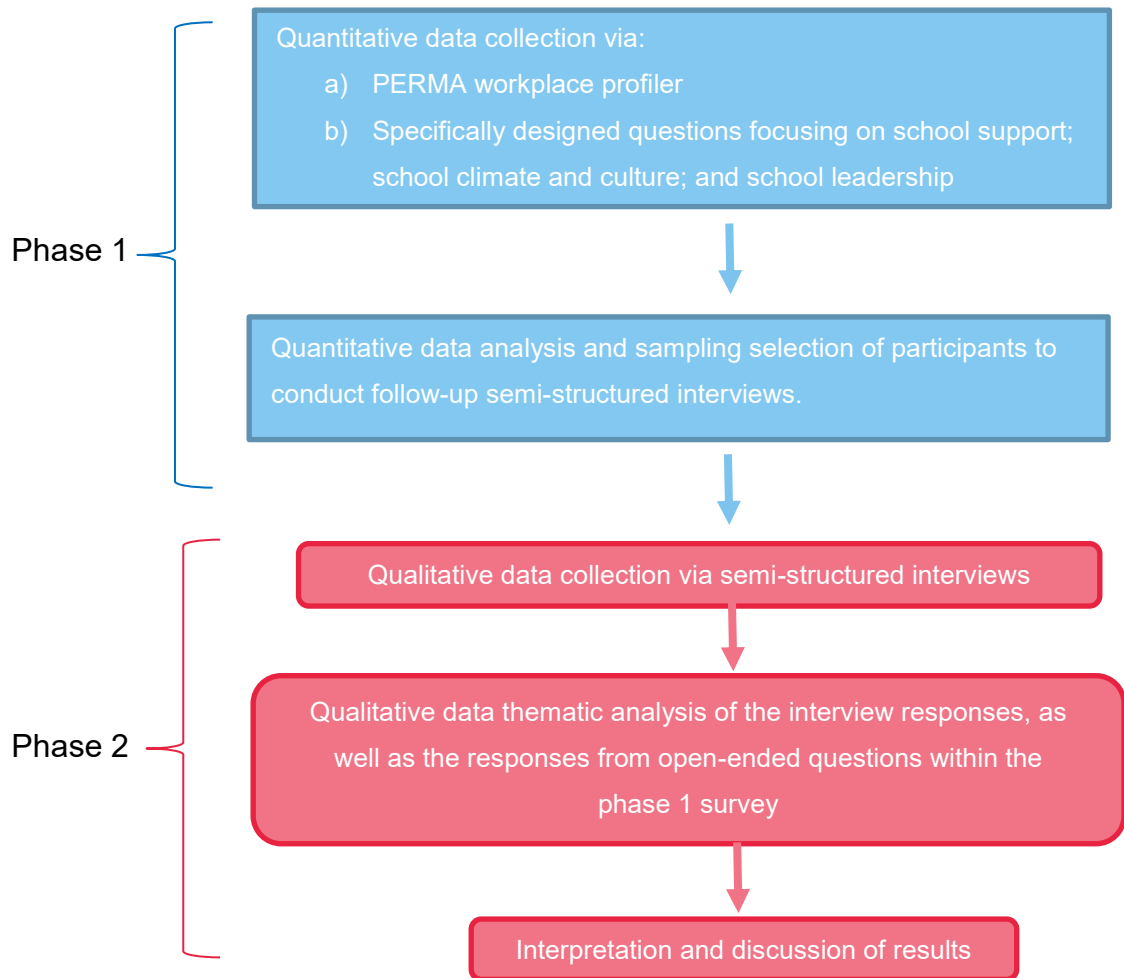


FIGURE 5: Overview of the explanatory sequential design used for this research, following recommendations by Cresswell & Cresswell (2018).

Through interviewing teachers whom perceive their WB as high or low, this established a greater understanding of what leadership actions, strategies and practices and most and least effective in supporting TWB, so that realistic and appropriate suggestions can be made. Further to this, Cresswell (2018) recommends a qualitative approach to an area where little research has been carried out and, in this case, research specifically conducted within the private school sector of Dubai regarding TWB is limited. The qualitative approach enables further exploration of the topic as well as making the research contextual.

3.1 Participants and Ethical considerations

Participants were teachers who were currently employed in private schools within Dubai. Participation in the study was voluntary, anonymous and respondents were informed of the purposes of the research through an explanatory cover letter, and consent was requested to participate. No incentive was provided for involvement in the study and participants could request to have their responses removed from the study at any time. The data collected was stored confidentially and securely via OneDrive for Business, provided via TAMK. The survey was piloted and pre-tested on three participants to ensure comprehension of the questions provided. These responses were not included in the quantitative data collection. The average total time to complete the survey in the trial phase was eleven minutes.

To conclude the survey questionnaire, respondents were asked to further declare their willingness and interest to be contacted for follow up interviews as part of the qualitative data collection phase, and if consent was given, a contact e-mail address was requested. This address was kept anonymous and not shared with others. All other contact information from those consenting was destroyed following completion of the qualitative data collection phase.

Allowing participants to respond anonymously reduces the likelihood of bias in the responses provided (Kuckartz et al., 2015). A school e-mail ID was requested in order to verify their role as a teacher within a private school in Dubai. Any participants whom did not provide a valid school e-mail address were discounted from the data collection. School information provided in the e-mail address also allowed for analysis of trends and themes regarding WB practices within a particular school. Where multiple teachers from one particular school responded, this enhanced reliability and validity of the quantitative data collected regarding TWB, as well as the WB actions, practices and strategies stated that were implemented by that particular school.

The justification for researching participants from a range of schools was to investigate a wider population and support in discovering what effective leadership

actions and practices are being utilised across private schools in Dubai. Investigating one individual school, or one managing group only, would restrict the responses as the experiences of the teachers employed here could be similar.

The aim of the study is not to compare, contrast or compete individual schools against one another, but to gain a greater understanding of the leadership actions and practices that are most effective in supporting and enhancing TWB so that realistic recommendations can be provided in this thesis to all schools within the private school sector in Dubai. As stated, all of the names of the teacher participants, as well as the schools at which they were employed, were kept anonymous and a declaration was shared with all participants citing that the information provided would only be used for the scientific purposes of this research thesis paper only, as part of the Master's in Educational Leadership program provided through TAMK. The ethical requirements followed complied with the Tampere University of Applied Science were implemented at all stages of this thesis.

Prior to distribution to private school teachers for completion, the survey was initially shared with school principals across the five schools operated by the educational group that I am currently employed. An additional two principals were contacted from schools outside of my current educational group. The purpose of prior sharing of the questionnaire involved was to inform them of the reasons for investigating their leadership practices at their school, as well as to gain their approval and consent prior to conducting such a study within their school.

Five of these seven school principals contacted acknowledged and agreed to participate. As some contacts did not respond, the survey was additionally shared via education groups on social media platforms including Facebook and LinkedIn, in order to increase response rate across a range of other schools and teachers. The use of these modern platforms aligns with Blandford's (2013) research regarding data collection, stating that a range of recruitment measures can be utilised in a research study to achieve a suitable number of appropriate participants. This method proved effective, resulting in a total of 83 responses (81 valid) being gathered and the demographic breakdown of the participants can be seen in table 1.

TABLE 1: Table displaying demographic breakdown of the 81 valid responses gathered from the survey questionnaire

Demographic Aspect	Total number	Percentile (%)
Gender		
Male	25	30.86
Female	56	69.14
Age		
21-25	4	4.94
26-30	25	30.86
31-35	24	29.63
36-40	13	16.05
41+	15	18.52
Nationality (countries represented):		
UK (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)	31	38.27
Europe (Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Serbia)	35	43.22
Asia (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Jordan)	9	11.11
Africa (South Africa, Egypt)	3	3.70
America (USA, Canada)	3	3.70
Role and Position within current school (roles represented):		
Teacher	43	53.09
Middle Leader (Head of Department/Faculty/Grade/Year)	28	34.56
Senior Leader (Assistant Head/ /Vice Principal/Head of School)	10	12.35
Number of years teaching experience:		
1-5 years	20	24.69
6-10 years	29	35.80
11-15 years	21	25.93
16-20 years	6	7.41
21+ years	5	6.17
Age range of students taught:		
Primary (aged 3 to 10)	30	37.04
Secondary (aged 11 to 19)	30	37.04
Through school (aged 3 to 19)	21	25.92
Qualification (highest held):		
Bachelor's	16	19.75
PGCE	27	33.33
GTP	3	3.70
Masters	26	32.10
NPQ	6	7.42
Other	3	3.70

3.2 Quantitative Data Collection

The first phase of the explanatory sequential research was conducted via an online survey questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire was to assess the current perceptions of TWB amongst private school teachers in Dubai. This survey was generated via Microsoft Forms, chosen as online surveys are inexpensive, reliable and simple to complete (Walliman, 2018). This platform also allowed for distribution to the participants via e-mail as well as the mentioned social media platforms. Through the Microsoft Office package, the responses were also stored and secured confidentially via OneDrive for Business provided by TAMK and could be later downloaded and analysed through Microsoft Excel.

Surveys are an effective method in order to make generalisations about the participants in the study as well as to observe patterns and trends within specific groups, such as experience or qualification (Dillman, Syth & Christian, 2014). In section one, additional background demographic information was requested including age, gender, nationality, role, qualification, age range of students taught and teaching experience in years (appendix 1). Anomalous and irrelevant results could then be disregarded to improve reliability of the results accrued.

The PERMAH workplace profiler (appendix 2) was utilised in section two (Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016). As outlined previously, this was chosen due to the connections to many theoretical frameworks applied in this thesis, including positive psychology, positive leadership, transformational leadership and leadership practices as described by Kouzes & Posner (2017). The PERMA profiler tool has also been extensively validated through piloting with over 30,000 participants globally (Butler & Kern, 2016, p.21). The PERMAH workplace profiler comprised of 23 items and assesses teacher's work-based perceptions of their own WB through the pillars of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. Each pillar had three associated questions. For the purpose of this study and in order to provide a more in-depth and multi-dimensional data collection, supplementary questions assessing the additional pillars of health, loneliness and happiness were also included.

In order to make the questions more specific and relatable for the respondents, the term “work” was replaced with “school”. For example, question 3 on the profiler provided by Butler & Kern (2016) states “at work, how often do you become absorbed in what you are doing?”. On the survey distributed in this study, this question reads as “at school, how often do you become absorbed in what you are doing?”.

Responses were provided on a Likert scale ranging from 0-10. This scale was chosen for a number of reasons. Increasing the response range allows for greater levels of interpretation in the responses provided and reduces the possibility of response clustering through yielding sufficient diversity in the data (Bernstein, 2017). Incorporating 0 has also shown to reduce the amount of missing data (Hopper, 2014) whilst providing odd-numbered scales results in a mid-point, making it easier and less time consuming for participants to respond as generally they respond above or below “average” (Bernstein, 2017). The responses from 0-10 can also easily be converted into percentages for analysis purposes. The same 0-10 scale was also implemented in previous published studies utilising the PERMAH profiler, allowing for direct comparison to these results.

Sections three, four and five comprised of additional questions, with responses again on a Likert scale from 0-10, equating to “Not at All” to “Always” or “Extremely” respectively, depending on the phrasing of the question provided to promote consistency and understanding for the respondents. The questions in these three sections focused on school-based evaluations and support; school climate and culture; and school leadership respectively. These questions were devised based on the common themes and trends discussed in the literature review to discover if these patterns were also visible within Dubai private schools. Two additional open-ended response questions were provided at the end of each of these three sections to allow for further elaboration of experiences regarding each section topic and TWB. The terms used in the responses assisted with thematic and trend analysis between the respondents.

3.3 Quantitative Data Analysis

Upon completion of the survey questionnaire, the data collected was analysed.

The first phase of processing calculated the current perceptions of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers, utilising the responses from the PERMAH profiler. Each pillar of the PERMAH model was analysed individually, with the mean, median and standard deviation being calculated using Microsoft Excel. A supplementary concluding calculation of the total mean of each pillar combined was conducted to provide an overall WB score for each individual respondent. Microsoft Excel was also utilised to generate bar graphs for visual representation of the processed data.

The additional quantitative data collected in sections three, four and five allowed for analysis of perceptions towards the supplementary aspects investigated in the study, which included support, evaluation and development; school culture and climate and school leadership. The mean and standard deviation of each section was calculated to evidence the perceptions of each factor and its influence on TWB.

The open-ended response questions in sections three, four and five of the survey questionnaire allowed participants to briefly identify the leadership actions that were currently implemented and effective in supporting TWB, as well as what actions and practices they would like to see employed. These questions were further supported the quantitative data collected. It was determined that the frequency at which particular phrases or terms were mentioned in the open-ended responses indicated a greater desire from teachers towards a certain action or practice to support TWB, as well as an increased utilisation of this action or practice amongst a range of schools and teachers.

3.4 Qualitative Data Collection

The use of interviews for this purpose is further supported by Blandford (2013, p.23) as it enables a greater understanding of experiences. Blandford (2013) explains that semi-structured interviews allow for the discussion to be focused towards the research questions, but also permit for additional lines of enquiry dependent on participants responses. The questions within the semi-structured interviews were formed around the topics investigated within each section of the

initial survey questionnaire in order to clarify the quantitative data gathered, and consisted of open-ended questions to ensure freedom of responses.

The interview structure applied in this study allows for unique experiences and feelings to be shared. This is suitable for this research study as the aim is to gather perceptions of TWB and generate realistic actions and strategies that teachers whom are directly employed within the private education sector believe would be effective in supporting and enhancing TWB.

The questions also incorporated the key topics evidenced in the literature review to promote specificity. Questioning via themes allows for the interviewer to modify, adapt and explore through additional follow-up questions to reduce the impact of misconceptions or bias and to ensure clarity in the responses provided. Terminology specific to the theoretical framework and conceptual understanding of WB was avoided where possible to reduce misconceptions, bias or guiding of responses.

In order to identify appropriate subjects for the semi-structured interviews in phase two of the sequential analysis, a combination of purposeful and criterion-based sampling was conducted. Following the completion of the raw quantitative data processing, firstly, those participants that had consented to be contacted for interview were identified. From these, the interquartile range of the means for each participant was calculated for sections two, three, four and five of the survey questionnaire. This enabled the top and bottom 25% of the mean values to be identified.

Using colour-codes, the top 25% of the means calculated for each section were labelled in green and the bottom 25% in red. Those participants where their mean results for all four sections of the survey lay within the bottom 25% were identified as teachers with low TWB, conversely those with all four mean results in the top 25% were categorised as having high TWB. These methods of categorisation and colour coding are similar to those implemented by Cann (2019), who investigated TWB amongst teachers in New Zealand.

From this coding, of those whom consented to be contacted for interview, 8 were identified as having low TWB, whilst 10 were identified as having high TWB. Following this, criterion-based purposeful sampling was utilised to select a range of suitable participants with varied backgrounds based on the demographic information provided in the survey questionnaire. This included identifying interview participants from different schools, genders and subject specialism/age range taught. Two suitable participants from each category were identified, contacted and subsequently agreed to participate in the semi-structured interviews (appendix 4) in order to investigate further the leadership actions, practices and strategies that are currently, and desired to be currently, implemented to support TWB (table 2).

TABLE 2: Table showing the processed data of the four participants identified to participate in the semi-structured interviews.

Survey Aspect/ Participant Code	A	B	C	D
School employed	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female
Role	Primary school teacher and middle leader	Senior leader	Through-school teacher	Secondary school teacher
PERMAH Mean	8.57	8.00	5.29	4.81
Negative Emotions and Loneliness mean	2.00	1.17	5.00	8.00
School evaluation, development and support mean	5.83	6.83	0.33	1.00
School climate and culture mean	8.67	8.33	2.33	3.67
School Leadership mean	8.33	8.11	1.44	1.44
Overall mean	7.85	7.82	2.35	2.73
TWB category	High	High	Low	Low

3.5 Qualitative Data Analysis

Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews, as mentioned, the participants provided their informed consent to have the discussion recorded for transcribing purposes. This was in addition to prior consent obtained to participate in the initial quantitative data collection, as well as consent obtained to be contacted for interview. Recording of each interview was conducted anonymously via the “Otter” mobile phone application, which simultaneously transcribes the audio discussion. This ensures that the information gathered from the interview was noted accurately and not paraphrased or misinterpreted. This app was chosen based on recommendations from MEL alumni.

All information shared during the interviews remained confidential and was utilised for the purposes of this research study only. Personal information such as school names, locations and identities of employees were anonymised in the written transcripts. The audio files recorded were destroyed upon completion and verification of the written transcripts.

During the qualitative data collection and interviews, it is important that I, as the researcher, demonstrate full awareness of ethical considerations to reduce bias and assumptions. Having been employed in the private education sector in Dubai for six years, I have been subject to issues regarding TWB and have experienced a range of leadership actions and practices within my current organisation with differing levels of effectiveness. As a researcher, it is important to ensure that actions taken and decisions made during the study are done so objectively without prior reasoning, allegiance or agendas to ensure validity and reliability of the results accrued.

To analyse the vast amount of qualitative data collected from the open-response questions in the survey and the semi-structured interviews, all of the responses received were grouped together in themes via deductive thematic analysis, allowing for clustering of responses which enables trends to be detected (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018) (appendix 5). The initial themes were framed around the sections within the survey questionnaire, which were generated based on the literature review, as each of these sections had associated open-ended responses

included. The interviews thus allowed for further elaboration of the initial qualitative data collected from the survey questions.

Braun & Clarke's (2006, p. 87-88) six phases of thematic analysis was implemented as this allows patterns to emerge. These six steps begin by firstly becoming familiar with the data collected, followed by generating the codes and then searching for themes (Appendix 5). Once these themes have been identified, they are reviewed and then appropriately named. Finally, the report is produced and relevant aspects are used in the findings of the research report.

Following these six steps, the following four themes and twelve codes were identified in figure 6:

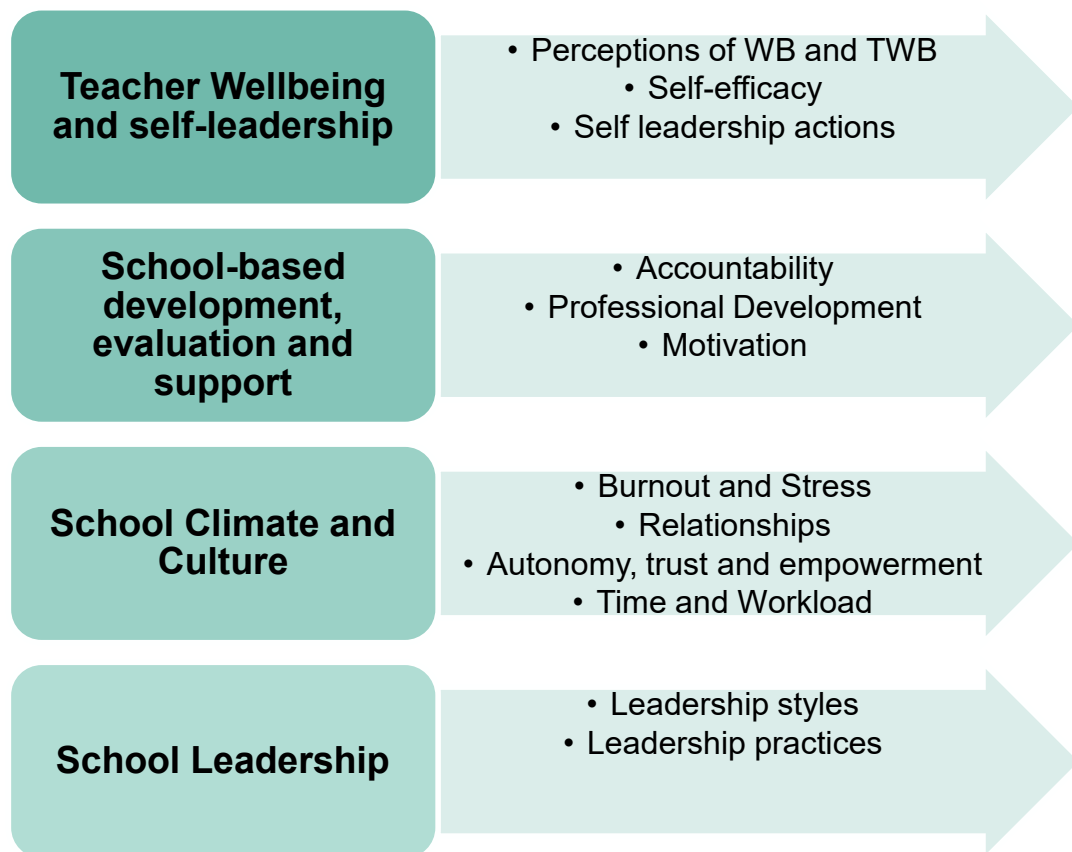


FIGURE 6: Thematic analysis of interview themes based on Braun & Clarke's six phase model (2006).

4 RESULTS

The results from the quantitative survey, open-ended response questions within the survey and the semi-structured interviews will be analysed in this section.

4.1 Theme 1: Teacher Wellbeing and Self-Leadership

Theme 1 has been divided into 3 separate codes following the six steps of thematic analysis. These codes have been outlined in figure 6.

4.1.1 Perceptions of wellbeing and teacher wellbeing

The participants interviewed had differing replies when asked to describe and define the terms “wellbeing” and “teacher wellbeing”, however links to some of the themes previously discussed including emotions, workload and accomplishment, were established. The range of responses supports the ideology of individualised WB care, as well as subjective WB, as each teacher had a slightly different perception of the term and considered different aspects when thinking about the term “wellbeing.” Some quotes from the definitions provided included:

“A state of mind.”

“If you’re feeling happy or stressed.”

“Are you able to get up and do your job?”

“Are you thriving or just about keeping your head above water?”

“Do you have the time to achieve everything you need to and want to in your job?”

“Your mental and physical state.”

The mean results of the PERMAH workplace profiler are displayed in table 3. These results were obtained by calculating the mean of the three questions in the profiler that correlated to each of the six key pillars (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment and health) for all 81 valid re-

spondents in the study. The additional pillar of negative emotions was also assessed via three questions, whereas loneliness and happiness were measured through one supplementary question only. The median and standard deviations were also calculated to analyse the spread of the data and reliability of the results gathered, as were the minimum and maximum response out of 10 provided by the participants. The mean and standard deviation results are also displayed graphically in figure 7.

TABLE 3: Table showing processed data demonstrating the mean, standard deviation and median for each aspect of the PERMAH workplace profiler, from the 81 valid responses in the study (data displayed to 2 decimal places).

PERMAH profiler aspect	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
P: Positive Emotions	6.37	1.96	6.67	2.67	10.00
E: Engagement	6.76	2.25	6.67	3.33	10.00
R: Relationships	7.25	2.10	7.50	2.67	10.00
M: Meaning	7.19	1.86	7.33	3.00	10.00
A: Accomplishment	7.24	1.63	7.33	4.33	10.00
H: Health	6.53	2.17	7.00	0.67	9.00
Happiness	6.39	2.16	7.00	2.00	10.00
Negative Emotions	4.03	2.53	3.83	1.33	7.67
Loneliness	3.21	2.76	2.00	0.00	9.00

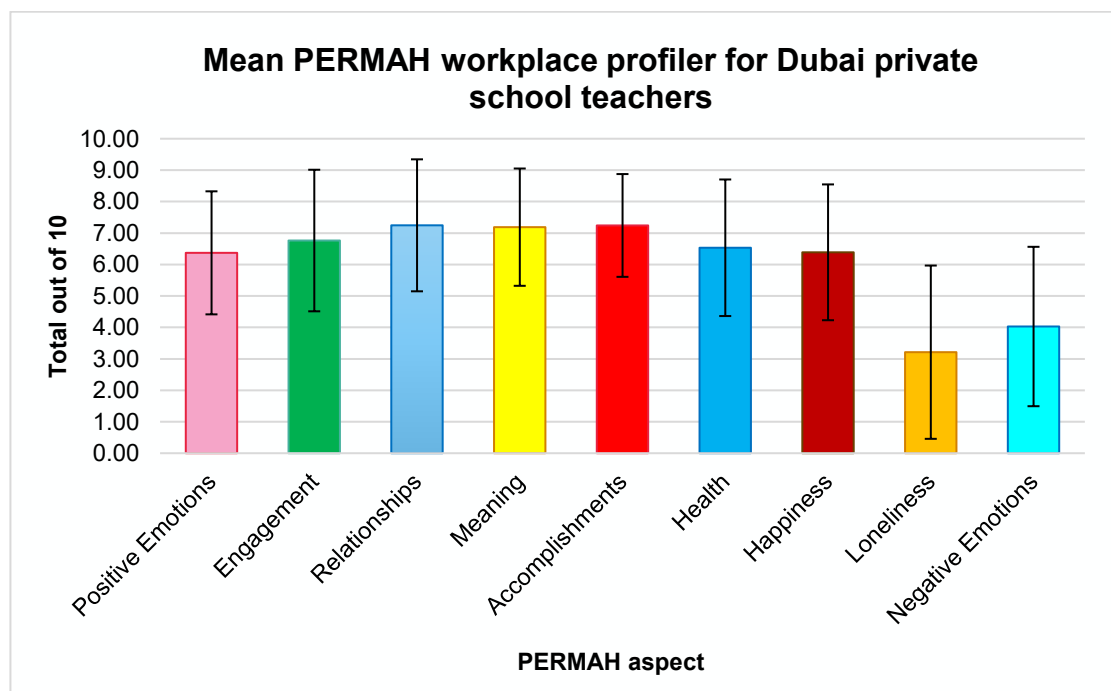


FIGURE 7: Bar graph displaying the mean PERMAH workplace profiler for Dubai private school teachers, demonstrating the perceived levels of TWB.

From the data presented, it can be seen that the highest mean (7.25) and median (7.50) from the PERMAH profiler pillars was for relationships, indicating strong feelings of support and community within Dubai private schools. This was further supported in the interviews by teachers of both high and low WB, where participant A and C stated respectively:

“I do feel supported, I have been at the school a long time so I feel like I’ve got strong relationships...I’ve become friends with a lot of the teachers that I work with.”

“my relationships are positive, but professional.”

Further to this, the open responses from the survey also demonstrated positive relationships amongst high WB teachers. Regular reference was made to the support of others, teamwork and colleagues going above and beyond to help each other where participants scored highly for this pillar of the PERMAH profiler.

Despite indicating a presence of caring communities, the lowest mean is for positive emotions (6.37), closely followed by happiness (6.39). Further to this, the standard deviation indicates the largest spread of data is for loneliness (2.76), and also recorded the greatest difference between the minimum and maximum mean values (9.00). These results may indicate that collaborative and supportive networks are not as strong or effective across all schools involved in the study.

Overall, by calculating the total mean of the six key pillars of the PERMAH profiler, as well as the mean for happiness, the average level of TWB amongst all of the participants was 6.82, which can be considered as relatively low. The low standard deviation also indicates high levels of consistency and reliability in the data collected regarding overall perceptions of TWB amongst private school teachers in Dubai (table 4).

TABLE 4: Table showing the mean PERMAH profiler results, and therefore the mean level of TWB, for all participants in the study.

Mean Level of TWB	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
6.82	1.33	6.90	3.57	9.57

The low overall result for TWB (table 4) is supported through the interviews conducted, as participants C and D reaffirmed their low results from their PERMAH profiler regarding perceptions of their TWB:

“teacher wellbeing in my workplace is quite low, or let’s say it’s not really considered.”

“wellbeing in our school has taken a hit...there’s an emphasis on it from the KHDA, however to be honest I think that’s just a tick box exercise and it doesn’t translate in to improved wellness in any way.”

To further evidence low levels of TWB, despite being identified as a high WB teacher from the quantitative analysis, participant A in the interview also stated:

“Currently, (my wellbeing is) not very good. I have had a huge load of things to do and recently I have been quite stressed.”

Participant B did however state that their WB was well considered, but did acknowledge other schools and teachers in Dubai may not be as fortunate:

“I’m more than happy with my wellbeing...I’ve never worked in a school with this much impact on wellbeing. It’s the happiest school I have ever worked at. But I do think there is a lot of room for other schools to improve in this area.”

In comparison to similar studies who have implemented the PERMAH profiler, the mean level of TWB amongst Dubai private school teachers is considerably lower than teachers in Saudi Arabia (7.73) and New Zealand (7.28) (Alqarni, 2021, p.15; Cann, 2019). However, the levels of loneliness and negative emotions (figure 7) were not as high as that experienced by teachers in New Zealand (4.0) (Cann, 2019).

4.1.2 Self-efficacy

Accomplishment (7.24) and Meaning (7.19) score relatively highly in the PERMAH profiler, demonstrating a perception amongst teachers in Dubai private schools that they feel value and achievement in the work that they partake in. The spread of data for these two pillars is also the lowest (1.63 and 1.86 respectively),

supporting the claim that these emotions are consistent across a range of teachers and schools in Dubai. In the survey, witnessing the students make progress, promotion to leadership and being allocated extra responsibilities were regularly referred amongst teachers with high levels of accomplishment and meaning. This was further supported by high WB teachers in the interviews:

“I love my job...teaching is the most enjoyable aspect...my children are lovely and enthusiastic and keen to learn.”

“I feel happy with the people in my school and then I feel mentally happy to do my job.”

High WB teachers also discussed self-belief in their abilities and indicated that the support they received at their school contributed positively to self-efficacy:

“as (a middle leader), I have been trusted to lead training for my team and this has given me confidence.”

“I feel like I know what makes a good lesson and know how to make students make progress.”

Even those high WB teachers, who were supportive of their culture and leadership based on their PERMAH profiler results, felt that even more recognition and appreciation would be beneficial in further enhancing TWB and self-efficacy:

“if staff are given the responsibility and opportunity to provide training sessions themselves, given their expertise, then they feel a better purpose at work. They feel they’re not being overlooked.”

“We need to be told that we’re doing a good job more often, like how when you say well done to children. Teachers are still people.”

In relation to self-efficacy, being recognised and rewarded was also frequently referred to by a number of survey participants. Initiatives such as staff “shout-outs” and being granted pre-approved day off from school for their achievements, titled “wellness days” or “be good to yourself days” were the amongst the most effective strategies implemented by school leaders that have improved TWB.

Conversely, participant C, as a low WB teacher, discussed the impact that their school culture and leadership had on self-efficacy:

“The leaders are out of touch, they don’t know what is going on as they are so pre-occupied with student enrolment. There is little support for struggling staff and teachers are worried and stressed as they know they can be replaced.”

The survey responses also support the impact that low self-efficacy has on TWB. Teachers who scored low in engagement and accomplishment referred to an absence of rewards or recognition and lack of empathy from leaders regarding the workloads and expectations placed on teachers. Some participants even claimed that they were being either undermined, manipulated or even bullied by their school leaders.

4.1.3 Self-leadership

The overall mean for negative emotions and loneliness is 3.62, which could be viewed as a concern, as these pillars are reverse-scored, a lower result for these particular aspects would be viewed positively. The standard deviation for both negative emotions (2.53) and loneliness (2.76), displayed in table 3, are the highest across all areas investigated in the PERMAH profiler, indicating that these emotions are being experienced by at least some teachers in Dubai private schools. This could be an issue for particular teachers and should be addressed (table 5).

TABLE 5: Table showing the mean level of negative emotions and loneliness experienced amongst the participants in the study.

Mean level of negative emotions and loneliness	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
3.62	2.03	3.25	0.00	8.17

Teachers have expressed concerns regarding negative emotions and loneliness in the interviews conducted. Low WB teachers seemed more reluctant to develop in-depth relationships with others in their workplace, and also mention how the

school culture contributes to this. However, they did suggest some self-leadership actions they take in order not to get engrossed within the negative environments at their schools:

“I think a lot of people moan a lot...I try not to get too close to people in work...not many people talk in the staff room and a lot of people just come in and sit on their phones.”

“the toxic culture definitely affects me more...if others weren't being respected, then I wouldn't like to get drawn in to that. I like to keep my personal life and professional life quite separate.”

From the survey responses, those teachers with higher levels of negative emotions also cited low staff morale, breakdown in communications and a lack of motivation amongst the most challenging aspects of working at their current schools.

The final pillars of the PERMAH profiler to be discussed, engagement and health, have mean scores of 6.76 and 6.53 respectively (table 3). Further variability is evidenced, particularly with perceptions of health, as the minimum and maximum mean value recorded for the participants has a difference of 8.33, second only to loneliness. Interestingly, both high and low WB teachers (A and C) stated in their interviews that their schools have introduced staff fitness-classes, indicating a greater self-awareness and consideration for physical and mental health. However, these initiatives were introduced by the teaching staff themselves, not by the leadership team, as they felt it would help improve TWB.

On the other hand, Participant B stated that these health-based activities were not as beneficial in their school. As well as this, interestingly no suggestions or recommendations were made by any participants in the survey to introduce these types of opportunities when questioned which strategies they would like to see implemented by their school leaders:

“We did start trying to bring some things in to the PD sessions, like offering yoga, but that actually didn't work as well as we'd hoped...some said they would rather opt out and have time to work, so these became optional on a sign-up basis.”

To overcome the depleted WB levels currently present in Dubai private schools, examples of self-leadership and self-care implemented by both high and low WB teachers were discussed, further indicating a growing awareness amongst teachers of the stressors and triggers that can impact TWB:

“I am pretty good at switching off, so I ignore work emails and communication, like WhatsApp groups, when I get home...I just hit a point where I know I won't be productive anymore.”

“I'm way better in the morning, so I go in to school early to work for an hour before lessons begin, then I can leave on time at the end of the day and don't have to take work home with me.”

“I've turned off my e-mails on my phone and have separated my school WhatsApp and personal WhatsApp to two separate SIM cards so I don't get as many notifications outside of school...I've found that's made a big difference.”

“I make an effort not to do work on the weekends and focus on my friends and family.”

“I take breaks, I need my breaks...otherwise I become tired and stressed and then my students are effected.”

4.2 Theme 2: School-based evaluation, development and support

Theme 2 has been divided into 3 separate codes following the six steps of thematic analysis. These codes have been outlined in figure 6.

4.2.1 Accountability

Figure 8 outlines the mean responses for section three of the survey questionnaire, as part of phase one of the explanatory sequential research. Further to figure 8, the overall mean of all responses gathered for this section was also calculated to obtain the overall perceptions of school-based evaluation, development and support amongst private school teachers in Dubai (table 6). This table also displays further data to analyse the spread and variability of the results collected.

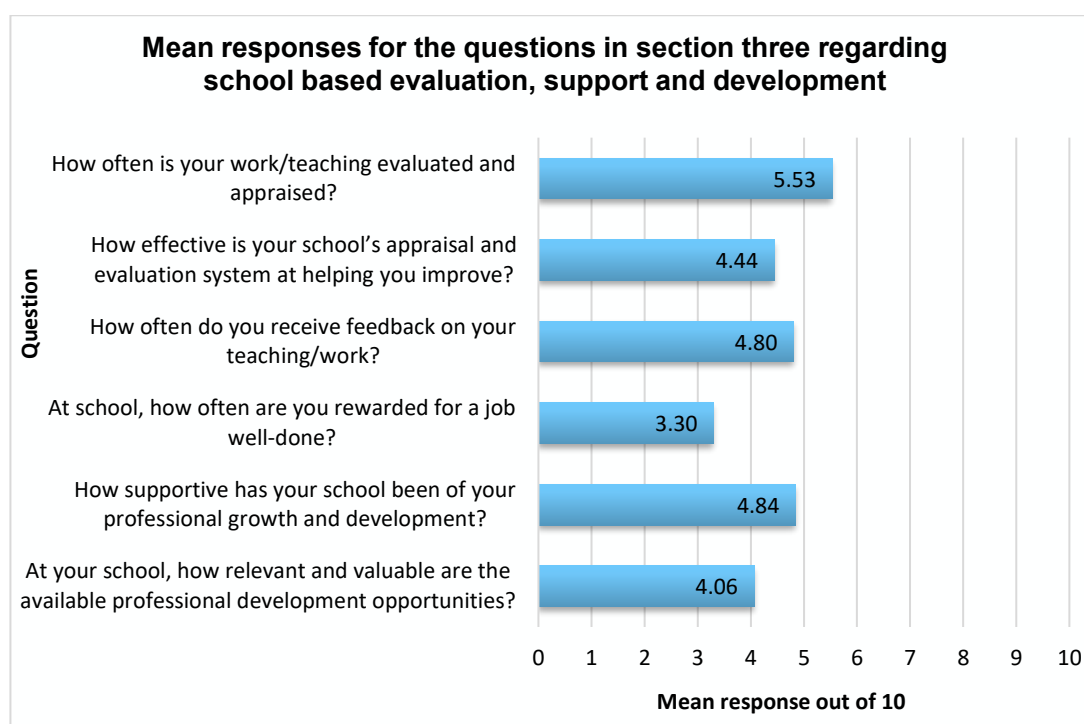


FIGURE 8: Bar graph showing the mean results calculated from the responses obtained in section three of the survey regarding school evaluation, development and support.

TABLE 6: Table showing processed data for school-based evaluation, development and support.

Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
4.49	2.06	4.33	0.17	9.83

As can be seen from the mean data presented in figure 8 and table 6, the perceptions of the level of support provided to teachers is very low. The highest mean presented is in relation to the frequency of evaluation and appraisal (5.53) suggesting the presence of a culture of accountability amongst Dubai private schools. In addition to this, participants who scored low in this section of the survey referred to pressure from the parent community and high or unrealistic expectations as the most challenging aspects of their job. Accountability was discussed by both high and low WB teachers in the interviews:

“We need training in how to support SEN (special educational needs) students. We are expected to ensure they reach their targets, but we are not taught how”

“we are expected to get all students to make outstanding progress, even the SEN students”

“There’s more pressure to get results because there’s more of a competitive environment now because there are more schools in Dubai.”

“There’s more pressure on them (school leaders) to get results, more pressure on them to sell and promote the school and to bring in new students.”

“Everything is done in order to get a better inspection result.”

However, from the interview responses, the frequency of formal lesson observations conducted per academic year ranged from zero to three, in the particular schools where they are currently employed. Therefore, it can be argued that some schools prioritise accountability and teaching performance greater than others. Participant C also discussed how a lack of accountability has implications for their school culture:

“we are rarely observed, but I my opinion that’s having an adverse effect. We are disregarding quality assurance. It can make some people feel better as it keeps people off your back, but staff are getting away with things and our standards are not as high as they could be.”

From figure 8, there is evidence of a lack of conviction from teachers in believing that the current appraisal, evaluation and development systems in place at their school are effective in improving their practice (4.44). The current systems have also shown to negatively impact TWB:

“I would feel very stressed before and during an observation, to the point where I feel exhausted for the rest of the day.”

“when the feedback is negative, or we are given unrealistic targets, that can cause extra stress.”

“school inspections are a stressful week. The build up to this week is also stressful.”

“overall, I don’t find these (lesson observations) useful as we get stressed out and overthink, then they are never referred to again. Nobody comes back and says does that work now or is it better?”

Finding the balance between frequency and duration of appraisals and ensuring constructive quality feedback is provided, have shown to benefit TWB. Regular peer observations, where teachers can observe their colleagues and share best-practice with each other, was perceived as highly beneficial within the survey and was frequently commented upon. Introduction of coaching and mentoring programs, where requested and required, and leadership feedback, was also deemed as effective amongst high WB teachers:

“we keep the number of formal observations low, but do regular drop-ins and learning walks. These are good as it doesn’t give the teachers time to stress out and teachers are familiar with others coming in to their lessons.”

“the expectation is that teachers go and observe others. We have to evidence 50 hours of PD across the year and we meet with leadership to talk about our targets and get advice and feedback, which is helpful.”

“we have coaches, I’m part of the coaching program, but we don’t believe that everyone should be coached, only if they choose to.”

Where lesson observations were seen to be aimed at identifying effective practices, this enhanced the perception and attitudes towards these as it allowed teachers to be recognised, which also showed to lead to improved self-efficacy:

“They are seen as chance for teachers to show off and its more seen as an opportunity to celebrate their work, rather than to look for issues in their work or to criticise”

These results are similar to those outlined by one MEL alumni, who investigated the culture of lesson observations and social learning spaces in Dubai private schools. One participant from this study stated:

“you actually feel trusted in what you're doing in the classroom as a practitioner and when you are observed it's done as supportive and not as a sort of a catch-you-out style” (Keating, 2021, p.35).

4.2.2. Professional Development (PD)

Despite high expectations on teachers and evidence of accountability, it can be seen from figure 8 that there is a negative perception of the efficacy of the development opportunities provided to aid improvement (4.06). This was also discussed in the interviews with participants A, C and D:

“the feedback (from observations) is negative and it’s not constructive.”

“we have performance management, as we call it, but it’s mostly about the data and results of the students.”

“in my three years at (my school), I have been offered no external training. Any (training) I’ve done, I have sought myself.”

The data gathered in the survey also identified concerns over PD provision, with 18% of respondents stating that there have been no PD opportunities made available to teachers in their schools. This could be an area for improvement for school leaders, considering the expectations and accountability placed on teachers. In order for educators to achieve meet these high demands, they need to be adequately trained and supported.

From the survey, the most commonly referred to support and development opportunities that were perceived as effective were subject-specific and curriculum-specific trainings, as well as external PD. External PD is where experts and specialists from external agencies deliver training and workshops to teachers, usually for a fee to the school. Where participants had higher perceptions of the PD opportunities provided at their schools, generally, there was a correlation to having higher levels of meaning, evidenced from their PERMAH profile. Participant A discussed an external subject-specific PD that they found beneficial:

“We get e-mails to see what courses we want to attend and every course I have asked for I have been put on. An English training that I went on had lots of people from different schools...you can then contact them and share advice or get support, it’s helpful definitely!”

Despite evidence of a desire amongst teachers to pursue external PD opportunities, this appears to be restricted in some schools due to a lack of investment or

a limited budget being allocated. Internal PD is the cheaper, more accessible alternative, where teachers lead training with and for their colleagues. However, only 8% of participants in the survey identified their current internal PD provision as being valuable or meaningful. This appears to impact TWB with many expressing stress and frustrations that all teachers are required to attend all sessions, further supporting the low levels of engagement amongst Dubai private school teachers (table 3):

“I feel like they are just meetings for the sake of meetings...I don’t actually take anything away from it and it can be very time consuming.”

“The minimal in-school PD I have been part of was not very beneficial at all.”

Despite a lack of evidence from the results gathered to support that the current provision of internal PD in Dubai private schools has any positive impact on TWB, participant B outlined a detailed program available at school 2, that they felt positively developed teaching practice, and therefore TWB:

“The PD portfolio that each teacher has to complete has worked really well this year...every session we attend we write a reflection on what we have learnt and how this has improved our practice...I think there’s a lot more value this year in our internal PD.”

However, suggestions were made that in order to even further enhance the internal PD provision and communities of practice (COP) within schools, teachers need to share their experiences of external courses with their colleagues. As well as this, teachers should be encouraged to deliver internal PD to their colleagues, and should be subsequently rewarded for doing so, through financial or other incentives.

The interviews with low WB teachers not only re-affirmed a lack of PD opportunities provided, but an appreciation and perception that it would be beneficial to self-efficacy and TWB, if made available and delivered appropriately:

“We don’t have any (PD)...but a quality PD program would benefit the school massively. It would be a positive as it allows people to develop

and improve their own teaching, which would in turn improve their well-being...if they are better and are getting better results for their students, you should feel better about your teaching, which would only be a positive.”

Other common examples of opportunities that teachers would like to have available to them through an individualised and personalised approach to PD include peer observations and mentoring programs to share and develop best practice (19%) and specific training relating to develop knowledge of individual subjects or students, for example how to effectively support SEN students (24%).

“we should have more chance and freedom to choose our PD...teacher should be asked to research areas of interest and then given the opportunity to explore these.”

“differentiated PD is needed, like for example the new staff should have training in the school ICT systems, but the other staff should have other options.”

“I would like to go to other schools, or even within my own school, and observe other lessons and teachers to understand different ways and methods of teaching.”

19% of teachers also desired leadership training to support their current and prospective roles. Being awarded leadership opportunities (i.e. promotion or career development/progression) is also viewed as valuable amongst the participants, which supports the high levels of perceived achievement amongst Dubai private school teachers (table 3). The fact that almost half of the participants in the survey held leadership roles or responsibilities within their schools (table 1), this demonstrates that promotion opportunities are widely available to teachers in Dubai private schools, and thus there is a greater sense of achievement, accomplishment meaning and thus, higher TWB amongst these teachers.

Regardless of the above results and evidence, many teachers claimed that in order to develop effectively, a greater time allowance needs to be made available to them to pursue these PD opportunities.

4.2.3 Motivation

The lowest mean calculated in this section of the survey is for being rewarded for a job well-done (3.30), indicating consistent feelings of a lack of appreciation. This could also be responsible for the lower levels of happiness and positive emotions experienced by Dubai private school teachers, evidenced from the PERMAH profiler (table 3). In the interviews, regular reference was made to the impact, or lack, of rewards as forms of recognition and motivation to support:

“wages haven’t gone up as a continued result of the pandemic...there is no incentive to work hard or to stay.”

“when we are appreciated, it gives us the motivation to go away and do even more for the business.”

“achieving a certain grade in an observation, or if your students do well, there should be an incentive and a reward. If the kids get better results, the school looks better, so we should be rewarded.”

“we get a wellbeing day once a year where we get the day off, but it can only be on a Friday, where we only work 4 hours anyway. It’s the school’s way of looking like they appreciate us and reward us, but it not really effective.”

“staff and students can wear casual or sports clothes on Friday and that’s been quite positive. It creates a positive feeling and positive vibe about the school on a Friday.”

From the survey, other effective initiatives that impact motivation and feelings of appreciation were discussed. These included public acknowledgement through a “staff shout-out”, being provided with gifts such as coffee or donuts and whole-staff events, referred to as “socials”, where teachers gather together in outside of school hours in events that have been organised and funded by the school. In the survey, several teachers from one particular school in the survey mentioned how the staff were informed that rewards would be offered by their leaders, such as a time allowance for receiving a staff “shout-out”, but this were never granted. This could impact motivation as the school leaders are not implementing their actions, and staff could feel aggrieved as they have applied themselves in order to receive the recognition that was believed to be on offer.

Participant A, despite being identified as a high WB teacher, dismissed the efficacy of these one-off reward strategies. They described that they perceived these methods a short-term fix and that they did not address the issues of school culture, which comprised of a lack of motivation or consideration of TWB. This suggests that recognition does not have to be a tangible reward, but regular, consistent recognition is deemed more valuable and a culture of motivation and appreciated is held in higher value:

“Our staff buddy buys us a treat every week, like a coffee for example. But these are small gestures and I don’t think they support wellbeing very much. They give you happiness for half an hour... and people are still stressed despite these”

These feelings are similar to those expressed by teachers who feel that being told that they are doing a good job impacts self-efficacy, as well as being a form of motivation.

The newly implemented UAE government initiative of a Friday half-day was regularly referred to as being very effective in supporting TWB, as the shorter working hours and contact teaching time in turn allowed staff time to complete additional administrative tasks prior to their weekend. This initiative also provides teachers with the opportunity to spend more time with family and friends. Those teachers interviewed were also very supportive of flexible working hours and discussed how these can impact motivation and TWB:

“Technically we are contracted to 3:45pm, but we can leave at 3pm. This is something we introduced during the peak of the pandemic, but kept in place as a form of good-will. Some (teachers) will stay to 4pm or later, if they feel they want to and feel they work better from school, but most go home at 3pm. The work still gets done regardless of where.”

“Flexible working hours would be good... those people that come in earlier can go home earlier...I would rather work from home as I don’t get any peace in school...the students finish at 2:30pm but we have to stay until 4:30pm...it’s also not considering people who have other responsibilities or families.”

Participant B, discussed how the individualised approach to teacher training and PD, can be modified to consider motivation:

“You can plan a great training session, but if staff don’t want to be there it doesn’t matter how good you think it is, staff will be bored. We have introduced a sign-up process and offer a range of PD sessions once a week and teachers can go to those (sessions) that are of interest to them. It’s like a carousel approach.”

“Those teachers that deliver the sessions are also rewarded with additional time off as someone from SLT (senior leadership team) will cover some of their lessons during the day to give them time to plan for their PD session.”

4.3 Theme 3: School Climate and Culture

Theme 3 has been divided into 4 separate codes following the six steps of thematic analysis. These codes have been outlined in figure 6.

4.3.1 Burnout and Stress

From the mean results calculated for each question (figure 9), as well as the data presented in table 7, the overall perception of school culture and climate is slightly more positive (5.97) than the feelings towards school-based evaluation, development and support (4.49). These feelings are also consistent, evidenced with a low level of variability in the responses (1.84). Teachers have indicated moderate levels of support from the parent community (6.69) and colleagues (5.99). The lowest mean was related to the tone which the leaders set (5.61), indicating the diminishing impact that certain leadership styles and practices could have on school culture and climate, which could cause stress or burnout.

A lack of positivity amongst teachers is evidenced (5.79) which could impact the culture of the school. This is also supported by the low levels of positive emotions experienced (table 3). This lack of positivity could be due to feelings of stress and burnout. From the survey responses, multiple challenges faced in Dubai private schools which could cause stress and burnout, were identified. The most com-

mon of these stressors include the previously discussed areas of high expectations, financial constraints, lack of support and training for students with individual needs, observations, school inspections and long working hours.

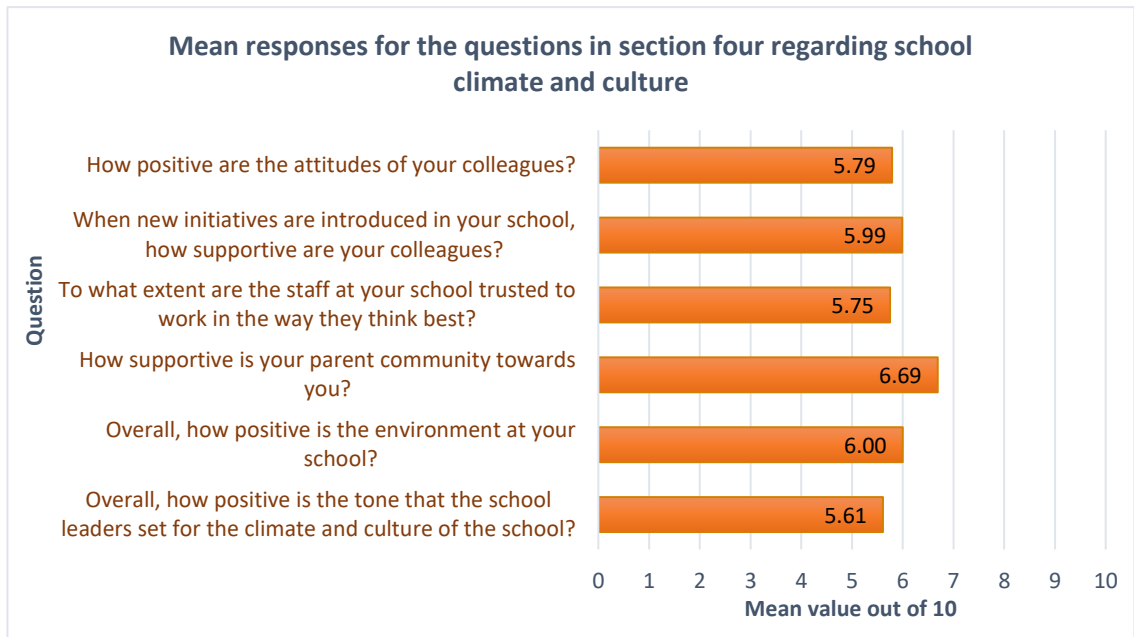


FIGURE 9: Bar graph showing the mean results calculated from the responses obtained in section four of the survey regarding school culture and climate.

TABLE 7: Table showing processed data for school culture and climate.

Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
5.97	1.84	6.00	0.33	8.33

The interview responses further identified other stressors and causes of burnout and how these, along with school culture, impact TWB:

“the culture is toxic at the minute. People just aren’t happy.”

“burnout for me is caused by the physical demands of my job as I am on my feet all day...I experience mental burnout as well as I am looking at screens all day. We are over-reliant on technology in the classroom, particularly since the pandemic.”

“having to cover other staff who are absent means that I can’t do any of my own work...that means that I’ve fallen behind with where I am and there have been nights where I have come home stressed because I know I have a lot of work to do the next morning.”

“being in leadership, you are expected to always be there (for support). This can become quite stressful dealing with negative complaints all of the time.”

“even though the staff buddy system was supposed to support wellbeing, there is now the extra stress of remembering to buy someone a gift each week.”

The most common challenges referred to, which are also noted in the literature review amongst the main causes of stress and burnout, are increasing workloads and a lack of time to complete this. Regular reference was made particularly to additional administrative and student reporting tasks, such as marking work and data tracking. These challenges were identified as the greatest experienced by 33% of the survey participants.

4.3.2 Time and Workload

Teachers in Dubai private schools are anxious about the growing workload and demands of the profession. Additional administrative tasks are a cause for concern and teachers are demonstrating frustrations with these extra non-teaching responsibilities. In the survey, frequent reference was made to the terms “*overwhelming*” “*unrealistic*” and “*relentless*” regarding workload. This is evidently having a detrimental impact on TWB, evidenced by the low WB teachers via the interviews conducted:

“recent paperwork preparations for the inspection, like reports, assessments, tracking folders etc. has meant everyone is just so busy.”

“everything comes at once, my workload is so high at the minute with reports, school (sporting) fixtures, the year book, inspection...”

“there have been lots of complaints about workload from the primary school teachers, especially the administrative tasks that we are required to do. Such as planning, supporting colleagues, concerts, end of year ceremonies...”

“it’s the national day celebration next week, then book fair the week after and then parent’s evenings. We aren’t given events on our timetables or advance notice, everything is so last minute.”

More worryingly, teachers have also expressed their discontent that these additional tasks are impacting their ability to complete their primary responsibilities of educating their students. The additional workload has taken focus away from their teaching practice and this could impact student attainment and progress. In turn, this can impact teacher self-efficacy which can cause stress and deplete TWB. Teachers are struggling to see the value in many of the tasks that they are subject to, which has had implications on motivation. This also supports the low levels of engagement (6.76) indicated from the PERMAH profiler (table 3). Further to this, those teachers whom have progressed and been entrusted with leadership positions strongly felt that they are not allocated sufficient time to complete their additional roles effectively or efficiently:

“I think teaching actually suffers in this school because everyone is so busy with unnecessary admin like tracking sheets, folders, observations, marking work, doing cover lessons, interventions, that they (teachers) are not focusing on the actual teaching.”

“there is not enough time to do what I need to do and not enough time to focus on the kids.”

“extra responsibilities of leading a subject or year group give you so much more work...it takes up a lot more time than I have been given...then I often lose this time to cover other teachers who are off ill.”

“particularly during inspection, I would say between 10-20% of time went to teaching, and the other 80-90% was admin tasks, like paperwork, marking, creating folders, writing lesson plans, going to after school meetings and so on...things that weren’t particularly essential, but were seen (by the school leadership) as more important.”

Other factors that are contributing to stress related to time and workload that have been discussed in the survey concern growing amount of e-mails received during the school day, too many forms and methods of communication, the requirement to stay on school premises long after daily lessons have concluded, pressures to cover curriculum content in preparation for upcoming assessments and demands to meet many deadlines in a similar time-frame. Further to that noted in section 4.2.3, additional suggestions were made for school leaders to implement flexible working hours to support staff in completing all required school-based tasks.

Not only have a lack of time and increased workload caused burnout, stress and been perceived as obstacles impacting ability of teachers to complete their primary roles and responsibilities, but it has also affected their ability to self-care and act effectively on their career development, work-life balance and WB:

“exercise makes me feel better than any of the others (methods of self-care) but I’ve limited time to exercise.”

“I’ve been invited to attend (subject-specific) training but it is at 7:30pm at night, 2 nights in a row. I know people are glad to have it but you’re going to be exhausted going to school the next day.”

“everything is on such short notice, then we have to stay maybe to 6:00pm or later at night. The impacts my other responsibilities at home.”

On the other hand, participant B, a high WB teacher, has explained in detail how the culture in school 2 strongly considers teacher workload and how by removing additional tasks and modifying and updating school policies have had a perceived positive impact on TWB.

“We built a culture in our school that teachers know there’s an expectation to work sharp, but we’re not expecting them to do long hours. We want people to be productive in what they do but we try to cut out the unnecessary...we consider the time spent on a task in relation to the output that comes from it.”

“We have a no written marking policy...that massively reduces teacher workload and again it comes back to the input versus output. We think the impact of spending five minutes marking a book in comparison to a thirty second conversation, which has more impact for the student. Teachers record the feedback in a whole class feedback book, which is much quicker.”

Interestingly, these changes to assessment and marking policies have not affected student attainment or school performance for school 2. Teachers are flourishing in this particular school, evidence being as it has maintained its “outstanding” rating from the external inspection bodies. Some pressure was seemingly being applied on the school to re-introduce more traditional methods of marking student work by the inspectorate, however TWB was strongly considered and the school leaders have supported their teachers by maintaining their current stance:

“We were almost challenged as leaders to show more (marking) but our argument was that we’re getting outstanding attainment, our lessons have been graded as outstanding, and we’re doing that by working sharp, rather than long...”

“a lot of our inspection feedback when back to bringing back written marking, which increases workload for staff but we argued why do we need that if we are getting results at this (outstanding) level without it?”

Despite the positive outlook from this high WB teacher, they did express how factors such as covering for their colleagues when absent, substantially added to their workload and has caused stress.

4.3.3 Relationships

Figure 9 indicates the importance and impact of school community and relationships, between colleagues, parents and students, has on TWB. This further supports the findings in table 3, where relationships was noted as the pillar with the highest mean from the PERMAH profiler. The terms “*relationships*” with staff or students, “*support*” and “*community*” were mentioned by 72% of the survey participants when outlining the most positive aspects of working at their current schools.

The positive perception of relationships and a culture of community was echoed by the high WB teachers in the interviews:

“I do feel supported. I have been at the school for a long time now so I feel like I’ve got strong relationships...it’s like working with friends, which is obviously more fun.”

“I do feel very well supported by the leaders above me.”

“my children are lovely and enthusiastic, which makes it (easier), because at the moment I feel like it’s quite difficult to have the energy to teach. I feel like they make it worthwhile.”

The low WB teachers discussed a lack of communication between staff at their schools and how personal issues between colleagues can affect TWB and school

culture (p.66). How leaders develop relationships with their followers and the implications this has on teacher self-efficacy has also been discussed (p.65).

Despite the parent community being evidenced as quite supportive (figure 9), 14% of teachers have identified this as their greatest challenge, suggesting that these relationships could be even further enhanced. High levels of parental involvement have shown to cause additional stress due to the high expectations, unrealistic demands and additional pressures of regular communication and feedback on their child's progress. It can be perceived from this survey that parental influence within private schools is an aspect for school leaders to address, but this can be a delicate area considering the fee-paying nature within this sector of education.

4.3.4 Autonomy, Trust and Empowerment

From the survey, the levels of trust experienced amongst Dubai private school teachers could be improved (5.75). Being trusted and a part of trusting relationships has shown to improve happiness and self-efficacy, as discussed in the literature review. This theme has also revealed correlations between trust, motivation, recognition, relationships and self-efficacy and how certain actions can positively address many of these WB factors.

Both high and low WB teachers in the interviews discussed how they perceived trust, empowerment and autonomy in their current roles:

"I like to make decisions...I am kind of left to my own devices and they (school leadership) let me get on with it because they know that I can do it."

"I feel trusted as a (middle leader). I make my own decisions and do things my own way and there has never been any backlash or concerns about it"

"I have autonomy in annual resource orders. I am trusted to purchase what is needed for my subject and have autonomy over what I want to teach."

"from key stage 2 onwards, there are no LSA's (learning support assistants). This makes the job very hard when you have SEN students in your class. Without this support then teachers feel that they can't do their job properly."

Being allowed to make decisions is viewed as being trusted and having autonomy, and being provided with the resources required to complete the responsibilities associated with teaching has shown to promote empowerment. However, participant C did feel at times that a lack of involvement from school leaders can also be perceived as a lack of interest, knowledge or appreciation for their work.

“I am left alone...so how much do they (school leaders) actually know or care about what we are doing...they miss the events like basketball matches, sports days etc. It would be nice to see some support with them showing their face.”

This indicates that leaders need to carefully consider their approaches to leadership styles and practices in order to ensure that their staff feel valued and recognised, but also not micromanaged. Teachers also shared their feelings of the impact of different levels of leadership involvement and communication on trust, autonomy and empowerment:

“I would say we are micro-managed. A lot of decisions are made without telling the staff and it becomes a surprise. An example would be that our recent inspection report and results were shared with the parents before the staff. This is undermining and many teachers were upset.”

“The leaders need to be more open when recruiting new staff. New teachers need to know information like where they will live, how long their visa will take to process, how to get a bank account etc. That way the new teachers will appreciate the support and trust that they are joining a new school that is supportive, honest and organised.”

From the survey results, when teachers had higher perceptions of trust, regular reference was made to their fellow teachers and leadership teams as the most positive aspects of working in their current schools. Being supported can also be perceived as trust, such as being provided with adequate time to complete their required tasks, which also impacts empowerment. As well as this, being rewarded and recognised, most notably through promotion to leadership positions, was often mentioned by those staff who felt most trusted.

Where teachers felt that they were being critiqued or judged, this negatively impacted perceptions of trust:

“People should be able to take time off when they need if they are over-worked or ill and not be made to feel guilty or be questioned. We need to feel supported and treated as a human”

Discussions in this area did not only focus on trust from leader-to-teacher, but also how this needs to be reciprocated in order to develop effective working relationships:

“we have a dress-down Friday when we can wear sports clothes, but now some people are coming in wearing these clothes on other days and are taking advantage.”

“we are supposed to stay in school until 3:40pm, but some staff leave earlier which is unfair. The leaders have said we will all have to stay until 4pm if this continues. This also isn’t fair as those that are causing the problem should be reprimanded, not everyone else.”

4.4 Theme 4: School Leadership

Theme 4 has been divided into 2 separate codes following the six steps of thematic analysis. These codes have been outlined in figure 6.

4.4.1 Leadership Styles

Table 8 displays the mean level of perception of school leadership amongst Dubai private school teachers. Further to this, from figure 10, it can be suggested that teachers in Dubai private schools have reasonably high perceptions of the levels of support (6.45) and friendship (6.99) that their leaders demonstrate towards them. However overall, from table 8, it can be suggested that perceptions of school leaders are low (5.54), but these viewpoints are varied considering the standard deviation (2.39). This is further supported by the range outlined for the minimum and maximum for this section of the survey (table 8).

TABLE 8: Table showing processed data for school leadership.

Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
5.54	2.39	5.72	0.56	9.89

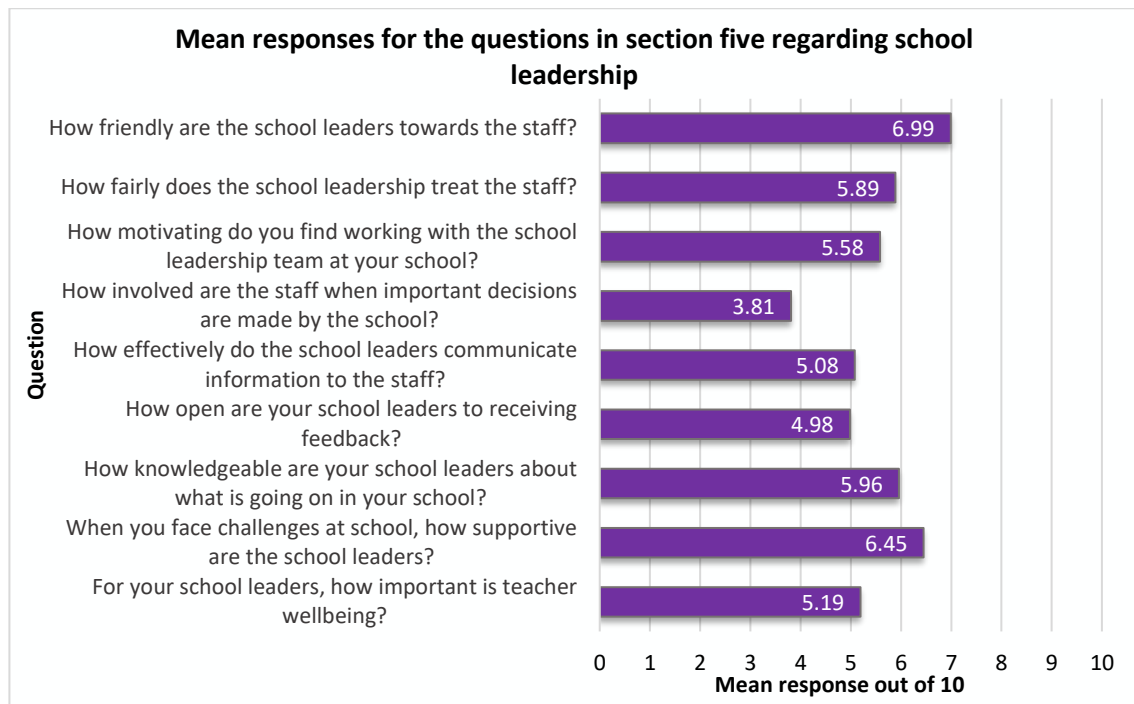


FIGURE 10: Bar graph showing the mean results calculated from the responses obtained in section five of the survey regarding school leadership.

The findings also indicate concerns regarding communication between leaders and teachers. There is a perception that leaders dominate decision-making within a school and staff have little input (3.81) and, as well as this, relationships between teachers-and-leaders based on open communication and constructive feedback are less prevalent (4.98). This suggests a greater application of instructional or transactional leadership styles in Dubai private schools. These styles rely heavily on clear directions from leaders and where this is not the case, a lack of, or breakdowns in communication, can negatively impact TWB, as trusting and supportive relationships are affected:

“they make decisions without telling anyone...so rather than entering into a controversy or an argument, the leaders just make all of the decisions. For example, they changed our planning format on the shared drive and didn’t tell anyone, so this obviously impacted wellbeing as it created more work for everyone.”

“being more organised as a school and being better at communicating message would definitely benefit people’s wellbeing.”

From the data collected, it can be suggested that a transformative leadership style is not consistently or effectively demonstrated in many Dubai private

schools. As discussed in the literature review, this approach to leadership has been shown to be most effective in considering each individual and in developing feelings of trust and support (p.36).

Further to this, participant B, discussed how their school leadership approach is more open, demonstrating the traits associated with transformational leadership. As well as this, this particular school was commended for their TWB provision in their recent inspection, whilst also achieving an “outstanding” inspection grade. This evidences that TWB and student care can be simultaneously and successfully catered for, as high levels of student progress and attainment must be met in order to achieve this inspection grade:

“the leaders have an open-door policy, and people can come by the office and talk. As a leader, I think I have good emotional intelligence also and I feel I can understand, empathise and judge, to some extent, what people are thinking and feeling.”

“We just had our inspection feedback and the inspectors said that they’ve never observed a school that considers wellbeing so highly.”

Participant A also commented on the “open-door” policy demonstrated by their school leadership and how this allows for frequent discussion and engagement between leaders and teachers, thus creating a greater sense of trust and support. The creation of “wellbeing committees” are regularly commented upon within the survey, as they also provide opportunities for teachers to discuss issues within their schools and become the drivers of positive change. 21% of the survey participants stated that either these committees or the “open-door” policy were amongst the most effective strategies implemented by their school leaders to support TWB.

However, with this transformational leadership style, participant B recognised that there were challenges experienced in maintaining high expectations of staff, consistency and relationships:

“I do think we are at a danger point where we try to let teachers be comfortable but it’s starting to become like the analogy where you give an inch and people take a mile...it could actually become difficult to reel back in our high expectations if we pushed wellbeing care too much more.”

“I have never worked in a school with this much impact on wellbeing...but I do think it is hard to find the balance.”

“at times if teachers don’t agree with what one leader says, they will go to the other, as they know (this leader) will consider teacher wellbeing over anything else and then they are likely to get the answer they want. This can lead to the leadership team having to have some difficult conversations with each other.”

It was noted how different leadership styles and changing management has had a detrimental impact on school culture and TWB. There is also evidence to suggest that TWB does not rank highly on the list of priorities for school leaders in Dubai private schools (5.19). In the private sector, leaders are under extreme pressures from their managers and school owners to ensure that their school is a profitable organisation, which can also have a damaging effect on leader WB and the operations and culture of a school:

“There’s been a lot of changes in leadership over the past few years, and there’s been a change of principal. The hierarchy has changed, the structure has changed and there is pressure applied from the owners to grow student numbers. This puts a lot of pressure on the principal to meet their demands and the owners demands are put on the teachers, via the principal.”

“things like cutting salaries did not come from the principal, but we never see the owners, so the principal is the bearer of bad news, and then people go and complain to them instead...There’s nothing that they (principals) can do about it (salary cuts) but it creates an atmosphere of negativity and frustration towards the leadership.”

Teachers in the survey discussed the most effective strategies that have been implemented by their school leaders to support TWB. Similar to previously outlined strategies, the most frequently referred to include recognition in the form of both tangible and intangible rewards, modified school timings or working hours, as well as the implementation of WB specific days or activities. Participant B described a specific strategy to support mental WB of the teachers at their school, which they felt was highly effective:

“We have a counsellor whose role is specifically linked to wellbeing. She’s done a lot of work on mental toughness and an external agency came in to school and did a questionnaire looking at mental toughness and resilience of our staff when we returned to school full-time after the peak of the

pandemic. Those with low mental toughness were identified and (the counsellor) has been working with them to build appropriate strategies.”

More worryingly, 29% of the survey participants described how they felt that there were no effective strategies implemented by their school leaders to support TWB, or that TWB was not considered at all by their leaders. This strongly indicates that there is still vast room for improvement and development regarding TWB care in Dubai private schools.

“it’s (TWB) spoken about at the odd staff meeting but realistically, there’s no action taken, or no action that’s having any real or positive impact (on TWB).”

“it’s not overly important to them (school leaders) ...so hopefully they’ll improve it and sustain the things they introduce. Rather than just trying one thing then it fails as its not followed through with, and they then try something else.”

Regular mention was made to neighbouring schools in the survey and their TWB care, and teachers indicated that they felt that other schools are catering for TWB more than their own school. This could impact motivation and empowerment for those teachers who feel aggrieved that they are not being treated as equals to their fellow educators in other institutions.

To overcome negative and depleted TWB, teachers again recorded their desires for their leaders to demonstrate greater consideration regarding teacher workload, available time and additional responsibilities. These included leadership responsibilities, cover lessons, planning, meetings and other administrative tasks.

4.4.2 Leadership Practices

From figure 10, it can be suggested that school leaders are perceived to be only somewhat active in the school community and could be more present and involved in the daily operations (5.96), indicating inconsistent levels of visibility. Leaders should be modelling the way for their followers and encourage them by leading by example. A lack of visibility has shown to impact perceptions of support from leaders towards teachers, which can impact WB:

“many teachers don’t feel supported because our senior management don’t really take an active role in the day-to-day running. They are not very visible...and you could go 3 to 4 weeks without seeing them.”

“I would like to see more presence from the senior leadership. Just knowing that they’re supporting you and that they are around as the face of the school would be quite beneficial”

Participant A, a high WB teacher, also expressed concerns over limited visibility from their school leaders and how improvements in this could lead to greater motivation and self-efficacy amongst teachers, thus improving WB:

“the leadership should be seen a little more to see what we do...not to the point where we are being formally monitored or observed but just popping in to have more of a sense of what we do and then we can get praised for it.”

Further evidence of modelling the way that has been effective in enhancing TWB has been discussed earlier in the findings. Where leaders conducted regular, informal lesson observations via “learning walks” or “drop-ins,” this creates a culture where teachers perceive that leaders appreciate their work and are more aware of what to do on a daily basis. Seeing daily practice also increases opportunities for recognition to teachers, i.e. encourage the heart. The regular incorporation of TWB care initiatives and activities are examples of leaders challenging the process and inspiring a shared vision that TWB is recognised as a priority.

When high levels of support to staff are provided, TWB is shown to be considered as highly cared for. Teachers have shown an appreciation for strong leaders and a consistent approach to the practices demonstrated by those in all levels of leadership. Participant D discussed their perceptions of how the current practices demonstrated by their school leaders are influencing TWB:

“We need strong leaders in leadership positions. People who can support colleagues and particularly when something happens in the workplace. If there’s an issue with parents or students, strong leaders who back up their staff would definitely have a positive impact of wellbeing.”

As previously discussed, those teachers in middle leadership roles also perceived high levels of trust from their senior leaders when they were allowed to make decisions and permitted autonomy in their practices. High levels of trust

and empowerment is an example of leaders enabling their staff to act, as micro-management has been shown in the findings to negatively impact perceptions of trust, and therefore TWB.

Trust is also evidenced amongst high WB teachers where their leaders allow greater flexibility in working and on-site hours. The expectation is placed on staff to ensure that all tasks and responsibilities are completed and adhered to, but the leaders consider each individual teacher's personal and professional circumstances. This helps to enable others to act in the way that best suits their needs and requirements.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research in this paper aimed at identifying realistic actions and practices to support TWB. Those to be recommended are based on results gathered from primary research, which was conducted in order to gather current levels and perceptions of TWB in international private schools, as well as considerations from published literature, theoretical frameworks and concepts. To validate the recommendations to be made, the results gathered were shared with my current school leaders in order to gather their perceptions of what actions and practices they feel, in their experiences, could be realistically implemented. This allows I, as the researcher, to take in to consideration other factors that impact TWB care provision, such as financial restrictions and constraints, as well as potential limitations due to school ownership and management.

5.1 Summary of findings

Private school teachers in Dubai have indicated the importance of supportive relationships with colleagues and leaders (7.25), as well as how further trust (5.75), autonomy and recognition (3.30) can enhance TWB. Considering the overall means gathered from the different sections of the survey, the quantitative data in this research indicates that TWB can be improved in international private schools in Dubai (6.82). With high levels of variance in some aspects of the PERMAH profiler, as well as the open-ended responses questions in the survey, this suggest that teachers in Dubai private schools are experiencing different leadership styles, practices and actions towards TWB care.

To investigate this further, a mixed-methods approach was adopted in this study, as the semi-structured interviews conducted allowed for further discussion and elaboration on the responses provided. This was also an opportunity for participants to provide specific examples of the issues impacting TWB and what strategies the participating teachers perceive would be effective in enhancing TWB. Overall, the results show that teachers are experiencing increasing pressure, along with symptoms of stress and burnout. Teachers with low TWB in particular are also demonstrating low levels of motivation and happiness in their profession and thus greater consideration and support for TWB needs to be demonstrated.

In this study, the most commonly cited contributing factors to this negated TWB include increasing accountability and workload, amplified by time limitations and a lack of quality development opportunities. These findings are supported by published research conducted In Dubai private schools, further evidencing that teacher's greatest sources of stress are in relation to accountability for student outcomes, increased administrative tasks including marking and managing expectations, demands and changes from government and inspectorate bodies (OECD, 2021). Regular formal teacher appraisal is also a key factor in reducing job satisfaction. Teachers feel aggrieved and stressed in conforming and adapting to standards and practices that are set externally (figure 11), thus impacting feelings of trust and autonomy. The levels of stress experienced in relation to these particular factors are also greater amongst Dubai private school teachers in comparison to the OECD average (figure 11).

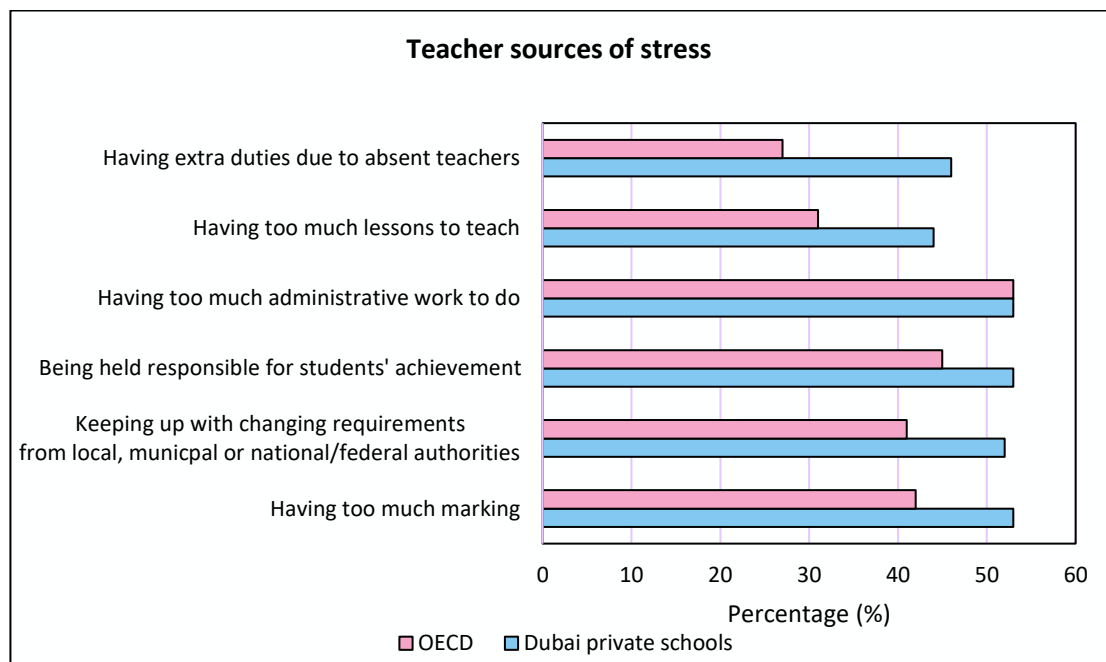


FIGURE 11: Comparison of main causes of teacher stress amongst Dubai private school teachers in comparison to the OECD average, adapted from OECD (2021).

In this study it has been demonstrated that the actions and practices adopted by school leaders profoundly impacts TWB. Where teachers feel more supported and appreciated, TWB levels are higher and teachers feel a greater sense of value, which creates a more constructive and positive school culture. Contrary to

this, where leaders lack visibility and empathy with their followers, this in turn depletes relationships, self-efficacy, motivation, feelings of trust and empowerment. Figure 12 further supports these findings, demonstrating how working conditions and trust, evidenced by short term contractual terms, creates stress amongst teachers. These feelings are augmented in comparison to other nations, indicating an increased risk of attrition from the profession amongst Dubai private school teachers.

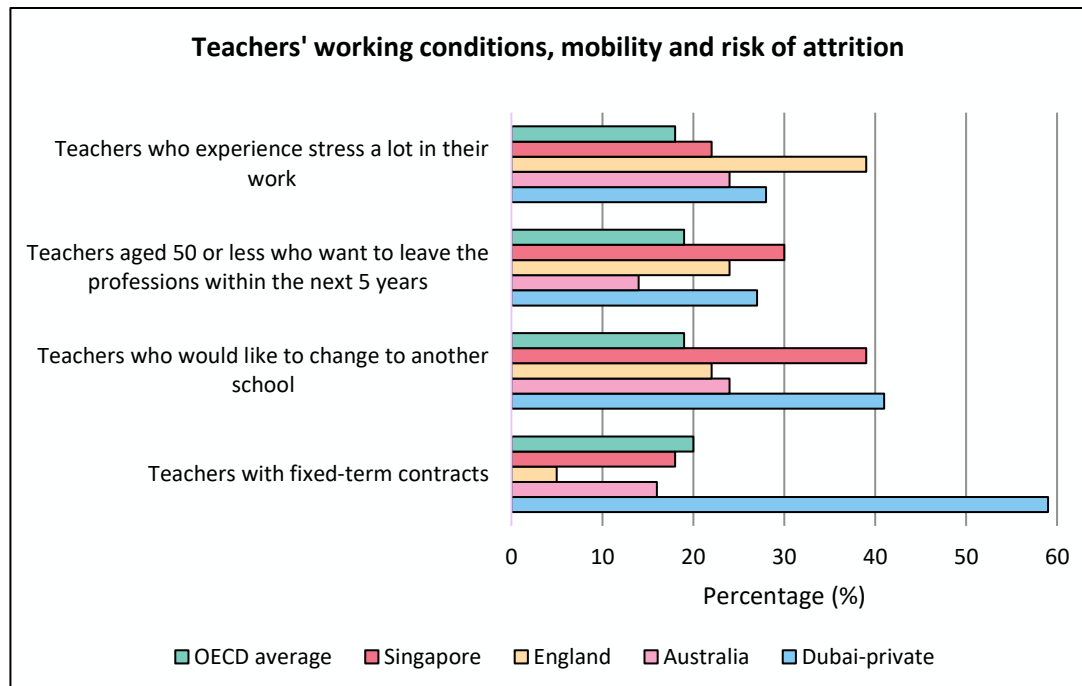


FIGURE 12: Teachers' working conditions, mobility and risk of attrition across different nations, adapted from OECD (2021).

Research has shown positive correlations between enhanced TWB, teacher retention, student outcomes and school performance (Turner, Thielking & Meyer, 2021). TWB should be identified as a key driver, particularly for private schools. With pressures from external inspectorates to achieve a high rating, teachers are under consistent pressure and growing accountability. Private schools also market and advertise their institution primarily around the grading achieved. Better ratings lead to a school being more in demand from customers, which in turn increases enrolments and income. If schools wish to maintain their high inspection ratings, which have been achieved largely due to high quality teaching and learning, they need to prioritise TWB to ensure they retain their high performing teachers. Reducing attrition and turnover rates is an important element in this and

ensuring an in-depth to the consideration of and provision of care for TWB could be play a vital role (Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012, cited in Collie, 2014). The challenge for schools and educational institutions is implementing effective actions and practices that cater for the individualised and personalised WB of all.

5.2 Recommendations of leadership actions and practices that enhance TWB

By taking into consideration the data gathered from this thesis, as well as published literature research, the following recommendations are made regarding leadership actions and practices amongst teachers and leaders within international schools to promote and enhance TWB.

5.2.1 TWB education and self-care

The findings in this thesis indicate the importance of educating staff regarding TWB and self-care strategies, in line with the theory of subjective wellbeing and individualisation of care. The findings in this study highlight varied perceptions of the term “wellbeing” amongst teachers, as well as contrasting opinions of what strategies are most effective. This supports the evidence to suggest that WB and WB care is not a one-size-fits-all approach, as supported by Kouzes & Posner’s leadership practice of encouraging the heart (2017).

It is important to clarify that whilst self-care does mean consideration of one’s own WB, it does not mean doing everything by yourself (Brosnan, Evans & Hoyle, 2022). To overcome these misconceptions and to provide clarity and support, teachers should be educated on WB as a concept in order to identify stressors and effective support mechanisms, as well as deciphering between what WB is and isn’t. It is recommended that schools create partnerships between government bodies, inspectorate authorities and professional organisations to fund and provide teachers with the knowledge of WB, as well as mental and physical health care.

To support with this, it is recommended that schools, teachers and leaders should promote the process of creating a “living map” of learning about flourishing. Following the model suggested by Cherkowski & Walker (2018), in-line with positive psychology (Seligman, 2011), teachers and leaders should be focusing on *noticing* what leads to flourishing, making efforts to *nurture* these personalised strategies that result in feelings of thriving, promoting a community culture to *sustain* and share these practices helps to create a culture where other teachers and leaders can *flourish* (p.113).

This environment of positive psychology and WB can stem from the classroom where expectations and boundaries can be set to establish effective student-teacher relationships which helps to create a productive and controlled learning atmosphere. Daily practice of fostering a sense of community creates a whole-school approach towards positive WB and happiness, where teachers are supported. Increased happiness, engagement and motivation leads to more effective teaching and also happier students. Teaching and learning are related, and WB can act as the bridge to support these.

The participants in this study expressed that it is vital that schools proactively support TWB consistently throughout the entirety the academic year, without resorting to short-term quick fix strategies or reacting when teachers have already reached breaking point. This can be challenging as it is acknowledged that teaching is a stressful profession and certain scenarios are particularly demanding, notably prior and during inspection visits.

To apply consistent TWB care, this approach needs to be adopted through self-care from the teachers themselves first and foremost. By equipping teachers with the knowledge of WB and TWB care, as stated by Hannaghan (2019), teachers and leaders should “put on your own oxygen mask before helping those around you.” Brosnan, Evans & Hoyle (2022) outline a five-step plan to promote self-care, that is recommended to be implemented, and incorporates the following:

1. What are you tolerating?
2. Creating daily habits
3. Healthy Boundaries

4. Healthy communication
5. Healthy flexibility

Within this plan, the individual is at the forefront of WB care through self-reflection, thus supporting flourishing. As discussed, despite evidence of increasing levels of teacher attrition, decreased job satisfaction and increased burnout levels amongst teachers, TWB is not being perceived as a priority amongst schools and leaders. Teachers therefore need to consider self-care and self-leadership actions to manage their own WB.

Teachers globally have taken to social media, educational forums and blogs, particularly since the covid-19 pandemic, to share examples of self-care actions and practices to improve their WB. Suggestions and recommendations of strategies include mindfulness, talking to trusted individuals, outdoor exercise, improving diet and sleep patterns, creating a daily diary of reflections or an emotions planner (Holmes, 2020; Hannaghan, 2019; Richards, 2020; Valenzuela, 2021; Furhram, 2022)

Further to this, developing resilience in challenges can support TWB. However, distinguishing between developing resilient qualities and encouraging teacher simply to “cope” must be established clearly. Modelling this shift in mindset is important so that others can also learn to flourish within the community is essential in moving forward with enhancing TWB within a school environment or organisation.

Developing resilience has also shown to increase professional commitment and engagement (Cook et al., 2017.) Further recommendations are made to incorporate and instil resilience within teacher-training programs and new staff inductions to empower and prepare these prospective educators to take control of their resilience as they enter the profession (Le Cornu, 2009). This is supported by Geng et al., (2015) who also encourages teacher-training organisations to incorporate TWB education in to their programs and curricula.

Personalisation of coping strategies is also important in order to modify provision and support dependent on each individuals' circumstances. Promoting subjective

WB and happiness is fundamental for developing positive culture and relationships. This approach is recommended within schools in order to establish collaborative and supportive learning communities that practice self-care regularly, as opposed to inadvertently developing a reactive culture that aims to reduce symptoms of stress amongst already exhausted and over-whelmed teachers through one-off rewards (Acton & Glasgow, 2015).

Improvements in EI awareness and skills amongst teachers, schools and leaders should also be enhanced. It is recommended that schools should educate their staff and provide appropriate training opportunities to develop EI competencies. Due to increased accountability, expectations and pressures on teachers, developing EI has the potential to enhance TWB, as teachers develop abilities to manage emotions. It is also recommended to facilitate and utilise teacher-mentors for inexperienced educators, which has also proven effective in developing EI and reducing feelings of isolation and worry (Farquhar & Tesar, 2016).

From this study, it has been demonstrated that those teachers who felt they were better able to cope also demonstrated higher self-efficacy, enhanced decision making and had higher perceptions of their own physical and mental health. Research conducted by Luk et.al (2009), further supports the importance of educating teachers about coping mechanisms and techniques. Subsequently, those teachers whom feel unable to manage are therefore lacking job satisfaction are more likely to quit teaching. This recommendation arises from the ACHIEVER Resilience Curriculum, which prioritises TWB and has shown to be effective in improving teacher self-efficacy and reducing job related stress and burnout. This approach implements education of WB theory, whilst training teachers on effective practices (including sleep hygiene, gratitude practices, values clarification and mindfulness) that are designed to promote TWB (Cook et al., 2017).

School leaders are key to creating a culture of support by modelling the way and demonstrating actions that allow teachers to feel valued, involved and encouraged. Teachers have shown to reach out to their principals for advice when experiencing burnout and stress so it is important that the leaders pivot the school culture in a direction that promotes guidance and support (Pillay, Goddard and Wilss, 2005). Moving more towards a culture of finding actions and practices that

allow teachers to strive and recover, rather than merely surviving or recharging is vital (Cherkowski & Walker, 2018, p.33; Rodman, Farias & Szymczak, 2020).

5.2.2 A culture of shared responsibility

Reducing the impact of the main causes of negative TWB such as increased workload, lack of time and growing accountability should be tackled with a whole-school approach. Each teacher should take responsibility for and make consideration to their WB and not always direct concerns to senior leaders or wellbeing committees and expect changes to occur. Nor can TWB issues be something that can be considered that only those in leadership can support or resolve.

The creation of “wellbeing committees” follows the approach of transformational leadership and leadership practice of enabling others to act. Application of these committees was commonly identified within this survey, as well as the interviews, as an effective strategy to allow teachers to have a voice. Those teachers with high WB further recognised the “open-door” policies applied by their leaders. These teachers also demonstrated feelings of being listened to and valued within their school community. Being able to influence decisions has also shown to link to higher levels of WB in international school settings (Pisanti et.al., 2003). Within this particular study, the PERMAH profiler identified that the relationships between colleagues has shown to be the most positive aspect of working in Dubai private schools (7.25). Utilising these collaborative networks more effectively can help to enhance TWB.

Interestingly, a lack of visibility from leaders was commented upon by teachers of both high and low WB, suggesting that all leaders should be considering practicing modelling the way more explicitly with regard to WB care. It is recommended that teachers should be allowed opportunities to discuss concerns and share ideas with their leaders, in order to make them feel that they are involved in the decision-making processes. This has also shown to lead to experiencing positive emotions when implementing education change (Hargreaves, 2004).

“Visibility” appears to be viewed as being witnessed within the school community as being a change agent, as well as noticing what challenges teachers are experiencing in their daily practice. Those high WB teachers commented on their leaders conducting regular “learning walks” to identify best practice and recognise achievements amongst staff. From this study, it is recommended that leaders could additionally perform regular “wellbeing walks” where the focus is to identify the obstacles and stressors that teachers are facing and to grasp a realistic understanding of the day-to-day workload and causes of low WB from a range of teachers, so that relevant support strategies can be implemented.

Within a transformational leadership style of shared responsibility, staff should not only share best practice of teaching and learning, but also WB care. Shifting from the previously discussed “paradigm of accountability” in UAE private schools and away from a culture of blame that is evident from the data collected in this thesis, it is recommended that teachers and leaders maximise their positive relationships and should work together to develop solutions for the problems impacting TWB. A further model to support embedding TWB care in daily practice is outlined by Farlecki (2022), who explains how the 6E’s roadmap can help schools implement and embed strategic, effective plans (figure 13).

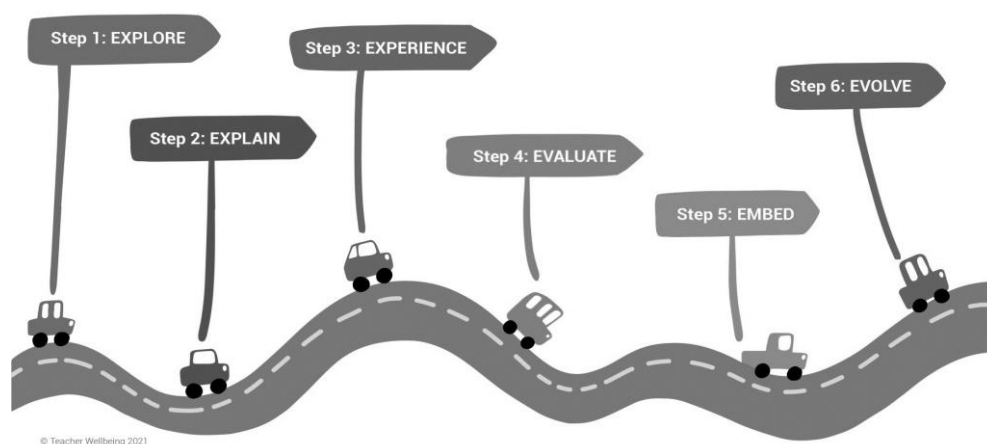


FIGURE 13: The 6E’s roadmap for strategic change in WB care, cited in Falecki, (2022).

In line with the individualised approach and shared responsibility to embedding WB care, recommendations are made to create focus or working groups to investigate the issues of workload and time allocation and for which teachers are feeling the strain most prominently. Regular discussions and surveys to measure,

in depth, TWB and perceptions of the main stressors, could help investigate in greater detail the main issues. The focus groups could further be personalised to cater for teachers of different years of experience, cultures or age to support to concept of subjective wellbeing. This has been supported by research conducted by OECD (2021), investigating TWB strategies amongst Dubai private school teachers.

It is recommended to gather participant demographic information, alongside data from a PERMAH profiler, or similar quantitative study, thus allowing focus groups to be identified and appropriately supported. It is worth noting that modifying the survey content so that it is relevant and specific for the organisation and staff employed can assist in identifying precise issues that need addressing. It is important however that with change management, any WB care strategies implemented need to be evaluated and further repeated surveys conducted on at least a termly basis to investigate the impact of any change applied (Falecki, 2022).

In these challenging times, interventions and policies should be created to better equip teachers with knowledge of how to manage and adapt to difficult aspects of their job, whilst prioritising self-care for their health and WB. However, these should be implemented following the transformational leadership style, whereby all staff feel that they have contributed to the policy, thus enhancing feelings of trust and personalisation in the WB care. Importantly, it is recommended that teachers should feel that they can be honest with their opinions and thoughts regarding TWB, whilst leaders should be open to sharing the results from surveys and feedback from focus groups. Leaders should also ensure to share “power” in decision-making, helping to create an effective culture of collective efficacy and implementing the leadership practices of challenging the process, enabling others to act and modelling the way (Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Emerich France, 2021).

By considering the feedback gathered and making visible efforts to create change, this will enhance trust between teachers and leaders. It is important however to consider that sharing of feedback through committees or survey should not be viewed as an opportunity to vent frustrations, but a productive moment to suggest how and what improvements can be made. Leaders can be subject to

blame and a collaborative approach to solving TWB issues should not result in an “us versus them situation” (Kelly, 2022).

A vast majority of private schools in Dubai are owned by a managing company, many of which are responsible for more than one school. It is recommended to establish a shared responsibility for best practice within a network or group of schools, as this can also help to devise new strategies and means to promote and enhance TWB. Pivoting away from a competitive culture that has been created within the private school educational marketplace can help to prioritise teacher care and WB as highly as inspection results and student attainment. In Shanghai, regular inter-school collaboration and PD occurs under the “Empowered Management Program”, that includes peer observations and mentoring for struggling teachers and schools. High performing schools are partnered with schools requiring improvement to enhance the overall provision of education across the city. To support this, teaching time per week is limited to 12 hours, thus allowing time for developing practice and creating a culture of research and the promotion of teaching as a learning profession (Jensen & Farmer, 2013, p.33).

Steps have been taken support this pivot by the KHDA, who have recently incorporated WB on the newly refined school inspection framework (KHDA, 2021). Other large education-based companies in the UAE have also recently advertised for the roles of “Corporate Head of Wellbeing”, identifying a need within schools to prioritise the WB care of their staff and educate all employees with training and support from specialists in the field (LinkedIn, 2022).

By involving all stakeholders and schools in the collective care of TWB, this helps to create collaborative COP and generates a sense of ownership amongst all members of the education sector. It is recommended to further align key policy documents from schools with inspection framework provided by KHDA to ensure that a coherent approach to TWB in Dubai is demonstrated (OECD, 2021). These policies and plans could outline specific goals, target and actions the all stakeholders can implement. Similar approaches have been adopted in Australia, whereby an occupational and wellbeing strategy has defined three key priority areas to be addressed regarding employee WB, alongside key actions, short-

and-long term place to achieve these targets. The targets identified were generated through direct consultation with teachers in Australia and includes regular progress tracking and evaluation to measure the impact over time (NTDE, 2019).

5.2.3. Purposeful, personalised, professional development

From this study, is it evidenced that teachers do not see value in the PD opportunities that they are provided with (4.06) nor do they feel that their school is providing individual support for their growth (4.84). It is recommended that schools permit the capacity for teachers to guide and choose PD opportunities. Research has shown that this approach is viewed as empowering, as opposed to a one-size-fits-all approach to development and training (Goe, Alkabbi & Tannenbaum, 2020; Zeng & Day, 2019). Specific individualised training to improve competence in areas such as managing challenging behaviour of students have been effective in reducing stress levels and have increased the sense of psychological safety within the workplace, thus having a positive impact on TWB (Zinsser & Zinsser, 2016, cited in Zinsser, Christensen & Torres, 2016), which in turn could reduce attrition rates. Further suggestions from UAE based teachers have been made to focus PD less on teaching strategies, but more on positive psychology in order to educate about WB and flourishing (Goe, Alkabbi & Tannenbaum, 2020).

This is supported by research conducted by Cann (2019), where teachers in New Zealand also expressed frustration at the limited purposeful professional development offered. Murphy & Louis (2018) noted how PD needs to be responsive to the needs of the teachers in order to promote a culture of flourishing. As time allowance has been identified in this study as a stressor, it is recommended that to consider the scheduling and requirements of PD training for teachers. Leaders should strongly consider the value of each PD session and the implications, not only on teaching practice and student outcomes, but the wellbeing of the staff.

Quality PD opportunities can be restricted due to school culture, facilities and leadership structures. Creating a provision of PD that is suitable for the needs of a variety of teachers whom have different levels of experience and specialise in different subjects is important, but is equally challenging to promote and maintain.

It is important that the PD provided is viewed as appropriate and valuable, as teachers are under increasing demands and workloads that are draining their available time and energy.

Attending compulsory PD meetings that are deemed not to be suitable or beneficial can negatively impact TWB, PLC and school culture. In this study, it has been shown that by making PD compulsory for experienced practitioners results in these teachers feeling aggrieved and devalued, as well as adding stress as a result of having less available time to manage other tasks. Research has also shown that teachers have predominantly negative perceptions of PD as they feel it does not address their individual needs (Buckner, Cheddi & Kindreich, 2016).

Participating in more collaborative PD and work has shown to lead to greater feelings of engagement. From this study, where schools incorporated PD “carousels”, mentor or coach programs, those staff in the semi-structured interviews felt that these approaches were most productive in supporting development of teacher competencies. This can in turn promote a sense of accomplishment and greater meaning amongst teachers. Therefore, recommendations are made to map PD opportunities across all schools in Dubai, and investment in platforms for professional exchange. Based upon survey data collected, by identifying information regarding which PD is deemed required for teachers, and also which is already being offered, information regarding PD events and training taking place can be shared across all schools. Gathering this data can also be incorporated in each individual organisations WB survey, or within the government provided surveys, such as the Adults@Work survey, conducted by KHDA (OECD, 2021).

Within Dubai, there has been an increase in informal collaborative groups of teachers that has created more agency amongst those involved. Recommendations are being made to promote and expand these teacher-led initiatives across all schools. KHDA have introduced effective programs, such as “What Works” to expand a culture of collaboration and sharing of practice has helped to break down some of the issues, but research has shown that not all teachers and schools are familiar with or aware of these initiatives (OECD, 2021).

Teachers in this research have reported positive emotions toward the relationships with their colleagues (table 3). Further to this, the TALIS (2018) survey data showed that 91% of secondary teachers in Dubai feel that they can rely on their colleagues, 4% higher than the OECD average. Dubai teachers have demonstrated a high willingness and involvement in collaborative approaches to PD and sharing of best practice, in comparison to other nations (figure 14).

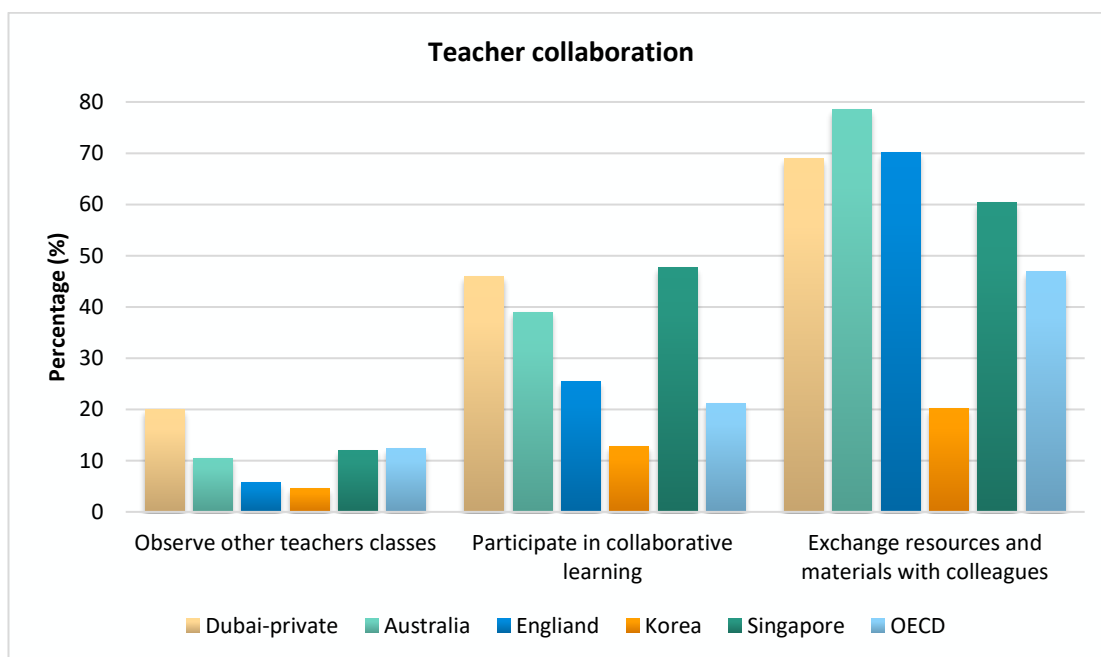


FIGURE 14: Graph showing teacher collaborative practice across different nations, adapted from TALIS (2018), cited in OECD (2020).

However, despite the positive feelings towards collective and collaborative PD, teachers have cited a lack of time to participate in sharing, further evidencing a subsequent challenge regarding workload, time and WB.

Recommendations are made that leaders introduce a culture and policy of regular peer-observations to support in developing knowledge and pedagogy, leading to effective communities of practice and utilise the seemingly positive relationships that currently exist between colleagues. To foster this, applying the GROW model can help build trusting relationships whereby the process is mutually beneficial for all involved, wherein teachers can feel assured enough to give and receive meaningful feedback as well feel empowered to ask for advice (OECD, 2020). By embedding this system in to a school's culture, the perceptions of the process

may improve as regular and consistent feedback is provided and teachers become more comfortable with this process. With effective feedback, teachers can improve their practices and self-efficacy, which in turn may enhance job satisfaction and therefore TWB (OECD, 2020).

5.2.4 Recognition, trust and reward

In this research, teachers regularly commented on the importance of feeling valued, being recognised for their efforts and achievements, however they felt that feedback is rarely shared (4.80) and that being rewarded rarely occurs (3.30). Feelings of value stemmed from being allowed a voice in sharing opinions regarding aspects of daily school life and being involved in key decision making processes. Where leaders are more visible, teachers felt that they were being appreciated for the work that they are performing on a daily basis. The perception was that when leaders were seen to be visiting classrooms, that this developed a sense of empathy from the leaders as they become more aware of the successes and challenges that teachers are subject to. This supports research by McCallum (2017), which evidenced that TWB is negatively impacted when leaders fail to acknowledge concerns and obstacles faced by teachers. Where leaders witnessed positive performances and outcomes from teachers, the resultant recognition enhanced TWB. This has also shown to increase self-efficacy (Cann, 2019).

Tangible rewards have shown by some to have positive implications on TWB, the most commonly referred to being "wellbeing days" where teachers can have additional day(s) of paid leave from school. This is already successfully implemented in some schools in Dubai and is proving effective in enhancing TWB (Burker & Swaine, 2022). The challenges for leaders in implementing these rewards include ensuring that the required tasks are completed prior to this absence, considering the WB of others as additional lesson cover is created for those staff that are present in school, as well as finding an impartial and consistent model to implement this strategy with. However, if not executed, teachers in this study have demonstrated an awareness that other schools in Dubai are already utilising such reward strategies, which has caused grievances amongst them towards their leaders that they are not in receipt of the same

benefits. This negatively impacts feelings of trust and relationships between teachers and leaders and could potentially increase attrition and staff turnover rates.

Other reward, trust and recognition strategies that are recommended to be implemented by leaders in Dubai schools to enhance WB include reduction in the frequency of meetings, establishing policies regarding communication during out of school hours, enhancement of school facilities and flexible school timings to allow staff with different personal and home circumstances to arrive early or leave later during the working day, dependent on school responsibilities (Cashin, Cottam, Drew & Coulter, 2022). Other initiatives include in-school activities such as mindfulness or yoga, but often participation in these takes up additional time from teacher's already hectic schedules, which might further increase stress and workload. These strategies were also not deemed as effective by the participants in this study.

Leaders should also ensure more stringent monitoring and regulation of working hours in recognition for the extra efforts and responsibilities conducted by their teachers. Dubai teachers have shown to be working as much as 70 hours per week (Rizvi, 2020b), in comparison to the OECD average of 38 hours per week. It is recommended that leaders and CEO's control time allocated to work. By following a similar model used in Estonia, where teacher contracts have been reformed to incorporate total working hours, not only contact-teaching time and these clearly define the specific number of hours that teachers are expected to allocate to particular tasks (Santiago et.al., 2016, cited in OECD, 2021), this can provide greater clarity and trust between teachers and leaders.

To monitor workload and support with time management, it is recommended that advisory groups are created. Similar strategies have been used effectively by OFSTED in the UK to equip teachers and leaders with techniques to manage their time and responsibilities more efficiently. Data collected from a survey conducted in 2019 showed that working hours had decreased on average by five hours per week as a result of the strategies shared by the advisory councils (Teacher Workload Survey, 2019; cited in OECD, 2021). In the private sector in Dubai, from this study it is recommended that inspectorate bodies conduct visits

to monitor teacher workload and WB, as well as observing current working conditions to ensure that teachers are being supported, recognised and rewarded for their work.

5.3 Change management in leading TWB care

Change management is defined as “the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customer” (Gayef, 2014, p.923). With any change implemented, it is important that a model for managing and sustaining any change is applied. This helps to ensure that any followers understand the reasons for and buy-in to the change. McQuaid (2017) outlined the difference between compliance and commitment to change. Ensuring that the needs of teachers are met helps to ensure that the change can be supported and sustained, otherwise additional negative emotions can be experienced (Hargreaves, 2004).

From discussions with my current school leaders regarding implementing change to support TWB, obstacles were faced regarding ensuring that the needs of teachers were catered for but also that high working expectations were still set. Ensuring the required work was still completed to the expected standard for inspections, whilst juggling what can be deemed as not as necessary and also reducing stress levels was highlighted as challenging. This was supported by participant B who stated concerns over the staff in school 2 possibly taking advantage of the allowances provided to them regarding TWB care and that there is a risk of allowing too much freedom to staff. Similar sentiments have been shared by Kelly (2022), stating that leaders worry about diminishing work ethics resulting in wavering commitment levels of staff, or staff resorting to doing the bare minimum in order to compensate for and prioritising TWB.

Low WB teachers in this thesis commented upon WB strategies not being followed through with, as well as an application of many short-term fix solutions to WB issues. Research has also shown that leaders expressed concerns or reluctance when implementing change that they fear may not be effective. Likewise, not being allowed the time for change to be embedded or followed through with, can impact perceptions of trust and relationships (Kelly, 2022).

Morgan (cited in Esther & Green, 2012) categorised organisations with 8 metaphors. By exploring these, it can be said that schools and educational institutions demonstrate characteristics associated with organisations as “machines” and as “organisms”. Schools, as machines, are structured organisations with individuals allocated to particular leadership roles, as well as having clearly defined policies, standards and practices. Managers monitor performance of the teachers in their departments, targets are set prior to inspections, and generally, major change is decided upon and implanted by those with authority (Esther & Green, 2012, p.112). However, by viewing schools as organisms, more attention can be shown towards TWB. This approach takes greater consideration for the needs of the individuals, not solely as an organisation, and prioritises a collaborative approach to change. Individuals have a voice and support is provided in order to make significant change (Esther & Green, 2012, p. 115).

Considering these different organisational viewpoints, based on my experiences in the private school sector and from the results gathered in this study, it is recommended that the Kotter 8-step model of change be implemented to support TWB (figure 15). Within this model, the need for change is emphasised and communication between all stakeholders plays a vital role in successfully implementing and sustaining change.

As suggested by Esther & Green (2012), by viewing change as cyclical, rather than linear, this promotes continuous evaluation and refinement of processes, as well as leadership involvement at all stages of the model. This model also demonstrates the leadership practices of inspiring the heart and enabling others to act. School leaders can show consideration of and empathy toward TWB of their staff, through the recommended conducting of discussions and surveys to ascertain the perceptions of the current levels of TWB. The recommended forming of well-being committees within school, helps to create and communicate a vision, as well as empowering teachers to make adaptations and modifications to their working life to promote and enhance TWB.

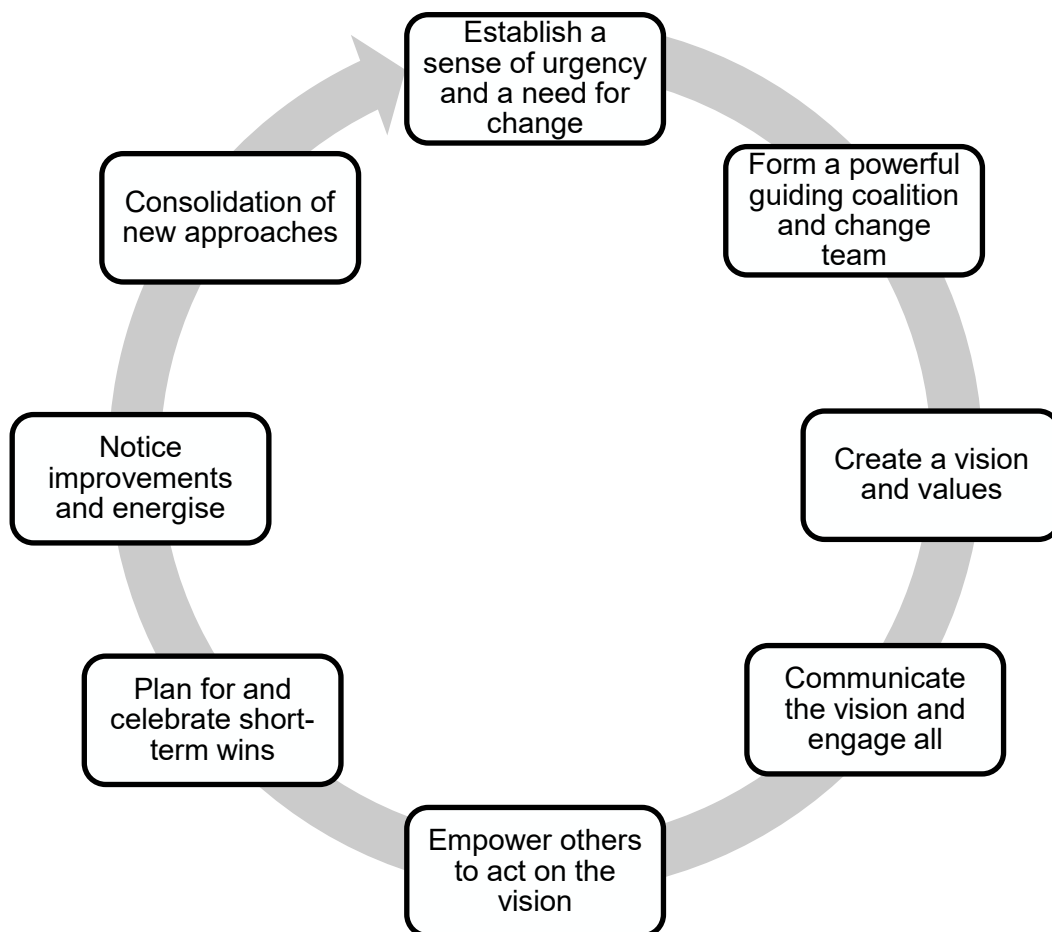


FIGURE 15: Kotter 8-step model for change management (adapted from Kotter (1995) and Cameron change consultancy, cited in Esther & Green (2012, p. 127).

By establishing a need for change and engaging all teachers in the recommended changes of; promotion of self-care, individualised PD and establishing a culture of shared responsibility regarding leadership, this can help to reduce resistance to change. This can also in turn enhance trust, recognition and reward amongst teachers. It was also commented upon in the semi-structured interviews that schools tend to implement new change and ideas for short periods of time, without evaluation or consolidation. The Kotter 8-step model incorporates short-and long-term goals, supported with reflection of change which helps lead to refinement for future practices so that TWB is catered for continuously. In turn avoiding a culture of reactive approaches or quick-fix actions, which the results of this thesis have shown to be ineffective.

By considering WB when making change in organisations, this has shown to build resilient behaviours, positive mindsets, increased emotional intelligence, trusting

relationships and a sense of ownership. All of which have been identified as key factors in enhancing TWB. In addition to this, Daniels et.al. (2019) also highlighted how unsupportive leadership can negate change and those organisations that were most effective in implementing change sought training and expertise from external consultants. This further supports the recommendation of educating staff regarding TWB and self-care and collaboration between government, educational and professional bodies to facilitate the care of TWB in Dubai international private schools.

5.4 Limitations and suggestions for further research

As there was a varied response in the quantitative data collected, in order to ensure the most valid identification of participants whom with to conduct semi-structured interviews, variation purposeful sampling was conducted (Patton, 2002). The initial demographic information collected in section one of the survey was utilised as it allowed for comparisons to be made between individuals regarding their perceptions of TWB in relation to the school that they were employed, their role within the school, gender and age range taught. Considering the influence of these demographics was important as it could also assist in understanding whether these could also potentially further effect TWB. Including a variety of teachers in phase 2 of this research can also reduce generalisations and increase reliability (Patton 2002, p.230). Further to this, the literature review has also outlined the importance of an individualised and personalised approach to TWB care and considering the backgrounds of each teacher could be pivotal in this model.

However, to further enhance reliability, a greater sample size could have been generated by expanding the study across a wider cohort of schools. This could in turn lead to a greater number of willing participants for interview which would have provided more qualitative data. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, participants may have felt reluctant to participate in recorded interviews where they may be potentially be viewed as being critical towards and employer, school or organisation. This is supported by research conducted by KHDA, where only 54% of all teachers in Dubai private schools participated in the Adults@School Wellbeing survey, potentially due to fear of retaliation from employers (The Well-being Lab, 2018).

To clarify however, it has been stated that, despite these concerns amongst participants, schools nor KHDA can access any individual results or identify any participants in their surveys. In line with this, all ethical, confidentiality and anonymity procedures were followed in this thesis, however further reassurance to all participants regarding research methods could prove vital in increasing participation rates as well as ensuring validity and reliability of the data gathered (OECD, 2021). Despite guaranteeing anonymity within the survey responses, and all confidentiality measures within the data presented in this research being taken, some participants may have been reluctant to be entirely honest and accurate in their responses. As a school e-mail ID was requested from each respondent to validate their position as a teacher in a Dubai private school, this may have deterred some participants from sharing feedback which could be viewed as critical towards an employer or particular school.

To improve reliability of the data evidencing the perceptions of TWB from teachers from different schools, the survey could have been repeated at different points in the year, and the mean results from multiple responses could be calculated. This removes to implications of the effect of the time of the year that the research was conducted. As identified in the study, particular aspects of the teaching profession were identified as notably stressful, including preparation for inspections, parents' evenings and report writing. By collecting data regarding TWB during these incidences, this may give an inaccurate perception of TWB as a whole, but more of the current feelings and emotions felt. Likewise, conducting the study prior to or following a recent school holiday for example, or other event that may reduce stress levels or increase motivation, this could also possibly affect the reliability of the data collected.

To further analyse the results gathered, statistical correlation tests could be utilised to detect correlations between the demographics and the data collected, such as paired t-tests. By considering information such as age, years of experience and nationality, the data could be examined further in order to make more specific recommendations regarding an individualised approach to TWB care.

Further limitations regarding the qualitative data collected relate to the number of interview participants. Despite many agreeing in the initial survey to be contacted for interview, only 4 respondents consented to participating in semi-structured interviews. Expanding this sample size could generate more reliable data to further justify the correlations and results gathered. Increasing the number of interview participants would also enable I, the researcher, to delve in to further detail regarding the effective strategies implemented across a wider range of schools in Dubai regarding TWB care.

To further research and extend this thesis, action research could be conducted by implementing the recommendations made in this study, following the guide of the Kotter 8-step model outlined. By assessing TWB perceptions before and after the applied changes, this can lead to evaluation of the recommendations and thus potentially further and more specific recommendations regarding leadership actions and practices that have shown to be effective in supporting TWB.

Supplementary to this, survey research along with qualitative data collection could be conducted with school management, CEO's and financiers regarding their perceptions of current TWB. Also, by sharing the results with these stakeholders of the action research conducted within their managed schools, this could potentially enhance empathy and understanding regarding the WB needs of their staff.

By educating school ownership regarding the correlations between TWB, teacher retention, student outcomes and overall school performance, this could increase awareness and knowledge of WB as a concept, as well as the benefits for all stakeholders. This could result in the provision of additional resources, support and investment for the WB care of their teaching and leadership staff.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Survey questionnaire: Background information



Teacher Well-Being Questionnaire

The following survey questionnaire is intended for school teachers and leaders in Dubai private schools and focuses on teacher well-being. This survey comprises of 5 sections.

All data collected from this survey will form part of a research thesis study conducted for the MBA Educational Leadership program at Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK), Finland. The information provided will be kept anonymous and used for the mentioned research purposes only.

If at any point you decide that you would not like your responses included, you can be withdrawn from the study.

Section 1



Section 1: Participant background information

1. Gender *

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

2. Age *

- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41+

3. Nationality *

Enter your answer

4. Role and position within your current school *

Enter your answer

5. How many years have you been teaching? *

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21+ years

6. Age range of students taught *

Enter your answer

7. Qualification (tick all that are relevant) *

- Bachelor's
- PGCE
- GTP
- Masters
- PhD
- NPQ
- Other

8. School e-mail address (this will only be used to verify your position and to communicate with your regarding follow up interviews, should you consent to participate. Your school will not be contacted) *

Enter your answer

Appendix 2: Survey questionnaire: PERMA workplace profiler

Section 2: PERMA workplace well-being profiler (Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016)

Please respond on the 0-10 scale which best describes your experiences at your school.

9. To what extent is your work purposeful and meaningful? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

10. How often do you feel you are making progress towards accomplishing your work-related goals? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

11. At school, how often do you become absorbed in what you are doing? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

12. In general, how would you say your health is? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Terrible Excellent

13. At school, how often do you feel joyful? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

14. To what extent do you receive help and support from co-workers when you need it? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

15. At school, how often do you feel anxious? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

16. How often do you achieve the important school-based goals that you have set for yourself? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never

Always

17. In general to what extent do you feel that what you do at school is valuable and worthwhile? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never

Always

18. At school, how often do you feel positive? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never

Always

19. To what extent do you feel excited and interested in your school work? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all

Completely

20. How lonely do you feel at school? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all

Completely

21. How satisfied are you with your current physical health? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all

Completely

22. At school, how often do you feel angry? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never

Always

23. To what extent do you feel appreciated by your co-workers? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all

Completely

24. How often are you able to handle your school-related responsibilities? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

25. To what extent do you generally feel that you have a sense of direction in your work? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

26. Compared to others of your same age and gender, how is your health? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Terrible Excellent

27. How satisfied are you with your professional relationships? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

28. At school, how often do you feel sad? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

29. At school, how often do you lose track of time while doing something you enjoy? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Never Always

30. At school, to what extent do you feel contented? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

31. Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are with your school? *

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Not at all Completely

Appendix 3: Evidence of total number of responses gathered

Teacher Well-Being Questionnaire - Saved ∨

NC 👁 Preview 🔗 Theme

Questions Responses 83

Teacher Well-Being Questionnaire

The following survey questionnaire is intended for school teachers and leaders in Dubai private schools and focuses on teacher well-being. This survey comprises of 5 sections.

All data collected from this survey will form part of a research thesis study conducted for the MBA Educational Leadership program at Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK), Finland. The information provided will be kept anonymous and used for the mentioned research purposes only.

If at any point you decide that you would not like your responses included, you can be withdrawn from the study.

Appendix 4: Semi-structured interview question plan

Briefing:

Good afternoon, thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview as part of the research investigating teacher wellbeing amongst Dubai private school teachers as part of the MEL course provided by TAMK, Finland. Please kindly re-confirm your consent for this interview to be recorded and transcribed. All personal information will be made anonymous in the transcript and the recordings will be destroyed upon verification of the transcript.

Introduction and opening questions:

1. How would you define the terms "wellbeing" and "teacher wellbeing?"
2. How would you rate your current level of "wellbeing at work?" (i.e. "teacher wellbeing")
3. What do you do to take care of your wellbeing? How effective are these strategies/actions?

School evaluation, development and support:

1. How often are you observed or appraised?
2. Do you feel that observations/appraisals/inspections have an effect on your TWB?
3. Do you feel that your school appraisal system at your school is effective?
4. What effective development opportunities do you feel have been provided at school?
5. What development and support opportunities would you like to see implemented in your school and why?

School climate and culture:

1. How would you describe the culture/environment at your school? Do you feel supported/trusted?
2. Does your school culture impact your TWB? Explain why?
3. How would you describe your workload, and the time available for you to complete this?
4. What are the main causes of stress/burnout at your school/in your job?
5. What are the most beneficial or enjoyable aspects of working in your school?
6. How would you describe your relationships with others at your school?
7. How can your school culture be improved to support TWB?

School Leadership:

1. Do you feel supported by your school leaders? Why? How?
2. How would you describe the style of leadership demonstrated by your school leaders?
3. What strategies have the school leaders implemented to support TWB? What do you think of these?
4. What strategies would you like to see the school leaders implement at your school to improve TWB?
5. How important is TWB to your school leadership?

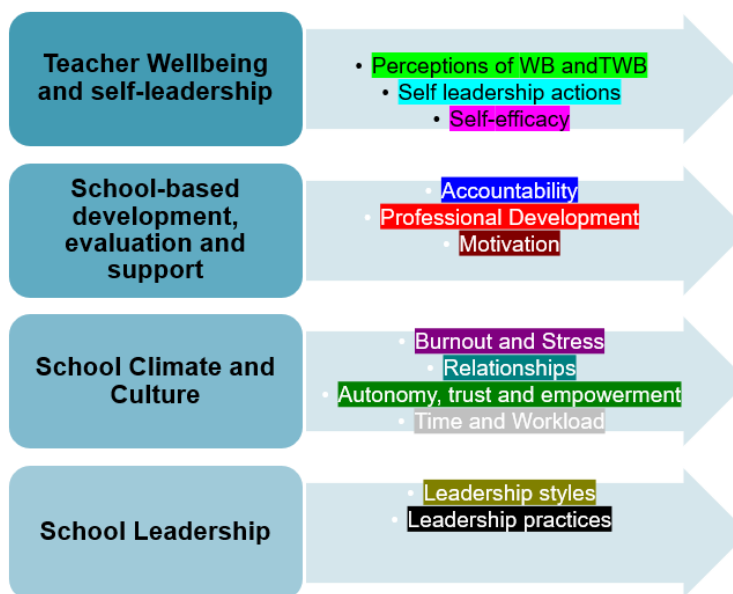
Conclusion:

1. Is there anything that you would like to add?

De-briefing:

Thank you for your comments and participation in this interview.

Appendix 5: Examples of interview-exert thematic analysis



09:19

and if these development opportunities were provided in your school, do you think that they would have an effect on teacher wellbeing?

09:29

I think it would be a positive because well for one like I mentioned earlier, if staff are given the responsibility to provide these sessions themselves, given their expertise, then they feel a better purpose in work. They feel like they're not overlooked. And that gives them motivation to go away and do even more for the for the business. And so yeah, it would give people a purpose. It would also allow people to develop obviously and improve their own teaching, which in turn would improve their own wellbeing if they're getting better results for students. And if they're feeling better about your teaching, it can only be a positive.

10:14

How would you describe the overall culture or environment at your school? I know you've touched on this before, but if you can just elaborate a little more on that please?

10:23

I would say it's quite negative. It's quite toxic. There's been a lot of change in leadership over the past few years. It's a new school. Well, it's four years old. And as I say, there's been a there's been a change in in the principal. There's been a lot of changes with the hierarchy and how it's structured. And there's a lot of pressure from the owning company to grow numbers. Because numbers haven't grown as they should have, or they aren't where they should be. So yeah, there's a bit of pressure from them on the principal, and then that in turn, puts pressure on middle leaders and it goes right down to teachers. And, you know, I don't like to talk about finances, but there have been some cutbacks with regards to housing allowance and salaries. And as a result of not growing as, as much as we should have. And that's having an effect on recruitment and the quality and standard of teachers that we're getting and therefore that's affecting the staff that have been there a long time. Yeah, it's affecting the overall let's say, culture, and how people feel. So for example, the staff room, not many people talk and a lot of people would come in and just sit on their phones are not come in at all. Me personally, I think that's very important to get to have that time as a group where people can just be themselves have a chat, have a laugh, without actually talking about work, or sitting on their phone to ignore and other people, I think of staff from play a key role in actually increasing wellbeing and building a team that you want to work together and collaborate. Even with the recent preparations for inspections, reports, assessments etc, everyone has just been so busy that we haven't met together as a whole staff in almost 12 weeks.