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Tarraya, Hilger Ojos

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Long Paper
**Teachers' Workload Policy: Its Impact on
Philippine Public School Teachers
(Public Policy Analysis and Review)**

Hilger Ojos Tarraya
Department of Education, Philippines
hilgertarrayasc@gmail.com

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Abstract

Teachers' workloads are common subjects of study. However, despite the pieces of literature and the endless calls for action, this remains among the prevailing issues in education. Hence, this paper aims to explore the policies further by gathering and analyzing the implications of workload policy and working hours of public school teachers, in the hope of producing a substantial view of the current impact of these policies on the field. Specifically, its (1) effectiveness, (2) efficiency, (3) economy, (4) equity, and (5) impact. The researcher's purpose is not to generalize teachers' views, competence, and performance but to review and analyze the prevailing issues and concerns evident in the existing literature and studies. The Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (SR/MA) was used to analyze the implications of workload policy and working hours of public school teachers. The primary sources of data are the policies, literature, and studies on teachers' workloads, selected through purposive sampling. Thematic analysis using a deductive approach was used to qualitatively analyze the data. The findings revealed that heavy workloads influence teachers' overall effectiveness and efficiency. Moreover, these issues need to be addressed critically to augment the resources the government can provide to improve access and quality of education since education is vital in sustaining the Philippines' economy. Based on the findings of this analysis, the following strategies and actions are suggested: policymakers shall have a comprehensive review and analysis of the policy; reduce workloads; improve the data management system; improve the staffing system; hire additional non-teaching personnel; quality teachers' mentoring programs through professional learning communities (PLCs); programs of other government agencies



implemented in schools must be facilitated by the concerned government office/agency, instead of fully delegating the implementation, monitoring, and reporting to teachers; and enhance teachers' welfare programs.

Keywords – public school, teachers, workload policy, impact

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' workloads are common subjects of study and prevailing issues in the field. However, despite the pieces of literature and the endless calls for action, this remains among the prevailing issues in education. Moreover, the recognition of teachers' roles and profession varies in the eyes of the public. The Varkey GEMS Foundation (2013) revealed that in many countries, teachers no longer retain the elevated status that they used to enjoy, and for many years, teachers have been identified as the "problem in education" (Gunter, 2013). "Teachers are public servants, so their commitment and sacrifice are expected in performing their duties to learners, school, and community. They have the security of tenure and regular salary; therefore, heavy workloads and extended work hours are part of their job. Good teachers work extremely and extensively." These are the usual perceptions of the public toward teachers. Hence, oftentimes teachers' welfare is overlooked.

Furthermore, the teaching career still has a reputation for being an underpaid and seldom recognized profession. Reports have also indicated the existence of several issues including corruption within the education system (Umil, 2013), insufficient teaching and learning facilities (Nemenzo, 2018), relevant training on curriculum content and pedagogies (Guadamor & Ojos, 2013), and most provisions of the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (Republic Act No. 4670) have yet to be enforced (Villar, 2004). Among all these, teachers face the societal conviction that learners' performance is directly associated with teachers' competence and skills. This declining respect for teachers will gradually weaken teaching and learning opportunities and ultimately weaken societies around the world. Long-term discussions have been existing on these arguments and these greatly affect the morale of faculty and staff. Hence, the need to continuously advocate for ways and opportunities in sustaining the crucial role of teachers in educational transformations.

The Institute for Educational Leadership (2001) affirms that students learn best when they have high-quality teachers. Also, it has been proven that quality teaching results in quality learning, and teachers are vital resources for education (Rice, 2003; Gore et al., 2017; Goe & Stickler, 2008). They have the power of empowering and transforming learners into productive citizens. With the endless appeals in the department to meticulously study the aforementioned concerns, considering the welfare and protection of public school teachers nationwide, there should be a definite explanation, clarification, and uniform implementation of policies.

It is suggested that these policies on teachers' working hours must be reviewed and restructured based on the current setup of learning delivery and the evolving types and needs of learners. The current situation requires a different set of mechanisms to maximize resources and deliver the best possible quality of learning. There is a need for policy and advocacy monitoring to identify gaps in the development and implementation of policies, outline areas for improvement, provide valuable information to advocates and policymakers, and hold institutions that implement policy accountable for their activities. Hence, the researcher sees that it is valuable to re-examine the policies and re-evaluate their effectiveness, efficiency, economy, equity, and impact. Moreover, recommend possible actions in to improve and maximize its benefits not only for the teachers but first and foremost for the benefits of learners, the school, and the community.

This paper was conceptualized to provide a comprehensive analysis of the implications of workload policy and working hours on public school teachers. The researcher's purpose is not to generalize the teachers' views, competence, and performance. But to review and analyze the prevailing issues and concerns evident in the existing literature and studies and evaluate the current policies of the Department of Education on teachers' workload and working hours. Specifically, its (1) effectiveness, (2) efficiency, (3) economy, (4) equity, and (5) impact to come up with recommendations to improve teachers' welfare.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Philippine Public School Teachers Workload Policy

Section 13 of the Republic Act No. 4670, the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers states that any teacher engaged in actual classroom instruction shall not be required to render more than six (6) hours of actual teaching per day. However, this regulation is not fully implemented in most schools because of the different interpretations and difficulty in harmonizing all other policies such as RA 1880 which provides that public school teachers are not exempted from the 8-hour workday as per the legal hours of the labor-minimum requirement.

In response to the call for appropriate interpretation and uniform implementation of RA 4670, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued Resolution No. 080096 that teachers are not exempted from the 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, or a total of 40 hours a week work schedule. There is nothing in the law that limits the hours of work of teachers to only 6 hours. What is limited to 6 hours is the actual classroom teaching of the teachers. The remaining 2 hours of work to complete the required 8-hour workday may be spent within or outside the school premises subject to the guidelines of the Secretary of Education, defined in DepEd Memorandum No. 291 s. 2008, the guidelines for the implementation of CSC Resolution No. 080096 on working hours for public school teachers and its addendum in DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2009.

Impact

The actual teaching hours have been increasingly sidelined by the heavy workload and the multitude of other responsibilities and roles that teachers play. Teachers are often tasked with administrative and ancillary works, including paperwork, training and seminars, tasks related to budget, disaster response, health, and others. Aside from these, teachers were likewise expected to participate in various government programs, such as mass immunization activities, deworming, conditional cash transfers, feeding programs, population census-taking, anti-illegal drug efforts, and elections, to name a few (David et al., 2019).

Public school teachers have repeatedly called out the “excessive” paperwork and systems they needed to accomplish. The number of additional tasks took time away from caring for their families, themselves, and from teaching itself. Hence, the daily operations and routines of teachers are considerably overwhelming. However, DepEd stands that all its requirements were legal and necessary for the improvement of basic education.

Among the many factors, teachers’ very high level of job satisfaction with school heads’ supervision and job security are contributors to their work performance. The teachers’ work performance is inversely affected by the school heads’ guidance and directly affected by the teachers’ job security (Baluyos et al., 2019). Hence, the role of school administrators in implementing policies in the basic unit of the department, the school, is crucial to teachers’ satisfaction and their teaching performance.

Furthermore, the findings of Jomoad et al., (2021) revealed that teachers have a high level of workload. Their burnout level is also high. Teachers’ work performance, on the other hand, is very satisfactory. Workload has a significant impact on the level of burnout experienced by teachers. Workload has an impact on teachers’ performance as well. To avoid stress and burnout, it is recommended that every school administrator adheres to proper workload assignments.

METHODOLOGY

The Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (SR/MA) was used to analyze the implications of workload policy and working hours of public school teachers, in the hope of producing a substantial view of the current impact of these policies on the field. The primary sources of data are the literature and research articles about the public school teachers’ workload which were collected from different online resources following the procedure of conducting a systematic review and meta-analysis.

In analyzing the qualitative and descriptive data, thematic analysis using a deductive approach was employed, the pre-conceived themes are as follows: effectiveness, efficiency, economy, equity, and impact. To identify the strategies and recommendations, the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis Matrix (Digo, 2022) was

utilized. The data analysis procedure includes the following: article screening process, identifying the effectiveness, efficiency, economy, equity, and impact based on results and findings, clustering of similar findings, analyzing internal and external factors using SWOT matrix analysis, and recommending strategies to improve teachers' well-being and teaching practices. The findings along the pre-conceived themes are simply identified and qualitatively analyzed and no statistics are employed to measure the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The effectiveness, efficiency, economy, equity, and impact of the teachers' workload policy

The Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS) was designed with the intent of improving teacher quality. Its objective is to align performance targets and accomplishments with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Teachers are provided with Key Result Areas (KRA), which describe the general outputs or outcomes that are expected of them. With these, teaching should be intentional, effective, efficient, and equitable. However, the presence of these systems does not limit the actual tasks and other roles that teachers perform in school. Hence, quality teaching is still compromised. In an attempt to establish strategies to improve teaching practices, this paper identified and analyzed the impact of workload policy on teachers in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, economy, equity, and impact.

Effectiveness

Teachers' workloads directly influence teaching-learning effectiveness experiences (Chirimi, 2016). This happens when too many duties and activities are designated to a teacher that cannot be complied with anymore which mostly results in attenuation in time which the former could use instead to teach her learners. The Alberta Teachers' Association (2012) drew a similar conclusion that the work of teachers is highly complex and involves a wide range of tasks. As a result, teachers often multitask during the workday, a situation that sometimes prevents them from focusing on such higher-order activities as planning, engaging in professional development, and reflecting on their practice, activities that would almost certainly improve their effectiveness as teachers over the long term.

Likewise, intensified workloads add some pressure on teachers' effectiveness and leave minute time how to meet the major teaching duties such as designing class discussions or giving feedback to students (Lopez, 2017). The feelings of powerlessness and lack of enthusiasm for teaching and making the school a pleasant environment result in teachers' burnout (Ozdemir, 2007). Thus, the quality of classroom teaching is unfavorably influenced (PPTA, 2016).

On the other hand, Ilyassova (2018) obtained different results from her case study on workload intensification that although heavy workloads lead to some negative outcome like high emotional stress and feeling of tiredness that hamper the teachers' capability to teach, it also offers practical experience for teachers, particularly on one's professional growth and development. The findings of Tarraya (2020) support this claim because teacher leadership (teachers taking on administrative and leadership roles) encourages teachers to be leaders, analytical thinkers, proactive, and initiate progressive practices. Moreover, teaching effectiveness does not depend on the tasks and functions given to the teachers, hence, they still achieve satisfactory ratings despite the fact that they are bombarded with designation and responsibility (Magalong & Torreon, 2021).

These findings suggest that the amount of workload truly influences teaching-learning effectiveness. This is supported by the claims of David et al (2019) that the actual teaching hours have been increasingly sidelined by the heavy workload and the multitude of other responsibilities and roles that teachers play. As a result, job satisfaction and work performance are also affected. Moreover, these studies also showed that although teachers experience burnout and stress, these do not hinder teachers to perform their duties and still achieve satisfactory ratings. It was also revealed that the role and guidance of school administrators in implementing policies in the basic unit of the department, the school, is crucial to teachers' satisfaction and their teaching performance.

Efficiency

Workload intensification, as a form of educational practice, decreases teachers' overall efficiency and efficacy inside the classroom (Tancinco, 2016; Wakoli, 2016). The overloading or intensification of work made them inefficient inside the classroom and affects the time to supervise and advise their students as well as to prepare the teaching materials of the day.

DepEd reported that it continuously works to simplify the processes and reduce forms, from 36 to 10 school forms, it maintains that these reviews are being conducted not to eliminate reporting entirely but to ensure that the data collected are not compromised and are integral to proper assessment, planning, and allocation of resources and intervention. In essence, reports enable teachers and the Department to identify areas of improvement and set the direction for evidence-based decisions to aid in the delivery of quality basic education. The Department also reminds all DepEd officials and employees that public service is hard work. Being in public service is to experience suffering and joy at the same time: the risks and the challenges, and the excitement and satisfaction of touching people, changing lives, and contributing to our betterment as a nation.

Moreover, Jomuad et al (2021) found that teachers have a high-level workload, and their burnout level is also high. Although workload significantly impacts the burnout level experienced by teachers, their work performance remains very satisfactory. Since workload

has an impact on teachers' performance as well, it is recommended that every school administrator adheres to proper workload assignments to avoid stress and burnout.

However, teachers still find ways to get the job done because their workload is based on national standards of teacher efficiency, which will later act as the basis for their performance assessment. They entail life-long commitment in order to perform well despite handling multiple ancillary functions. It was a complete package of sacrifice, persistence, and determination. This means being prepared holistically, aside from being optimistic and determined; they should also need to be strategic (Villanueva et al., 2022).

These literature and studies are similar in terms of valuing efficiency in teaching and its impact on work and department performance in general. Hence, the DepEd is working on simplifying administrative tasks such as the preparation of school forms and reports. Moreover, the department emphasizes that public service entails hard work, suffering, and joy at the same time. It can be gleaned from the studies that teachers understand public service and its highs and lows. Hence, they still find ways to get the job done.

Economy

The National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines (NEDA) published the Philippine Development Plan, 2017-2022, detailing the country's aspirations for the next five years, human capital was listed as a key driver for the country's growth, hence a push for more accessible and more relevant educational programs is needed. A report made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2008, which assessed the education systems of Southeast Asian countries, found that participation and achievement rates in basic education in the Philippines had fallen dramatically due to chronic underfunding (Beltran, 2019).

Since 2018, public expenditure for basic education has been alternately plateauing or plummeting, while public expenditure for defense and infrastructure has continuously increased in comparison. In 2020, the DepEd budget decreased by PHP 21.9 billion. In terms of financial constraints, Philippine Business for Education (PBE) has stated five problems that result in poor learning outcomes that need to be urgently addressed: (a) implementation inefficiencies; (b) malnutrition; lack of textbooks; (d) school connectivity; and (e) teacher quality. Poor quality of education has resulted in low proficiency levels among students. Some studies have shown a correlation between school funding and student outcomes. Low-funded schools are not as equipped and don't perform to their full potential since they lack resources and access to technology. This affects how efficiently they can implement reforms and update curricula. Similar studies have shown that when governments cut their per-pupil funding rates, this subsequently lowers the number of educators in a school. For instance, in public schools in the Philippines, it has been a lengthy effort to bring down the number of students per classroom to an acceptable level. As such, imbalanced teacher-to-student ratios, shortages in classrooms, and large class sizes have

perennially plagued the sector. Imbalanced teacher–student ratios decrease the interactions between teachers and students and lessen learning time (Filoteo, 2021).

Moreover, Abulon et al. (2014) cited that the Philippines spends billions of pesos annually to prepare education students. However, a significant portion of these investments is wasted in terms of the high failure rates in the licensure examination and the estimated number of education students abandoning the profession after graduation in favor of alternative careers. They concluded that teachers’ workload was the common denominator when teachers were asked why they leave their professions.

Anchored on the idea that one of the ways to achieve economic recovery, growth, and sustainability is to strengthen the education system, the education sector received the highest allocation (P788.5B) of the 2022 national budget. However, the underlying problems, the imbalanced teacher-student ratio (Filoteo, 2021), intense workloads (Abulon et al., 2014), and underfunding (Beltran, 2019), specifically at the school level, still remain. These issues need to be addressed critically to augment the resources the government can provide to improve access and quality of education in an evolving economy. Education is indeed a vital key in sustaining the Philippines’ economy.

Equity

Inequalities in education among Southeast Asian Countries like the Philippines exist not only between rural-urban areas and public–private education institutions or among provinces in the country. There are also gender and socio-economic conditions that result in gaps in the delivery of quality learning opportunities especially if we talk about access to ICT (Sadiman, 2004). Specifically, the shortage of teachers. In remote areas multi-grade teachers teach more than one grade of primary school; the uneven spread of population, which also creates serious disparities in educational opportunity; geographical location; and lack of budget for building more schools, classrooms, and learning facilities. Ultimately, these inequalities affect the teachers in school. Teachers are given more workloads and extended working hours. While it is desired, it remains difficult for schools to distribute workload equitably because of several factors such as the number of teachers and students, specializations, and locations.

The way the World Bank calculates learning poverty is based on schooling deprivation and learning deprivation. In the case of the Philippines, we have a high incidence of both. The learning poverty in the country is exacerbated by overworked teachers who have to perform tasks other than teaching. A good way to jumpstart the system and make sure that teachers really spend more time looking at how are learners coping is to lessen or remove the administrative functions of teachers so they could focus and concentrate on assessing and delivery of learning, (Fermin, 2022).

David et al. (2019), reported that if teachers are to be followed, they want to focus on teaching and have more time to speak with students, give guidance, and apply what they learned about differentiated teaching. Teachers fully realize what is needed, that is, to spend more time with students and innovate on classroom instruction, and provide more focused individualized attention to students. Their main restriction is time. The salary was not mentioned in the interviews with teachers and administrators as a problem. The issue is workload, which subsequently restricts the time for actual teaching. Other agencies seek the assistance of schools and teachers in implementing some programs given their efficiency in reaching large populations of children. This is an added workload for teachers aside from their teaching tasks. The recommendations to address the poor quality of education children receive in many public schools are to address the human resources allocations of DepEd, increase the salaries of guidance counselors, pursue evidence-based studies on teacher workload, and rationalize teacher training. A more specific breakdown of the exact workload of a regular teacher, the sources of work, and the amount of time left for student contact and actual teaching will allow DepEd to pinpoint the sources of the pressures.

Decentralization becomes a common agenda of education reform in most countries including the Philippines. Hence, literature and studies suggest that to address problems of equity, constructing more school buildings and classrooms and reconstructing or rehabilitating existing schools are needed to accommodate more students; training and appointing more teachers, especially to remote places, with additional incentives; training teachers, school heads, and other school personnel and upgrade their professional competency; develop and implement open education and learning systems; provide the schools and learning institutions with more and better learning facilities; and giving more autonomy to education institutions/schools to manage their education process.

Impact

The policy in teachers' workload impacts teachers, learners, schools, and the community. Moreover, it does not only affect the teachers as professionals but their personal lives as well. Wijaya & Prastuti (2021) concluded that most teachers experience burnout, which means that teachers experience work exhaustion or burnout mentally or physically because of increased job demands with less high coping stress abilities. Their findings revealed that most of the teachers experience burnout with symptoms caused by emotional exhaustion and low self-esteem. All teachers have sufficient or moderate coping stress abilities, meaning that all teachers can cope with all situations and perceived demands by being able to withstand the pressure from their environment. Some teachers illustrate coping with stress abilities by focusing on problems and some of them focus on emotions. All teachers have a moderate to heavy workload, meaning that they acquire a mental or physical workload that is considered heavy. The workload experienced by teachers is divided into mental, physical, time, effort, and performance workloads, as well as feelings of frustration experienced by teachers with their work.

Undeniably, teachers in Philippine public schools tend to work beyond the official working hours, also that their workload is compromising their personal and professional well-being. Although teachers accept that the profession comes with sacrifices, looking at different ways to support teachers' well-being to improve the Philippine education system is essential. Bongco & Ancho (2019) explored how teachers get the work done, with emphasis on those professionals working in small barangay schools in the province, and found that, in spite of such issues, teachers were found to be matching such issues with strategizing, inspired work, and professional commitment. They concluded that while it is admirable how teachers match the struggles with a positive attitude, it would still be ideal to explore means of 'getting the work done' without compromising the teachers' physiological well-being, personal lives, and professional self-concept.

Moreover, Pacaol (2021) suggested that by reflecting on the varied personal and professional perspectives of teachers, the degree of implications of workload intensification on one's teaching is dependent on how they handle the designated loads and what working practices they uphold. He claimed that, unlike the negative general standpoint, workload intensification happens to be not affecting the teacher's role in establishing the quality of teaching. Supervising the students and preparing the teaching materials were the only two elements of quality instructions that appear to be susceptible to the adverse implications of intensification, other elements were highly ensured by the teacher to keep up the solemn oath before the state, quality and adequate teaching to the learners.

Furthermore, Rosanes (2020) believed that teachers saddled with an excessive workload early in their careers are more likely to have their positive classroom management methods derailed, a recent study has revealed. The study, which followed 395 teachers from the start of their teaching education until 15 years into their teaching careers, also found that young, overworked teachers often resort to negative approaches to managing student misbehavior, including yelling and using sarcasm. In contrast, teachers who feel well-prepared and confident in their ability to manage classroom behavior are more likely to provide students with a clear structure and expectations on how to conduct themselves in school.

Teaching effectiveness does not depend on workloads assigned to teachers, hence, they still achieve satisfactory ratings even though they are bombarded with designation and responsibility. Tarraya (2022) supported these findings in her recent study on the challenges and opportunities for teacher leaders, teachers encounter several challenges in performing administrative functions and leadership roles in school, affecting their professional and personal lives. However, the positive impact and opportunities are also undeniable. They believe that they grow professionally and personally in terms of work performance, time management, decision-making, and interpersonal skills. Magalong & Torreon (2021) concluded that teachers can still effectively perform their duty and responsibility as professionals even in the presence of workload.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Literature and studies show that heavy workloads and extended working hours of teachers influence their mental and physical health, work performance, personal lives, and learners' achievement. Heavy workloads add pressure on teachers' effectiveness and fulfilling the major teaching duties. An increase in workloads from policymakers often resulted in teachers' burnout and teachers' satisfaction is crucial to their teaching performance. Further, heavy workload allocation impedes teachers' time and emotional management and related activities. Thus, decreases the teacher's overall efficiency and efficacy inside the classroom.

However, other studies revealed that although heavy workloads lead to some negative outcomes like high emotional stress and feeling of tiredness that hamper the teachers' capability to teach, they still achieve satisfactory ratings even though they are bombarded with designation and responsibility. Teaching effectiveness does not depend on the tasks and functions given to the teachers; hence, they still achieve satisfactory ratings even though they are bombarded with designation and responsibility. Also, it offers practical experience for teachers which maximizes professional opportunities and growth and encourages teachers to be leaders, analytical thinkers, proactive, and initiate progressive practices.

In the case of having heavy workloads and extended working hours, something is bound to be neglected. This could be more harmful to students because the quality of instruction might suffer as teachers attend to their other roles. Hence, based on the findings of this inquiry, the following strategies and actions are suggested:

1. Several pieces of literature and studies presented the impacts of heavy workloads on the overall performance of teachers. Hence, policymakers and implementers shall comprehensively review and analyze the policy.
2. Reduce workloads. Identifying priority improvement areas/ processes and eliminating redundant roles help in reducing workloads.
3. Improve the data management system. Unifying, digitizing, and digitalizing school data, with proper access authorization, minimize duplication and rushed submission of reports.
4. Improve the staffing system. The distribution of workloads must be equitable. Every teacher is a leader, recognizing their strengths and potential and strengthening their weaknesses are necessary for delegating tasks.
5. Hire additional non-teaching personnel. The administrative and clerical work of teachers will be lessened if schools are filled with nonteaching positions, resulting in more efficient delivery of basic services.
6. Quality teachers' mentoring programs through professional learning communities (PLCs). This helps teachers cope with the overload of demands, collaborate with colleagues, and provide professional and personal support.
7. Government programs such as mass immunization, deworming, conditional cash transfers, feeding programs, population census-taking, anti-illegal drug efforts,

and others must be facilitated by the concerned government office/ agency, instead of fully delegating the implementation, monitoring, and reporting to teachers. The school shall only provide accommodation, provide relevant reports such as school and learners profiles, and assist in information dissemination and advocacies.

8. Enhance teachers' welfare programs. Studies showed boosting job satisfaction significantly influenced teachers' commitment to work. Their satisfaction affects the overall process of carrying out their job and increases retention, thus, contributing to the school's success.

IMPLICATIONS

The New Times (2017) reported that with overloads - voluntarily or otherwise - we run the risk of stress and burnout. It will suffice to mention that continual stress from such ultimately affects three dimensions: the first dimension is emotional exhaustion, where the individual is in a state of depletion of emotional resources and feels worn out. The second is depersonalization which is a negative, cynical attitude towards one's work or the recipients of one's care (e.g., students in the case of teachers' burnout). The third is decreased personal accomplishment, marked by a sense of inefficacy, negative self-evaluation, and inadequacy with reference to job performance.

“Teachers are public servants, so their commitment and sacrifice are expected in performing their duties to learners, school, and community. They have the security of tenure and regular salary; therefore, heavy workloads and extended work hours are part of their job. Good teachers work extremely and extensively.” These are the usual perceptions of the public toward teachers. Hence, oftentimes teachers' welfare is overlooked. However, because of the constant campaigns of teachers' welfare groups and improvement in the department, teachers are now heard. While we cannot deny that there are teachers who underperform, the majority of teachers are committed and consistent. Teaching is a noble profession; this principle comes with great responsibility and duty to learners. More than teaching and imparting knowledge, teachers inspire and motivate learners and influence important decisions in their lives.

However, this commitment, extensive workloads, and other factors often result in burnout and low self-esteem. The challenges that teachers encounter impact their overall work performance, mental and physical health, and even personal lives. Hence, while changes and improvement in public policies necessitate thorough studies, it is strongly encouraged that teachers should practice work-life balance, establish time and emotional management, set boundaries between personal and professional interactions, and continue pursuing ways to improve themselves. A physically and mentally healthy teacher works effectively and efficiently and will significantly impact the lives of the learners and community.

DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

I, HILGER O. TARRAYA, understand that conflict of interest refers to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise my judgment in evaluating, conducting, or reporting research. I hereby declare that I don't have any personal conflict of interest. Further, in case of any form of conflict of interest (possible or actual) which may inadvertently emerge, I will duly report it to the review committee for immediate action. Likewise, I certify that the submission is not under review at any other publication.

Informed Consent

The paper has no actual human participants; hence no informed consent was required. However, the works of the authors of the literature and studies used in this paper were appropriately cited and acknowledged.

Ethics Approval

As far as the author's knowledge, research ethics have been observed in producing this work.

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Author's Biography

Hilger O. Tarraya, Head Teacher I designated as public secondary school head. Passionate and driven with a decade and a half of teaching and leadership experience. Deeply invested in learning management to assist teachers and students achieve their personal, professional, and academic successes. Directly involved in leadership and management, learning and development, management of resources, and research. Research interests include teacher leadership, organizational management, teaching practices, and learning development.