

SELF-CARE PRACTICES AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS: BASIS FOR A WELLNESS PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Self-care practices are essential for fostering work-life balance, especially for elementary teachers who face demanding workloads and stress. Effective self-care can improve physical, emotional, social, and professional well-being, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction and personal fulfillment. However, challenges in maintaining work-life balance persist, prompting the need to explore the relationship between self-care practices and work-life balance to identify strategies for improvement. This study aimed to assess the self-care practices and work-life balance of elementary teachers in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales, during the School Year 2024–2025. Using a quantitative-descriptive research design, data were collected through a validated researcher-designed questionnaire with high reliability scores (Cronbach's Alpha = .983 for self-care practices and .986 for work-life balance). A total of 89 respondents were selected through simple random sampling. Results revealed that self-care practices were consistently and frequently practiced across physical, emotional, social, and professional dimensions. Despite this, work-life balance in terms of time management, stress management, personal fulfillment, and job satisfaction was only moderately evident. A very high positive significant correlation was established between self-care practices and work-life balance, highlighting their strong interrelationship. In response, a wellness program was drafted to enhance self-care practices and improve work-life balance. The program aims to address gaps in time and stress management while fostering personal and professional fulfillment. This study concludes that while teachers consistently engage in self-care practices, their work-life balance requires further enhancement. The significant correlation underscores the importance of optimizing self-care to improve overall well-being. The findings contribute to the growing recognition of self-care as a critical factor in achieving work-life balance and highlight the need for targeted wellness initiatives to support teachers effectively.

Keywords: Self-care Practices, Work-life Balance, Elementary Teachers, Wellness Program, Teachers' Support.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced educational environment, the pursuit of work-life balance has become a critical concern for elementary teachers, who often find themselves juggling professional responsibilities and personal commitments. With the increasing demands placed on teachers, particularly in the wake of recent global challenges, the need for effective self-care practices has never been more urgent. The prevalence of burnout and stress among teachers highlights a significant issue that not only affects their well-being but also their ability to provide quality education to learners (Cairns, Cigal, and Singe, 2024).

This study investigated the self-care practices and work-life balance of elementary teachers in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales. Teachers played a pivotal role in shaping future generations, yet they frequently encountered overwhelming workloads, inadequate support systems, and societal pressures. As a result, many teachers experienced elevated levels of stress and dissatisfaction, which led to negative outcomes for both their health and their learners' academic performance (Dickson, Jun, and Melkus, 2021; Williams, 2021). This issue was particularly pertinent on a national scale, where educational institutions strove to retain qualified teachers while addressing the mental health crisis within the profession.

Conducting this study was vital for several reasons. Locally, teachers in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales faced unique challenges that may not have been adequately addressed by broader research findings. Understanding how these challenges affected teachers' self-care practices and overall work-life balance informed the development of tailored wellness programs that promoted healthier work environments. Moreover, previous studies focused primarily on the negative aspects of work-life balance without offering concrete strategies for improvement (Best, 2024; Ramos, Gokcek, Deciancio, Garriga, Haynes, Scalera Elliott, Valenca, Skonieczny, and Fattore, 2024). By exploring the relationship between self-care and work-life balance in this specific context, the study aimed to fill this research gap and contributed valuable insights to educational leadership and policy.

The primary objectives of this study were to assess the current self-care practices of elementary teachers in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales and to evaluate the impact of these practices on their work-life balance. Furthermore, the study identified potential areas for intervention and support that could have enhanced teacher well-being and effectiveness in the classroom. By focusing on these objectives, the research emphasized the significance of self-care and work-life balance in the educational sector, ultimately guiding the development of a comprehensive wellness program tailored to the needs of local teachers. The scope of the study was limited to elementary teachers in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales, while recognizing the broader implications for educational systems at national and global levels.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to assess the self-care practices and work-life balance of elementary teachers in San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales during the School Year 2024-2025. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the self-care practices of elementary teachers be described in terms of:
 - 1.1. physical;
 - 1.2. emotional;
 - 1.3. social; and
 - 1.4. professional?
2. How may the work-life balance of elementary teachers be described in terms of:
 - 2.1. time management;
 - 2.2. stress management;
 - 2.3. personal fulfillment; and
 - 2.4. job satisfaction?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the self-care practices of the elementary teachers and their work-life balance?

4. What wellness program can be proposed to enhance the self-care practices and work-life balance of elementary teachers?

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study aimed to assess the self-care practices and work-life balance of elementary teachers in San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales during the School Year 2024-2025. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, with data collected, classified, summarized, and analyzed using percentages and means. The study involved 89 elementary teachers, selected through simple random sampling to ensure equal representation of the population. A researcher-designed questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, targeting dimensions of self-care practices and work-life balance. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability, as confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha values for self-care practices ($\alpha = 0.983$) and work-life balance ($\alpha = 0.986$). Statistical analyses, including the Spearman Rho Correlation Coefficient were used to test the study's hypotheses.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teacher

4.1.1. Physical

Table 1 presents the Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Physical. The indicators were evaluated using mean and standard deviation (SD). The means for the ten indicators ranged from 2.69 to 3.21, all interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*. The standard deviations ranged from .751 to .820, indicating a relatively small spread in responses and suggesting consistency in the participants' self-reported physical self-care practices. The general mean rating of 2.91 was also interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*, reflecting that teachers consistently engaged in physical self-care activities to some extent. The general SD of .690 showed a moderately low variability, which further supported the uniformity in responses among the elementary teachers.

Table 1. Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Physical

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I make sure to eat balanced meals to maintain my energy throughout the day.	3.02	Frequently Practiced	.783
2. I drink at least eight glasses of water daily to stay properly hydrated.	3.03	Frequently Practiced	.775
3. I follow a regular exercise routine to keep my body active and healthy.	2.69	Frequently Practiced	.820
4. I ensure that I get 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night to help my body recover.	2.82	Frequently Practiced	.762
5. I practice good posture while working to prevent back or neck pain.	2.88	Frequently Practiced	.751
6. I take short breaks between tasks to avoid physical fatigue during the day.	2.85	Frequently Practiced	.791

7. I wash my hands and maintain good hygiene to protect myself from illness.	3.21	Frequently Practiced	.818
8. I make time for stretching exercises to keep my muscles flexible and prevent strain.	2.84	Frequently Practiced	.767
9. I manage my screen time to reduce eye strain and discomfort.	2.79	Frequently Practiced	.804
10. I listen to my body's signal, such as hunger or tiredness, and respond by eating or resting as needed.	2.98	Frequently Practiced	.768
General Mean Rating	2.91	Frequently Practiced	.690

The findings implied that elementary teachers generally maintained a positive level of physical self-care practices, frequently engaging in behaviors such as eating balanced meals, drinking enough water, and managing screen time to reduce strain. However, the slightly lower mean on maintaining a regular exercise routine (2.69) suggested an area that may need further encouragement or intervention. The overall consistency in responses indicated that most teachers shared similar levels of commitment to their physical well-being.

These findings aligned with the study of Madigan, Kim, Glandorf, and Kavanagh (2023), which reported that teachers prioritized physical health to sustain their energy and effectiveness in their professional roles. Madigan, et al. (2023) emphasized that consistent physical self-care practices positively influenced teachers' productivity and reduced stress levels. The present study corroborated these insights, highlighting the importance of maintaining physical health for overall well-being and performance in teaching.

4.1.2. Emotional

Table 2 showcases the Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Emotional. The mean values for the ten indicators ranged from 2.93 to 3.09, all interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*. The standard deviations ranged from .730 to .782, indicating a relatively consistent agreement among teachers regarding their emotional self-care practices. The general mean rating of 3.01 was interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*, suggesting that teachers generally maintained a positive approach to their emotional well-being. The general SD of .711 denoted moderately low variability, reflecting a consistent perception among participants about their emotional self-care.

Table 2. Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Emotional

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I express my feelings openly and talk to others when I need support.	3.01	Frequently Practiced	.746
2. I take time to relax when I feel stressed or overwhelmed.	2.93	Frequently Practiced	.780
3. I practice deep breathing exercises to calm myself when I am upset.	2.99	Frequently Practiced	.776
4. I focus on positive thoughts to help improve my mood.	3.03	Frequently Practiced	.730

5. I recognize my emotions and understand how they affect my actions.	2.97	Frequently Practiced	.745
6. I forgive myself for mistakes and learn from them to feel better.	3.06	Frequently Practiced	.766
7. I set boundaries with others to protect my emotional well-being.	3.02	Frequently Practiced	.753
8. I celebrate my achievements, no matter how small, to boost my confidence.	2.99	Frequently Practiced	.761
9. I engage in activities that make me happy and help me relax.	3.09	Frequently Practiced	.778
10. I surround myself with positive people who support my emotional health.	3.04	Frequently Practiced	.782
General Mean Rating	3.01	Frequently Practiced	.711

The findings implied that elementary teachers frequently engaged in emotional self-care practices, such as surrounding themselves with supportive people, celebrating achievements, and setting boundaries to protect their emotional health. The highest-rated item, "I engage in activities that make me happy and help me relax" (3.09), highlighted teachers' focus on balancing stress with enjoyable activities. However, slightly lower means for stress management and emotional recognition suggested areas where additional support or resources could be beneficial.

These results were consistent with the findings of Emeljanovas, Sabaliauskas, Meziene, and Istomina (2023), who reported that teachers frequently practiced emotional self-care as a means to cope with the demands of their profession. Emeljanovas et al (2023) emphasized that emotional resilience positively influenced teachers' ability to handle challenges effectively, and this study confirmed the importance of maintaining emotional health as a key factor in sustaining their well-being and professional efficiency.

4.1.3. Social

Table 3 displays the Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Social. The mean values for the ten indicators ranged from 2.98 to 3.15, all interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*. The standard deviations ranged from .757 to .818, indicating a moderately consistent agreement among teachers regarding their social self-care practices. The general mean rating of 3.05 was also interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*, suggesting that teachers generally maintained strong engagement in social self-care activities. The general SD of .739 reflected low variability in responses, signifying uniformity in the perceived frequency of these practices.

Table 3. Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Social

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I spend time with friends and family to feel connected and supported.	3.04	Frequently Practiced	.811
2. I communicate openly with others to maintain healthy relationships.	3.08	Frequently Practiced	.757

3. I join group activities that help me build strong friendships.	3.00	Frequently Practiced	.798
4. I make an effort to stay in touch with people who are important to me.	3.06	Frequently Practiced	.774
5. I ask for help when I need it instead of trying to handle everything alone.	3.06	Frequently Practiced	.774
6. I listen to others with respect and understanding to improve our relationships.	3.09	Frequently Practiced	.778
7. I balance my time between work and social activities to stay happy.	3.03	Frequently Practiced	.818
8. I participate in community events to feel involved and valued.	2.98	Frequently Practiced	.783
9. I respect other people's boundaries and expect them to respect mine.	3.15	Frequently Practiced	.791
10. I create time for fun and laughter with friends to improve my mood and well-being.	3.04	Frequently Practiced	.796
General Mean Rating	3.05	Frequently Practiced	.739

The findings implied that elementary teachers prioritized social connections as part of their self-care, with frequent practices such as respecting boundaries, spending time with family and friends, and maintaining open communication. The highest-rated indicator, "I respect other people's boundaries and expect them to respect mine" (3.15), highlighted the value teachers placed on mutual respect in their relationships. However, the slightly lower mean for participating in community events (2.98) suggested an area where teachers might need encouragement or more opportunities to engage socially outside their immediate circles.

These results aligned with Torres-Soto, Corral-Verdugo, and Corral-Frias (2022) findings, which emphasized the role of social self-care in fostering a supportive environment for teachers. Torres-Soto et al. (2022) concluded that maintaining healthy relationships and active social engagement significantly enhanced teachers' emotional resilience and professional satisfaction. The current study reinforced these insights, underscoring the importance of nurturing social connections to improve overall well-being and sustain effectiveness in their roles.

4.1.4. Professional

Table 4 illustrates the Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Professional. The mean values for the ten indicators ranged from 3.03 to 3.16, all interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*. The standard deviations ranged from .780 to .815, indicating a moderate consistency in the teachers' responses regarding their professional self-care practices. The general mean rating of 3.10 was interpreted as *Frequently Practiced*, suggesting that teachers consistently engaged in professional self-care activities. The general SD of .753 reflected relatively low variability, signifying a shared level of commitment among participants to their professional development.

Table 4. Mean and Interpretations of the Self-Care Practices of Elementary Teachers in terms of Professional

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I set clear goals for my teaching to stay focused and motivated.	3.16	Frequently Practiced	.796
2. I seek feedback from colleagues to improve my teaching skills.	3.13	Frequently Practiced	.786
3. I attend workshops and training sessions to learn new teaching methods.	3.08	Frequently Practiced	.815
4. I organize my lesson plans in advance to manage my time effectively.	3.15	Frequently Practiced	.791
5. I reflect on my teaching practices to identify areas for improvement.	3.12	Frequently Practiced	.781
6. I collaborate with other teachers to share ideas and resources.	3.11	Frequently Practiced	.804
7. I take breaks during my workday to recharge and maintain my productivity.	3.04	Frequently Practiced	.811
8. I celebrate my successes and progress in my teaching career.	3.03	Frequently Practiced	.790
9. I keep a positive attitude towards challenges to foster a growth mindset.	3.07	Frequently Practiced	.780
10. I seek mentorship from experienced teachers to guide my professional development.	3.12	Frequently Practiced	.781
General Mean Rating	3.10	Frequently Practiced	.753

The findings suggested that elementary teachers regularly engaged in professional self-care practices, such as setting clear teaching goals, attending workshops, and reflecting on their teaching practices. The highest-rated item, "I set clear goals for my teaching to stay focused and motivated" (3.16), underscored the teachers' emphasis on having a structured approach to their work. However, slightly lower ratings for celebrating career successes (3.03) and taking breaks to recharge (3.04) highlighted areas where teachers could benefit from greater encouragement to acknowledge achievements and manage work-life balance effectively.

These findings were consistent with Cleofas and Mijares' (2022) study, which emphasized the significance of professional self-care in enhancing teachers' effectiveness and job satisfaction. Cleofas and Mijares (2022) highlighted that activities such as seeking feedback, collaborating with peers, and maintaining a growth mindset were critical in promoting professional resilience and career advancement. The present study confirmed these observations, reinforcing the importance of regular professional self-care practices to sustain productivity and job fulfillment among teachers.

4.2. Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teacher

4.2.1. Time Management

Table 5 outlines the Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Time Management. The mean values for the ten indicators ranged from 2.84 to 3.07, all interpreted as *Moderately Evident*. The standard deviations ranged from .714 to .793, indicating a moderate level of consistency in teachers' responses regarding their time management practices. The general mean rating of 2.96 was also interpreted as *Moderately Evident*, signifying that teachers' time management skills were present but not fully optimized. The general SD of .676 reflected a relatively low variability, suggesting a shared perception among participants regarding their time management practices.

Table 5. Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Time Management

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I create a daily schedule to plan my work and personal activities.	3.04	Moderately Evident	.767
2. I prioritize my tasks to complete the most important ones first.	3.07	Moderately Evident	.766
3. I set specific times to check and respond to emails to avoid distractions.	2.94	Moderately Evident	.729
4. I break big projects into smaller tasks to make them easier to handle.	2.99	Moderately Evident	.746
5. I use timers to stay focused on my work for set periods.	2.92	Moderately Evident	.757
6. I set aside time for relaxation and fun to recharge my energy.	2.91	Moderately Evident	.793
7. I avoid multitasking to stay focused on one task at a time.	2.84	Moderately Evident	.752
8. I review my weekly goals to stay on track and adjust my plans as needed.	2.97	Moderately Evident	.714
9. I learn to say no to extra responsibilities when I feel overwhelmed.	2.90	Moderately Evident	.754
10. I reflect on how I spend my time to find ways to improve my efficiency.	3.02	Moderately Evident	.723
General Mean Rating	2.96	Moderately Evident	.676

The findings implied that while elementary teachers demonstrated some time management strategies, there was room for improvement in making these practices more evident in their routines. The highest-rated item, "I prioritize my tasks to complete the most important ones first" (3.07), highlighted the teachers' effort to address critical responsibilities effectively. However, lower ratings for avoiding multitasking (2.84) and setting aside time for relaxation (2.91) suggested challenges in maintaining focus and balancing work with personal rejuvenation.

These results aligned with Hasbullah and Nasri's (2023) study, which identified time management as a critical factor influencing teachers' work-life balance. Hasbullah and Nasri (2023) highlighted that effective time management practices, such as prioritization and goal setting, enhanced teachers' productivity and reduced stress. The current study affirmed these

findings, emphasizing the need for teachers to strengthen their time management skills to achieve a healthier balance between work demands and personal life.

4.2.2. Stress Management

Table 6 highlights the Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Stress Management. The mean values for the ten indicators ranged from 2.91 to 3.07, all interpreted as *Moderately Evident*. The standard deviations ranged from .731 to .782, reflecting moderate consistency in the teachers' responses regarding their stress management strategies. The general mean rating of 2.98 was also interpreted as *Moderately Evident*, indicating that teachers practiced stress management techniques to some extent but with potential for enhancement. The general SD of .687 suggested low variability in the responses, implying a shared level of awareness and application of stress management practices among participants.

Table 6. Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Stress Management

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I practice deep breathing exercises when I feel stressed to help calm myself.	2.93	Moderately Evident	.766
2. I take short breaks during the day to relax and clear my mind.	2.96	Moderately Evident	.782
3. I talk to someone I trust about my feelings when I feel overwhelmed.	3.07	Moderately Evident	.766
4. I engage in physical activities, like walking or stretching, to reduce stress.	2.91	Moderately Evident	.733
5. I create a quiet space for myself to unwind and think clearly.	3.00	Moderately Evident	.739
6. I use positive self-talk to encourage myself during tough times.	2.99	Moderately Evident	.776
7. I listen to music or readd a book to relax after a long day.	2.97	Moderately Evident	.745
8. I set aside for hobbies that bring me joy and help me recharge.	2.98	Moderately Evident	.753
9. I practice time management to avoid last-minute stress before deadlines.	3.03	Moderately Evident	.775
10. I recognize my limits and ask for help when I need it to reduce pressure.	3.01	Moderately Evident	.731
General Mean Rating	2.98	Moderately Evident	.687

The findings indicated that elementary teachers moderately exhibited stress management practices, with "I talk to someone I trust about my feelings when I feel overwhelmed" (3.07) receiving the highest mean score. This emphasized the importance of social support in alleviating stress. On the other hand, activities like engaging in physical exercises (2.91) and practicing deep breathing (2.93) had slightly lower ratings, suggesting areas where teachers might benefit from further support or training to improve their stress management skills.

These findings were consistent with Myke-Sotohn's (2023) study, which highlighted the critical role of stress management in maintaining teachers' overall well-being and professional effectiveness. Myke-Sotohn's (2023) research emphasized that regular stress-reducing practices, such as seeking social support and engaging in relaxation techniques, were essential in fostering resilience among teachers. The present study reaffirmed these findings, underscoring the need for teachers to integrate effective stress management practices into their daily routines to enhance their work-life balance and overall quality of life.

4.2.3. Personal Fulfillment

Table 7 features the Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Personal Fulfillment. The mean scores for each of the ten indicators ranged from 2.94 to 3.09, all interpreted as *Moderately Evident*. The standard deviations ranged from .744 to .793, indicating moderate consistency in the teachers' self-reported practices related to personal fulfillment. The general mean rating of 3.02 suggested that teachers moderately engage in activities that contribute to their personal growth and satisfaction. The general SD of .707 indicated a shared level of agreement among participants on these practices.

Table 7. Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Personal Fulfillment

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I set personal goals that inspire me to grow and learn new things.	3.09	Moderately Evident	.793
2. I take time to reflect on my achievements to celebrate my progress.	3.08	Moderately Evident	.757
3. I pursue hobbies and interests outside of work to find joy in my life.	3.00	Moderately Evident	.754
4. I engage in community service to give back and feel connected to others.	2.98	Moderately Evident	.753
5. I practice gratitude by writing down things I appreciate in my life.	2.96	Moderately Evident	.752
6. I explore new experiences that challenge me and help me learn.	3.02	Moderately Evident	.753
7. I create a vision board to visualize my dreams and aspirations.	2.94	Moderately Evident	.744
8. I seek out opportunities for personal development, like workshops or classes.	3.02	Moderately Evident	.753
9. I surround myself with positive influences that motivate me to be my best.	3.07	Moderately Evident	.766
10. I reflect on my values to ensure my actions align with what matters to me.	3.04	Moderately Evident	.767
General Mean Rating	3.02	Moderately Evident	.707

The indicators such as "I pursue hobbies and interests outside of work to find joy in my life" (3.00) and "I seek out opportunities for personal development, like workshops or classes"

(3.02) suggest that teachers recognize the importance of balancing professional and personal development. However, areas like setting personal goals that inspire growth (3.09) and reflecting on achievements (3.08) were rated slightly higher, indicating a stronger engagement in these practices.

These findings align with the previous study by Singh, Sarmiento, Truong, Carrasco, Dugarte, Quinn, and Panagakos (2023), which highlighted the role of personal fulfillment in fostering a balanced life for teachers. Singh et al.'s (2023) research suggested that personal fulfillment activities, such as setting goals, engaging in self-reflection, and pursuing personal interests, were crucial in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and well-being. The current study extends these findings by confirming that elementary teachers value and practice activities that contribute to their personal fulfillment. This highlights the need for support systems that encourage the integration of such activities into teachers' daily routines to improve their overall work-life balance and personal well-being.

4.2.4. Job Satisfaction

Table 8 exhibits the Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Job Satisfaction. The mean scores for each of the ten indicators ranged from 3.08 to 3.16, all interpreted as *Moderately Evident*. The standard deviations ranged from .761 to .804, indicating moderate variability in how teachers perceive their job satisfaction. The general mean rating of 3.12 suggests that elementary teachers generally have a moderate level of job satisfaction.

Table 9. Mean and Interpretations of the Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers in terms of Job Satisfaction

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I enjoy teaching my learners and feel happy when they learn new things.	3.16	Moderately Evident	.796
2. I feel proud of my accomplishments and contributions to my school.	3.11	Moderately Evident	.790
3. I seek feedback from my learners to understand how I can improve my teaching.	3.08	Moderately Evident	.801
4. I celebrate my successes with my colleagues to create a positive work environment.	3.10	Moderately Evident	.799
5. I find joy in building strong relationships with my learners and their families.	3.13	Moderately Evident	.800
6. I participate in school activities and events that make me feel included.	3.11	Moderately Evident	.804
7. I reflect on what I love about my job to stay motivated and engaged.	3.15	Moderately Evident	.791
8. I share my ideas and suggestions with my school to help me make improvements.	3.09	Moderately Evident	.778

9. I focus on the positive aspects of my job to maintain a good attitude.	3.10	Moderately Evident	.798
10. I set personal and professional goals to keep myself challenged and fulfilled in my work.	3.12	Moderately Evident	.781
General Mean Rating	3.12	Moderately Evident	.761

The indicators such as "I enjoy teaching my learners and feel happy when they learn new things" (3.16) and "I find joy in building strong relationships with my learners and their families" (3.13) highlight that teachers experience positive emotional responses to their work and value the connections they make with learners and their families. This supports the idea that a positive teacher-learner relationship is crucial for job satisfaction.

These findings are consistent with the study by Wartenberg, Aldrup, Grund, and Klusmann (2023), which found that job satisfaction among teachers is significantly influenced by their emotional connection with learners and the fulfillment they derive from their role. The current study reinforces these conclusions, indicating that elementary teachers derive job satisfaction from their relationships with learners, their accomplishments, and the positive work environment they contribute to.

The moderate job satisfaction level also points to areas for potential improvement, such as enhancing professional development opportunities, recognizing accomplishments, and fostering a supportive community among teachers. Such improvements could further increase job satisfaction and overall well-being among elementary teachers.

4.3. Correlation Between the Self-Care Practices and Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers

Table 9 outlines the statistical correlation between the two variables. The correlation coefficient between self-care practices and work-life balance was 0.941, indicating a very high positive correlation. The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which was below the 0.05 threshold, and the sample size (N) was 89. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, confirming that there was a significant correlation between self-care practices and work-life balance among the participants.

Table 9. Spearman's Rho Coefficient Correlation to Test the Correlation between the Self-Care Practices and Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers

Sources of Correlation (Spearman's Rho)		Self-Care Practices	Work-Life Balance	Decision/ Interpretation
Self-Care Practices	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.941	Very High Positive Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	89	89	
Work-Life Balance	Correlation Coefficient	.941	1.000	Reject H_0 Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	89	89	

The findings suggested that the more teachers engaged in self-care practices, the better their work-life balance became. This highlighted the importance of promoting self-care routines

as part of professional development and well-being programs for teachers. Schools and education stakeholders could have leveraged these results to design initiatives that supported self-care, potentially leading to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and overall improved quality of life for teachers.

Fitzgerald, Shipman, Pauletic, Ellesworth, and Dymnicki (2022) explored similar themes and found that teachers who prioritized self-care tended to exhibit better emotional stability and professional performance, which resonated with the present study's findings. Fitzgerald et al.'s (2022) research highlighted structured self-care programs as pivotal in fostering work-life harmony, aligning with the current study's evidence of a strong correlation between self-care and work-life balance. This parallel reinforced the argument that investing in self-care practices was critical to maintaining a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal well-being among teachers.

4.4. A Wellness Program to Enhance the Self-Care Practices and Work-Life Balance of Elementary Teachers

Elementary teachers play a critical role in shaping young learners, but their demanding responsibilities often challenge their work-life balance and overall well-being. The study revealed that while teachers frequently engage in self-care practices across physical, emotional, social, and professional dimensions, their work-life balance remains only moderately evident. Time and stress management skills also emerged as areas for improvement, contributing to moderate levels of personal fulfillment and job satisfaction. A significant positive correlation was established between self-care practices and work-life balance, emphasizing the need to enhance the impact of these practices. Addressing these issues through targeted wellness programs is crucial for promoting teachers' professional and personal well-being, ultimately leading to improved performance and satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Elementary teachers consistently and frequently practiced self-care across physical, emotional, social, and professional dimensions.
2. Despite frequent self-care practices, teachers exhibited only a moderately evident work-life balance, particularly in the areas of time management, stress management, personal fulfillment, and job satisfaction.
3. A very high positive significant correlation was found between self-care practices and work-life balance, emphasizing their strong interrelationship.
4. To address these findings, a wellness program was drafted to enhance the effectiveness of self-care practices and improve the work-life balance of elementary teachers.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Elementary teachers should integrate self-care practices into their daily routines and participate in school-based wellness initiatives to sustain and enhance their overall well-being.
2. School heads should organize targeted workshops on time and stress management to help teachers improve their work-life balance.
3. School heads should promote a culture that emphasizes the importance of self-care as a key strategy for enhancing teachers' work-life balance through institutional policies and awareness campaigns.

4. School heads should pilot the drafted wellness program and gather feedback from teachers to refine and implement it effectively across schools.

5. Further studies should explore the long-term effects of self-care practices and wellness programs on the professional performance and personal satisfaction of elementary teachers.

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