

Psychological Wellbeing Among Teachers In Malaysia: The Relationship Between Burnout, Resilience And School Factor

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Abstract

Teaching career is one of the professions that experiences high levels of mental pressure. This study aims to examine the teacher's burnout, the teacher's resilience, school culture, and the psychological well-being among school teachers in Malaysia. This study also investigates differences in gender, location of schools, and the marital status of teachers that influence the teacher's psychological wellbeing. Factors that contribute to the psychological well-being among school teachers in Malaysia are also examined. The research utilizes a quantitative method with a correlational framework encompassing a combined count of 320 teachers randomly chosen from various regions of Malaysia. The instruments used for this study include *Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale*, *Teacher's burnout scale*, *Teacher Resilience Scale*, and *Positive School Culture Scale*. The data were analyzed by using SPSS software, involving descriptive and inferential analysis. The findings indicate that resilience and school culture are related to the psychological well-being among teachers in Malaysia. However, only resilience is identified as a factor affecting the well-being of teachers in Malaysia. It is hoped that this study can serve as a guide for specific departments such as school administrators in planning and implementing intervention programs to enhance resilience and psychological well-being among teachers in Malaysia.

Keywords: Teachers, Psychological Well-Being, Resilience, Burnout, School Culture

Introduction

Psychological wellbeing has been a research focus in education as it significantly affects a teacher's performance and longevity in the teaching profession. Teachers' psychological wellbeing is multi-faceted and encompasses aspects such as job satisfaction, resilience, and the ability to cope with stress and burnout. These elements are influenced by the school culture in which teachers work. Researchers have noted that a positive school culture that encourages social support and provides resources can foster teachers' resilience, job

satisfaction, and overall well being (Collie et al. 2015; Roorda et al. 2011). On the other hand, negative school culture with a lack of support from colleagues and administrators and limited resources, has been linked to burnout and attrition among teachers (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Thus, educators are recognizing the importance of understanding teachers' psychological wellbeing to create a positive and supportive school culture.

Angie (2019) states that psychological well-being is an important indicator that contributes to work productivity, a person's level of mental and physical health. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that there is a close relationship between mental health and psychological well-being. A career as a teacher is one of the jobs that contributes to high stress compared to other jobs, teachers are feared to be more at risk of mental health problems and will affect mental well-being in particular and psychological well-being in general (Kavita et al, 2018). Based on the findings of previous studies, it shows that psychological well-being among teachers in Malaysia is inconsistent. Therefore, research on the effects of teacher burnout, school culture, and resilience on psychological well-being is necessary to determine whether these factors have an impact on teachers' psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being, according to Ryff and Keyes (1995), is the state of being fully alive and performing at one's best. In a comparable way, Diener et al. (1999) characterize psychological well-being as the absence of negative affect, good affect, and life satisfaction together. On the other hand, scholars such as Maslach and Leiter (2016) define psychological wellness as the lack of negative components like stress and burnout. Burnout is a state where an individual experiences exhaustion in terms of physical, mental, and emotional aspects, which applies to the profession of helping, including the career of a teacher (Abdul Aziz, 2019). Resilience according to Cavioni (2023) and Ying (2014) refers to a person's ability to adapt effectively in the face of any challenge or resistance in any situation. School culture refers to the extent to which the school and members at the school practice positive cultures in the school. School culture according to Mod Faiz et.al (2016) is the quality and characteristics of a school that are related to norms, goals, human relations, teaching, learning, leadership and organizational structure. In addition to encouraging teamwork and cooperation, school culture also fosters professionalism, increases organizational cap urban, and raises student accomplishment (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Therefore, the objectives to be achieved through this study are:

1. To identify the level of teacher psychological well-being, the teacher's burnout, resilience and school culture in Malaysia.
2. To investigate differences in the level of psychological well-being of teachers based on gender and school location.
3. Identifying differences in teachers' resilience and burnout based on marital status.
4. To determine the relationship between burnout, resilience, and school culture that related to the psychological well-being of teachers in Malaysia.
5. To determine the factors that affect the psychological well-being among teachers in Malaysia.

Literature Review

The following are literature reviews connected to the study undertaken that support this research.

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is complex and can be characterized in a variety of ways (Hupert & So 2013; Diener et al. 2010). Psychological well-being is also associated with higher work productivity and a longer life expectancy, as well as higher differences and immune systems and better social relationships (Diener et al, 2005). Psychological well-being is measured not only in terms of positive feelings, negative feelings, and life satisfaction, but also as a multi-dimensional variable with six dimensions: autonomy, mastering the environment, personal development, positive relationships with others, life goals, and self-acceptance.

Teacher's Burnout

Teacher burnout is a global phenomenon that has drawn the interest of educational psychologists and stimulated efforts in construct development and measurement. According to Maslach (2011), burnout is a problem of emotional disturbance that exists between humans and their work and everything that surrounds them, resulting in individuals doing various activities that might have a variety of bad consequences. Maslach (2011) sees burnout as having three key components: emotional deprivation, depersonalization, and diminished personal success. Emotional deprivation is a condition in which one's emotional will to work exceeds one's own emotional resources. Depersonalization is a state in which a professional's life is disrupted by a personal psychological issue. A reduction in personal achievement refers to a circumstance or condition in which people have unfavorable self-evaluations of their own accomplishments.

Resilience

Regarding the various obstacles and pressures that teachers experience on a daily basis, teacher resilience is an important subject in the field of education (Brouskeli et al. 2018; López-Angulo et al. 2022). Being able to bounce through setbacks, overcome adversity, and adapt to changing situations is referred to as resilience (Bobek 2002; Kangas-Dick & O'Shaughnessy 2020). According to Taylor (2013) one of the important elements needed by a teacher is resilience. Resilience is an important aspect to meet the challenges of change in the world of education. Teachers who have high resilience are able to control negative situations, on the other hand, teachers who have low resilience will give negative impacts such as depression, emotional stress, which in turn causes symptoms of exhaustion and weakens the psychological well-being among them. Montminy (2016) on the other hand stated that individuals with resilience are those who see challenges as opportunities and are always prepared calmly when faced with obstacles and conflicts that arise at work. Therefore, in the context of this study, the concept of resilience refers to the teacher's ability to survive and adapt to the hardships experienced and the ability to bounce back, i.e. return to emotional and physical stability after going through difficulties and past experiences that make the teacher have resilience which is stronger. Furthermore, teachers with high resilience may handle life and other people well and try to strengthen their dedication to the organization and its true tasks (Mansfield et al, 2016).

School Culture

According to Kummerow and Kirby (2014), culture is what is contained in an individual as a result of the experience of social interaction with the surrounding community. In short, it gives meaning to a person's daily life. The definition of school culture according to Naker (2019) is shared values, rules, belief patterns, teaching and learning approaches, behavior and

relationships between or all individuals in the school. Cavanaugh and Dellar (2003), describe school culture as the manifestation, development, application and transformation of shared beliefs, values and norms among teachers for the purposes and actions to improve student and teacher learning. Barth (2002) describes school culture as a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, ceremonies, traditions, and myths that are deeply rooted in the organization. It has an impact on all aspects of the school including teaching and learning, student achievement and professional development (Tus, 2020).

Methodology

This study utilizes a quantitative approach in the form of a correlational study design. Overall, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variables in this study are burnout, resilience, and school culture, while the dependent variable is teachers' psychological well-being. This study's population consists of Malaysian teachers. The Cochran sample formula is used in the sample calculation. This study's sample size is 320 Malaysian teachers. This study's sample was chosen by basic random sampling, comprising questionnaires distributed at random in Malaysian schools via Google Form. The Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale instrument is used to assess teachers' psychological well-being, the Maslach Burnout Inventory instrument is used to measure burnout, the Winwood Workplace Resilience Scale (2013) instrument is used to measure resilience, and the positive school culture instrument by Gruenert and Vallentine (1998) is used to assess school culture. Table 1 shows the number of items and the alpha level for the reliability of the questionnaire used for this study.

Table 1:

Number of items and alpha value

Section	Instrument	Number of Item	Alpha value
A	Respondent Demographics	5	-
B	Psychological Well-being	18	.738
C	Burnout	20	.860
D	Resilience	20	.895
E	Positive School Culture	23	.946

Findings And Discussion

Findings and discussion obtain from the study are shown below:

The Level of Teacher Psychological Well-Being, Teacher's Burnout, Resilience and School Culture in Malaysia

According to the study's findings, teacher resilience ranks first, followed by psychological well-being, positive school culture, and burnout, as shown in the table below. The overall mean score ranges are from 2.75 to 5.00. Table 2 summarizes the findings of the study.

Table 2:

Malaysian teachers' psychological well-being, burnout, resilience, and school culture

Variables	Min	SD	Level	Rank
Psychological Well-being	4.03	0.35	High	2
Teacher's burnout	2.80	0.32	Low	4
Resilience	4.06	0.39	High	1
Positive School Culture	3.96	0.54	Moderate	3

Smith (2008) classified the score level into three levels: low, medium, and high. A score that ranges from of 1.00-2.99 is considered low, a score of 3.00-3.99 is considered medium, and a score of 4.00-5.00 is considered high. In accordance, the results from the descriptive analysis, the mean for the variable of psychological well-being ($M=4.03$), and the resilience ($M=4.06$) is at a high level. The mean for school culture is ($M=3.96$), indicating a moderate level. The mean score for burnout is a low ($M=2.80$).

The significance of teachers' psychological well-being cannot be emphasized, since it has a direct impact not only on the individual teacher but also on the entire educational community. Teachers play an important part in shaping the minds and futures of the next generation, and their psychological well-being has a significant impact on their ability to carry out this responsibility effectively. A teacher who suffers from mental stress, burnout, or low psychological well-being may find it difficult to provide a positive and engaging educational setting. This study finds that teachers in Malaysia have a high level of psychological well-being. This outcome is consistent with studies conducted by Kurt (2019); Mehdinezhad (2012) and Konu, et al. (2010). The results of this study also supported the findings reported by Zakaria et al. (2021), who found that teachers' well-being in Malaysia is generally high in secondary school. This study also shows that the resilience of teachers in Malaysia is also at a high level and can support the findings from previous research that teachers in schools are generally resilient (Pretsch et al. 2012; Papatraianou & Le Cornu 2014; Ainsworth & Oldfield 2019). Research from Katsantonis et al. (2019) also shows the interconnection of school culture and its impact on teacher wellness and resilience. It is widely acknowledged in the research that teacher resilience contributes to the maintenance and growth of teacher wellbeing (Mansfield, 2021). As consequently, in order to acquire a high degree of psychological well-being, teachers must be resilient.

The Differences in the Level of Psychological Well-Being of Teachers Based on Gender and School Location

The level of psychological well-being of teachers based on gender is shown in table 3 below

Table 3

T-test Table for Comparing Teachers' Psychological Well-Being based on gender

Gender	Number of teachers	Min	Standard Deviation	T value	Degree of Freedom	Significant
Male	92	3.92	.26	-4.35	233	.00
Female	228	4.08	.37			

Findings show that there is a significant difference in the level of psychological well-being for female teachers ($M = 4.08$, $SP = .37$) and male teachers ($M = 3.92$, $SP = .26$; $t(-4.35) = 233$, $p = .00 < .05$). This shows that female teachers are more psychologically well-being than male teachers. This data coincides with a study conducted by Erözyürek's (2019) which showed that the psychological well-being level of female teachers was higher than male teachers, and there were no significant differences in terms of marital status, professional seniority, educational status and school type variables. This study findings also contradict a study conducted by Kepenek (2021) involving 497 young adults, showing that psychological well-being levels have no significant difference was found according to gender. Therefore, we may

conclude that female teachers have higher tolerance levels than male teachers, which explains why female teachers have higher psychological well-being levels than male teachers. The level of psychological well-being of teachers based on school location is shown in table 4 below:

Table 4

T-test Table for Comparing Teachers' Psychological Well-Being based on school location

Gender	Number of teachers	Min	Standard Deviation	T value	Degree of Freedom	of Significant
Urban area	256	4.01	.33	-1.89	83	.04
Rural area	64	4.11	.42			

Findings show that there is a significant difference in the level of psychological well-being for urban teachers ($M = 4.01$, $SP = .33$) and rural area teachers ($M = 4.11$, $SP = .42$; $t(-1.89) = 83$, $p = .04 < .05$). This shows that rural area teachers are more psychologically well-being than urban teachers. Based on these findings, it appears that the demographic component, which is school location, plays a different and unique role in psychological well-being, as demonstrated by a study by Sezer et al. (2022). Teachers in rural locations are better psychologically because their students have better attitudes than students in urban areas. Parents in rural areas cooperate with teachers more than parents in urban areas because parents in the urban have to deal with their own personal careers. Teachers in rural settings usually aren't faced with dealing with traffic jams on their way to and from school, whereas teachers in urban areas might.

The Differences in Teachers' Resilience and Burnout Based on Marital Status

The level of the teacher's resilience based on marital status is shown in table 5 below:

Table 5

T-test Table for Comparing Teachers' Resilience based on marital status

Gender	Number of teachers	Min	Standard Deviation	T value	Degree of Freedom	of Significant
Unmarried	80	4.17	.44	2.58	120	.01
Married	240	4.03	.37			

Findings show that there is a significant difference in the level of the teacher's resilience for unmarried teachers ($M = 4.17$, $SP = .44$) and married teachers ($M = 4.03$, $SP = .37$; $t(2.58) = 120$, $p = .01 < .05$). This shows that unmarried teachers are more resilient than married teachers. The findings of this study are contrary to the outcomes of the study conducted by Dündar and Demirli (2018); Erden et al. (2023) that indicated that the well-being of teachers was not affected at all, and not significantly impacted by their marital status. Teachers who are single may be more resilient than others since they are familiar with living alone, either with company or not. This finding is an interesting matter to be discussed in future studies. The level of teacher's burnout based on marital status is shown in table 6 below:

Table 6

T-Test Table Comparing Teachers' Burnout Based On Marital Status

Gender	Number of teachers	Min	Standard Deviation	T value	Degree of Freedom	Significant
Unmarried	80	2.89	.37	2.55	115	.012
Married	240	2.77	.30			

Findings show that there is a significant difference in the level of the teacher's burnout for unmarried teachers ($M = 2.89$, $SP = .37$) and married teachers ($M = 2.77$, $SP = .30$; $t(2.55) = 115$, $p = .01 < .05$). This shows that unmarried teachers are more burnout than married teachers. One possible reason for this result is that a healthy home atmosphere may help spouses who are experiencing burnout at school or work. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Çağlar 2011; Sümer 2007; Aslan 2009; Engin 2006; Watts et al. 2011; Mukundan & Ahour 2011; Önal 2010; Kepekçioğlu 2009; Lau 2002; Maslach & Jackson 1981). Unmarried teachers face their problems alone and have no one to talk to at home about their work stress, which causes them to be more burnout than married teachers. Some studies show a statistically significant result for the advantage of the single (Sümer 2007; Başol 2009; Babaolan 2006; Yldrm 2009; Ylmaz 2009; nal 2010), whereas others show a statistically significant result in support of the married (Alayan 2012; Gündodu 2013). A wide number of research indicated no statistically significant differences in burnout between men and women (Izgar 2000; Karahan 2008; Yiit 2007; Soyer 2009; Arcan 2009; Cihan 2011; Sönmez 2010).

The Relationship between Burnout, Resilience, and School Culture That Related to the Teachers Psychological Well-Being in Malaysia

Pearson's correlation statistical analysis was conducted on all variables to investigate the relationship between burnout, resilience, and school culture with the psychological well-being among Malaysian teachers. The following table summarizes the study's findings:

Table 7

The Relationship Between Variables

Variable	R value	Significant (p)	Interpretation
Burnout	0.02	.97	No relationship
Resilience	0.58**	.00	A strong positive relationship
School Culture	0.27**	.00	A weak positive relationship

** . Significant at the 0.01 level (2-way)

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017), there is a strong positive relationship that reaches a significant level between teacher resilience and teachers' psychological well-being ($r = 0.58$, $p=0.00$), while there is a positive relationship that is weak between school culture and teachers' psychological well-being ($r = 0.27$, $p=0.00$). This shows that teacher resilience has a substantial positive association with teachers' psychological well-being, but school culture has a limited positive relationship. However, there is no correlation between burnout and teachers' psychological well-being in Malaysia.

This finding illustrates how the level of resilience and school culture are related to overall psychological well-being. This conclusion confirms with the findings of Brouskeliet et al.

(2018), who discovered a positive connection between resilience and teachers' psychological well-being. Culture, according to Schein (2004), Deal and Peterson (2016), can also impact organizational members' beliefs and behaviors to surroundings, and so can stabilize and give meaning to the organization while bonding its members as well.

Factors that affect the psychological well-being among Teachers in Malaysia

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to see the main factors contributing to the psychological well-being among teachers in Malaysia. The data shown in the following table:

Table 8

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	
	B	SEB	t	p
Constant	1.93	.16	11.68	.00
Resilience	.52	.04	12.83	.00

R² = 0.341

F_(3, 319) = 54.50, p < .05

Multiple regression analysis reveals that the regression model of burnout, resilience, and school culture can explain 34.1% of the variance in Malaysian Teacher Psychological Well-Being (F_(3, 319) = 54.50, p < .05). However, only resilience ($\beta=0.52$, t = 12.83, p < .05), is a significant predictor of Teachers' Psychological Well-being in Malaysia. This analysis' regression equation is:

$$Y = .341x_1 + 1.93$$

There is a single factor that contributes to teachers' psychological well-being, which has been verified through multiple regression tests, which is 34.1% for this model. The outcomes of this research have been supported by the findings of a previous study done by Ngui and Lay (2019), which suggests that resilience plays a role in moderating teachers' well-being. This could be because teachers who have good self-resilience might have high psychological well-being, even if they work in a less than ideal school cultural context. A positive cultural school is favourable to a teacher. Teachers, in spite of their stress, remain to support the school's objective for the sake of their students. According to Zaine et al. (2022), school climate and culture, coping approaches, job satisfaction, professional development, and teacher empowerment are all significant in enhancing student achievement.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, this study indicates that resilience and school culture have a significant relationship with the level of psychological well-being of Malaysian teachers. Therefore, researchers advised teachers to maintain both mental and physical wellness through sustaining a solid work-life balance as well as acquiring effective communication skills. It is advised that the Malaysian Ministry of Education provide sufficient in-service training to strengthen the resilience of teachers, especially for younger teachers, because the current younger generation is less resilient than the older generation.

Limitation and Implications

The limitation of this study is that it was carried out by using a Google form and solely used a quantitative design. The disadvantages of using Google Forms are that the study sample may answer the questionnaire in an unethical manner. The researcher suggests that the next researcher carry out qualitative research on the same topic in Malaysia in order to identify more transparent data. Future researchers can expand on this study by including additional variables such as organizational issues, digital competencies, and mindfulness.

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