Research Article

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Teacher Well-Being Promotion in School Workplace: The Role of Leaders

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Abstract

Teacher well-being is increasingly recognized as an important concern for sustaining teachers' professional functioning and healthy school workplaces. However, research has examined leadership and workplace-related factors with varying degrees of integration. This review aims to understand the role of school leaders in promoting teacher well-being by examining how well-being is situated within the school workplace, how leadership and workplace-related conditions are connected in the literature, and what these patterns reveal about how leadership and organizational practices may shape the conditions experienced by teachers. A structured literature search was conducted using Scopus, and 184 studies published between 2021 and 2026 were included following predefined eligibility criteria. Studies were coded across six domains: leadership (A), school climate/social relationships (B), working conditions (C), organizational support/practices (D), job demands/job resources (E), and workload/ autonomy (F), and analyzed for their distribution and co-occurrence patterns. The findings indicate a shift from single-factor research toward more interconnected accounts of teacher well-being, while relationships among domains remain insufficiently specified. The review highlights the potential role of school leaders in shaping the organizational and workplace conditions through which teachers experience their work, including workload, autonomy, organizational support, and workplace relationships. Further research is needed to clarify how leadership and organizational practices shape these conditions and through what mechanisms they relate to teacher well-being.

Keywords: Teacher Well-being, School Leadership, School Workplace, Working Conditions, School Climate, Job Demands, Workload, Autonomy

Introduction

Schools face growing demands for accountability, organizational effectiveness, and continuous improvement, while teachers work under increasingly complex professional expectations. These conditions have increased concern about teacher well-being as an important component of sustainable professional practice and healthy school workplaces. Research has also documented substantial concerns related to teachers' stress, burnout, anxiety, and depression, highlighting the importance of understanding teacher well-being in relation to the conditions of teachers' work (Agyapong et al., 2022). From a healthy workplace perspective, employee well-being is influenced not only by individual health but also by the physical and psychosocial conditions in which work is organized and performed (World Health Organization [WHO], 2010).

Teacher well-being is therefore closely connected to the workplace in which teachers perform their professional roles. Within schools, leadership and organizational practices can influence working conditions, while social relationships, job demands, workload, and autonomy form important aspects of teachers' everyday work experience. The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) perspective further provides a useful lens for understanding how demands and resources embedded in work relate to well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Although research on teacher well-being has expanded substantially, the literature encompasses diverse domains and combinations of factors. Leadership, school climate, social and relational conditions, working conditions, organizational support, job demands, workload, and autonomy have been examined both separately and in combination, but these combinations are not evenly distributed. This review therefore examines how these domains are represented and connected in the literature, with particular attention to what the patterns reveal about the role of school leaders in shaping workplace conditions relevant to teacher well-being.

Research objectives

1. To examine how teacher well-being has been addressed in relation to the school workplace and work-related conditions in the literature;

2. To map the distribution and co-occurrence of leadership and workplace-related domains examined in relation to teacher well-being; and

3. To examine how leadership and workplace-related domains are connected in the literature and identify implications for the role of school leaders in promoting teacher well-being.

Conceptual background: Teacher well-being in the school workplace

Teacher well-being is a broad concept encompassing how teachers feel, function, and experience their work and lives. Previous research has addressed well-being through positive feelings and life satisfaction, psychological functioning and personal growth, and positive functioning and flourishing (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). Recent conceptual work emphasizes the importance of considering the distinctive context of teaching rather than treating teacher well-being simply as general employee well-being (Viac & Fraser, 2020). The importance of examining teachers' well-being in relation to their work environment has likewise been emphasized in research on well-being in school settings (Benevene et al., 2020).

For the present review, particular attention is given to well-being in relation to teachers' work and workplace. Previous research has also identified the school context as an important setting for understanding teachers' health and well-being (Klusmann et al., 2016). Recent research has further highlighted the importance of job resources and job demands in understanding teachers' work-related well-being and related professional outcomes (Collie, 2023).

The OECD framework recognizes cognitive, social, subjective, and physical and mental dimensions of teachers' occupational well-being while explicitly considering the quality of their working environment (Viac & Fraser, 2020). The WHO Healthy Workplace Framework similarly emphasizes psychosocial conditions and organizational processes, including work organization, support, participation, and the work environment (WHO, 2010). JD-R theory provides a complementary perspective by distinguishing characteristics of work as demands or resources in relation to employee well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

From this workplace perspective, the role of school leaders becomes relevant not only in relation to their direct interactions with teachers, but also in relation to the organizational context in which teachers work. Leadership is connected to the conditions through which teachers experience their work and may be associated with workplace conditions, including organizational support and other aspects of the school environment (Lambert et al., 2023). This provides a basis for examining teacher well-being not only as an individual outcome, but also in relation to the organizational and work-related conditions of the school workplace.

Accordingly, the empirical search framework was organized into six literature-derived categories representing major aspects of teachers' work and workplace: leadership, school climate/social relationships, working conditions, organizational support and practices, job demands/resources, and workload/autonomy (Table 1).

Table 1 Search framework used for the empirical literature.

Code	Search category	Examples of literature-derived search terms
A	Leadership	school leadership, educational leadership, leadership practices
B	School Climate/Social Relationships	school climate, social support, collegial support, relationships, collaboration, collective efficacy, teacher–administrator relationships
C	Working Conditions	work environment, workplace conditions, organizational structure, classroom environment, quality of work life, resources
D	Organizational Support/Practices	organizational support, HRM, professional development, participation in decision making, school policies, institutional support, organizational practices
E	Job Demands/Job Resources	job demands, job characteristics, emotional demands, role conflict, professional demands, stressors
F	Workload/Autonomy	workload, workload stress, time pressure, work-life balance, autonomy, work autonomy, decision latitude, control over work

These six domains were subsequently used to organize the empirical literature and examine its distribution and co-occurrence. The framework was intentionally broader than any single theoretical model so that the analysis could capture how the literature itself combines different aspects of teachers' work and workplace.

Research methodology

Review approach and scope

This study conducted a review supported by a structured literature search to examine research on teacher well-being in relation to the school workplace, with particular attention to the role of school leaders. The approach was selected to examine how diverse workplace, organizational, and leadership-related factors have been studied and combined rather than to estimate a pooled effect.

The review focused on school teachers' well-being in relation to leadership, organizational, and work-related factors. Studies focused primarily on students, non-school populations, or contexts outside the school workplace were excluded. The review comprised four stages: defining the scope; searching and selecting literature; screening and coding studies across six predefined domains; and analyzing domain distribution and co-occurrence.

Literature search strategy

The literature search was conducted using Scopus. The initial search used “teacher well-being” or “teacher wellbeing” or “teachers’ well-being” or “teachers’ wellbeing”, yielding 2,112 records. The search was limited to publications from 2021-2026, English-language publications, Social Sciences, and research or review articles, resulting in 1,246 records.

The six domain searches defined yielded 508 records for Leadership, 330 for School Climate, 398 for Working Conditions, 118 for Organizational Support, 467 for Job Demands–Resources, and 505 for Workload and Autonomy. After combining these searches and removing duplicates, 609 records formed the master dataset for screening (Table 2).

Eligibility, screening, and final selection

Studies were included when they: (1) focused on school teachers and teacher well-being; (2) were English-language peer-reviewed articles published between 2021 and 2026 and indexed in Scopus; (3) were empirical research or review articles; and (4) examined at least one of the six predefined domains.

Studies were excluded when they focused primarily on pre-service teachers, students, higher education faculty, non-school occupational groups, or contexts outside the school workplace. Studies focusing only on individual psychological constructs, student or parent outcomes, or intervention and measurement development without relevant workplace or organizational factors were also excluded.

Screening was conducted in two stages. Of the 609 records in the master dataset, 6 duplicates were removed, leaving 603 records for title screening. A total of 394 were excluded, leaving 209 for abstract screening. Following abstract screening against the predefined criteria, 25 records were excluded, resulting in a final corpus of 184 studies (Table 2).

The final corpus was subsequently coded and analyzed for the distribution and co-occurrence of the six domains. Selected studies were examined in greater detail to illustrate notable patterns and trends in the literature. AI-assisted review was used only when relevance could not be determined clearly from the title; final inclusion and exclusion decisions were made by the researcher according to the predefined criteria.

Table 2 The final screening process.

Screening stage	Records
Initial teacher well-being search	2,112
After publication-year, language, subject-area, and document-type filters	1,246
Master dataset after combining six domain searches	609
Duplicate records removed	6
Records remaining for title screening	603
Records excluded following title screening	394
Records retained for abstract screening	209
Records excluded following abstract screening	25
Final studies included	**184**

Coding and analysis

Each of the 184 included studies was reviewed through its abstract and coded according to the six predefined domains (A-F). The abstracts were examined to identify the workplace-related factors, conditions, or variables investigated in relation to teacher well-being. A study could be coded under multiple domains; therefore, domain frequencies were not mutually exclusive.

The analysis examined two levels of patterns. First, the distribution of studies across the six domains was examined to identify relative research attention. Second, co-occurrence patterns were examined to identify domains studied together, including pairwise and multi-domain combinations. Particular attention was given to combinations involving leadership (A), consistent with the review's focus on the role of school leaders in shaping workplace conditions relevant to teacher well-being.

Characteristics of the included literature

A total of 184 studies published between 2021 and 2026 were included: 9 in 2021, 18 in 2022, 28 in 2023, 34 in 2024, 54 in 2025, and 41 in 2026 (Table 3).

Citation counts were examined descriptively as an indicator of literature visibility, not as an inclusion or exclusion criterion. They were interpreted cautiously because newer studies had less time to accumulate citations. The 2026 search was conducted approximately seven months into the publication year.

Table 3 Distribution of included studies by publication year and citation count.

Citation count	2021 n (%)	2022 n (%)	2023 n (%)	2024 n (%)	2025 n (%)	2026 n (%)	Total n (%)
0-9	1 (11.1)	3 (16.7)	9 (32.1)	22 (64.7)	44 (81.5)	38 (92.7)	117 (63.6)
10-39	4 (44.5)	10 (55.5)	14 (50.0)	8 (23.6)	10 (18.5)	3 (7.3)	49 (26.6)
40-69	1 (11.1)	3 (16.7)	4 (14.3)	3 (8.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (6.0)
70-99	2 (22.2)	2 (11.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (2.8)
100-129	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)
≥130	1 (11.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)
Total	**9 (100)**	**18 (100)**	**28 (100)**	**34 (100)**	**54 (100)**	**41 (100)**	**184 (100)**

Note. The 2026 search was conducted approximately seven months into the publication year; therefore, citation counts for 2026 publications are not directly comparable with those of earlier publications.

Research findings

1. Examining teacher well-being in relation to the school workplace and work-related conditions

The literature addressed teacher well-being across six predefined domains: leadership (A), school climate/social relationships (B), working conditions (C), organizational support/practices (D), job demands/job resources (E), and workload/autonomy (F). Because studies could address more than one domain, frequencies are interpreted as patterns of research attention rather than unique study counts. Research attention was unevenly distributed. Single-domain studies were most frequent for leadership (A, n = 23) and school climate/social relationships (B, n = 21), followed by working conditions (C, n = 8), organizational support/practices (D, n = 7), job demands/job resources (E, n = 6), and workload/ autonomy (F, n = 5) (Table 4). Overall, the literature addressed teacher well-being across diverse workplace conditions, but the level of attention varied substantially across domains.

Table 4 Single-domain distribution.

Domain	Single-domain studies
A Leadership	23
B School Climate/Social Relationships	21
C Working Conditions	8
D Organizational Support/Practices	7
E Job Demands/Job Resources	6
F Workload/Autonomy	5

2. Distribution and co-occurrence of leadership and workplace-related domains

2.1 Patterns of two-domain research

The co-occurrence analysis identified how frequently the six domains were examined together (Table 5). The most frequent combinations were AB (n = 16) and EF (n = 12), followed by BC and BD (n = 7 each) and AF (n = 6). Several combinations were rare, including AC, AE, and CD (n = 1 each), while CE was not identified. Overall, the domains were unevenly integrated, with some combinations involving working conditions (C) occurring relatively infrequently.

Table 5 Distribution of identified studies across the six coding domains and their co-occurrence patterns.

A Leadership		B School Climate/ Social Relationships		C Working Conditions		D Organizational Support/Practices		E Job Demands/- Job Resources		F Workload/ Autonomy	
AB	16										
AC	1	BC	7								
AD	4	BD	7	CD	1						
AE	1	BE	4	CE	0	DE	2				
AF	6	BF	2	CF	2	DF	4	EF	12	-	-

2.2 Patterns across multi-domain studies

Multi-domain studies combined different configurations of organizational, relational, and work-related factors (Table 6). Among three-domain combinations, BEF (n = 10) was the most frequent, followed by ADF, BDF, and CEF (n = 3 each). Other three-domain combinations were less common, while four- and five-domain combinations were relatively limited. CEF combined working conditions (C), job demands/job resources (E), and workload/autonomy (F), whereas ABEF, ABDE, ABCEF, ABDEF, and ADCEF incorporated leadership (A) and/or organizational support (D) alongside work-related domains.

Overall, multi-domain studies show increasing integration of organizational, relational, and work-related factors, but the configurations remain heterogeneous and unevenly represented. The co-occurrence patterns alone do not establish a dominant model or direction of relationships among the domains.

Table 6 Distribution and co-occurrence of leadership and workplace-related domains.

Examples of multi-domain combinations							
Code	**n**	**Code**	**n**	**Code**	**n**	**Code**	**n**
ADF	3	BEF	10	CEF	3	DEF	1
ABD	2	BDF	3	CDE	2		
ABF	2	BCD	1				
ABEF	4	BDEF	1	CDEF	2		
ABDE	1						
ABCEF	1						
ABDEF	1						
ADCEF	1						

3. Examining connections and implications for school leadership

3.1 Leadership and workplace-related domains connected in the literature

1) What was studied within each domain?

Table 7 presents findings derived from the abstracts of selected higher-citation studies representing each of the six domains and their relationships with teacher well-being.

Table 7 Main findings relevant to teacher well-being from selected single-domain studies.

ID	Year	Code	Citation	Main finding relevant to teacher well-being
59	2022	A	25	Leadership and organizational/relational processes were associated with teacher well-being.
1	2021	B	508	Social relationships were an important factor in teacher well-being.
38	2022	C	99	Working conditions were directly related to teachers' well-being.
209	2024	D	24	Organizational/contextual conditions shaped teachers' resources and pressures.
338	2025	E	12	Job resources were positively associated with well-being, while job demands were negatively associated.
9	2021	F	72	Workload, particularly marking demands, was associated with poorer workplace well-being.

Taken together, the selected studies show that teacher well-being has been examined in relation to organizational, relational, and work-related conditions, functioning as resources, demands, or

contextual influences. These findings provide the basis for examining how the domains are connected when studied together.

2) What happens when domains are combined?

Table 8 presents selected studies examining two domains together and illustrates how relationships among domains have been investigated within the same research framework.

Table 8 Main Findings relevant to teacher well-being from selected two-domain studies.

ID	Year	Code	Citation	Main finding relevant to teacher well-being
6	2021	AB	97	Collegial school leadership and organizational health/climate were associated with aspects of teacher well-being during COVID-19.
472	2025	AC	0	Transformational leadership was positively associated with job satisfaction and lower burnout, while workplace conditions were also important.
26	2021	AD	28	Leadership influenced HRM and performance, while HRM was related to performance partly through improved well-being.
540	2026	AE	0	Leadership support and school-family conflict showed reciprocal relationships with job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion.
205	2024	AF	43	Distributed leadership was related to teacher commitment, with workload stress and well-being playing mediating roles.
200	2024	BC	63	A review of 774 studies showed that teacher well-being research has largely examined antecedents, nature, and effects, with relatively limited longitudinal, experimental, and mixed-methods evidence.
52	2022	BD	38	Providing social support to colleagues was associated with eudaimonia, collegial relationships, professional development, school functioning, and teacher well-being.
153	2023	BE	11	Social support buffered the negative relationship between job demands, such as classroom behavioural problems, and burnout under some conditions.
335	2025	BF	13	School climate was indirectly associated with teacher well-being through psychological need satisfaction; relationships and classroom autonomy were important.
36	2021	CD	2	Unfavourable working conditions, including inadequate infrastructure, resources, relationships, and curriculum constraints, were associated with teacher stress and fatigue, while organizational/supportive resources helped teachers cope.
495	2026	CF	3	Changes in educational context were associated with changes in teaching practices and teaching-related well-being, with substantial within-teacher variation across contexts.
207	2024	DE	28	Organizational support was positively associated with well-being, while emotional labour was negatively associated; organizational support functioned as a resource alongside job demands.

ID	Year	Code	Citation	Main finding relevant to teacher well-being
244	2024	DF	9	Collective involvement in decision making was related to teacher well-being, partly through organizational commitment, linking organizational practice with autonomy/control.
199	2024	EF	76	A synthesis of 173 studies showed extensive evidence linking job demands/resources and related work factors with teacher well-being.
42	2022	EF	54	Job demands and job and personal resources were associated with teacher well-being and retention-related outcomes, with evidence of a buffering process across different profiles of demands and resources.

Note. Selected studies were included to illustrate the range of two-domain combinations and the ways in which relationships among variables were examined. Some studies, particularly those published in 2025 and 2026, had relatively low citation counts but were included because of their relevance to specific domain combinations and their limited time since publication for citations to accumulate.

Across the two-domain studies, domains were examined as related conditions, predictors, mediators, moderators, or resources, rather than as parts of an established causal sequence. Leadership was examined alongside all five other domains, while social relationships were linked to working conditions, organizational support, job demands, and workload/autonomy. Some studies reported more complex relationships, including social support buffering job demands and organizational practices being associated with autonomy and control. Overall, the studies show that domains are increasingly examined in relation to one another, but the evidence remains insufficient to explain how leadership and organizational practices shape conditions across other workplace domains.

3) Emerging patterns across multi-domain studies

To examine emerging patterns across multi-domain studies, selected cases were reviewed in greater detail. Priority was given to studies including leadership (A) and/or organizational support and practices (D), particularly when examined alongside working conditions, job demands/resources, workload, or autonomy (C, E, and F). Studies with relatively higher citation counts were also prioritized as supporting evidence.

Table 9 Main findings relevant to teacher well-being from selected multi-domain studies.

ID	Year	Code	Citation	Main finding relevant to teacher well-being
104	2023	ABEF	112	Autonomy-supportive/thwarting leadership, relational support, job demands, and time pressure were examined together in relation to teacher well-being and turnover intentions.
113	2023	DCEF	42	Working conditions, job demands, workload, and organizational factors were examined in relation to teacher distress, with high workload and classroom discipline issues showing particularly strong relationships.
351	2025	ADBEF	7	Leadership, relational resources, organizational factors, job demands, and autonomy were examined together; mentorship, PLCs, autonomy, and interpersonal connections supported well-being, while time constraints and administrative demands were challenging.
262	2024	ADCEF	6	Supportive leadership and professional development were examined alongside resource limitations, classroom demands, workload, and work–life balance as interconnected influences on teacher well-being.
95	2022	DCE	5	Working conditions, organizational factors, and job demands/resources were associated with teacher and student outcomes, with effects varying across contexts.

The selected studies show that teacher well-being is increasingly examined through interconnected organizational, relational, and work-related factors. Studies involving leadership, such as ABEF, ADBEF, and ADCEF, place leadership and organizational practices alongside working conditions, job demands, workload, and autonomy. However, these studies remain largely factor-oriented, examining associations among multiple factors and teacher well-being rather than explaining how leadership or organizational practices shape or influence teachers' work conditions and experiences.

4) What remains unclear?

The findings show increasing integration across the six domains, but co-occurrence does not establish how one domain influences or shapes another. Although some studies examined mediating, moderating, buffering, or reciprocal relationships, the literature remains largely focused on associations among factors and teacher well-being.

Importantly, there is limited evidence explaining how organizational and management-related conditions shape teachers' actual work experiences across these domains. Thus, the functional

relationships among leadership, organizational practices, relational conditions, working conditions, job demands/resources, workload, and autonomy remain insufficiently specified.

3.2 Implications for the role of school leaders in promoting teacher well-being

The patterns identified in the reviewed literature provide a basis for considering how school leaders may contribute to teacher well-being from a workplace-management perspective. Rather than focusing solely on direct leadership effects or individual well-being interventions, the findings draw attention to the organizational and workplace conditions within which teachers experience their work. Four implications emerge from these patterns.

1) Understanding the school as a workplace

School leaders may need to view teacher well-being not solely as an individual outcome, but as something experienced within the conditions of the school workplace. This requires attention to the conditions that may create pressures or provide resources for teachers, including working conditions, relationships, organizational practices, job demands, workload, and autonomy. Research has increasingly highlighted the interconnected relationships between leadership practices and school-level conditions, as well as the importance of understanding teachers' job demands and resources within their broader work environment (Ahn et al., 2025; Moens et al., 2026).

Examining these conditions can help school leaders identify where workplace pressures arise and where organizational arrangements or resources may need to be adjusted. From this perspective, promoting teacher well-being involves not only monitoring whether teachers are doing well, but also understanding and addressing the workplace conditions through which their well-being is experienced.

2) Managing teachers' work and job resources

The EF literature provides substantial evidence that job demands and job resources (E) are associated with teacher well-being, with some studies indicating that resources may buffer the effects of demands. Importantly, job demands extend beyond the amount of work itself to include the psychological, emotional, and other work-related pressures associated with carrying out teaching, whereas job resources include conditions and supports that help teachers achieve work goals, manage demands, and sustain their well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Granziera et al., 2022; Ostermeier et al., 2023). When examined alongside workload and autonomy (F), this suggests that the organization of teachers' work should be regarded as an important component of well-being promotion. Attention is therefore needed not only to the amount of work and time demands, but also to the broader demands teachers encounter, the resources available to meet those demands, their degree of autonomy, and the conditions under which they carry out their work.

3) Ensuring fairness in work allocation

Managing teachers' work involves more than reducing workload. How work is allocated and experienced may also matter. School leaders may therefore need to establish fair and transparent principles for teaching schedules, additional responsibilities, administrative tasks, and access to organizational resources. This perspective extends consideration of workload to organizational justice by asking not only whether teachers have too much work, but also whether work is distributed fairly and teachers have an appropriate degree of control over their work.

4) Leading through the school management system

The role of school leaders is not limited to the actions of the principal alone. Decisions concerning teachers' work are often implemented through management teams, department heads, coordinators, and administrative processes. School leaders therefore have a role in establishing organizational principles, coordinating those responsible for work allocation, and adjusting arrangements when unintended pressures emerge. Leadership in this sense involves shaping the conditions within which teachers work rather than providing support only after problems occur.

These implications should not be interpreted as evidence that a specific leadership pathway to teacher well-being has already been established. Rather, they represent implications derived from patterns identified across the reviewed literature and identify a potentially important direction for leadership practice and future research.

Discussion

1. What the literature found

Based on the 184 studies reviewed, all six workplace-related domains were represented in the literature on teacher well-being. The co-occurrence analysis showed that some domains were more frequently examined together than others, with leadership and school climate/social relationships (AB) and job demands/resources and workload/autonomy (EF) representing the most frequent two-domain combinations. Multi-domain configurations, including BEF, CEF, ADBEF, and ADCEF, further indicate that teacher well-being is increasingly examined in relation to interconnected workplace conditions rather than isolated factors.

However, the relationships among these domains were heterogeneous. Although some studies examined mediation, moderation, or reciprocal relationships, the reviewed literature did not establish a consistent direction of influence. This pattern is consistent with broader research suggesting that teacher well-being is associated with multiple and interacting job demands, job resources, and

workplace conditions rather than a single, universally applicable pathway (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Collie et al., 2020; Granziera et al., 2022; Ostermeier et al., 2023). In particular, there was insufficient evidence in the reviewed studies to conclude that leadership or organizational support systematically leads to changes in relational or work-related conditions. Thus, co-occurrence should not be interpreted as evidence of a common causal pathway.

2. What this means for understanding teacher well-being

The findings suggest that teacher well-being is increasingly examined as embedded in a configuration of relational, organizational, and work-related conditions. This broader view is consistent with research emphasizing the role of multiple workplace demands, resources, and contextual conditions in shaping teachers' well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Granziera et al., 2022; Ostermeier et al., 2023). Nevertheless, much of the literature remains factor-oriented, examining associations between particular workplace factors and teacher well-being rather than explaining how organizational practices shape the conditions that teachers subsequently experience.

3. What this means for school leadership

The review therefore shifts attention from asking whether leadership is associated with teacher well-being to asking how leadership operates through the school workplace. The implications identified in Section 4.3.2 suggest that this role may involve shaping the organizational conditions in which teachers work rather than simply responding to individual well-being problems. This perspective is also consistent with work emphasizing the role of school administrators in creating conditions that support health promotion within schools (Suphasirisuk & Khaikleng, 2026).

This interpretation also requires attention to context. The reviewed literature spans different educational and organizational settings, and leadership practices may not operate identically across contexts. Cultural expectations, organizational structures, and local working conditions may influence how leadership decisions are experienced by teachers. The role of school leaders should therefore be understood as context-dependent rather than as a universally transferable set of practices.

4. Rethinking the leadership–well-being relationship

The review does not support a single model in which leadership produces teacher well-being through a predetermined sequence of workplace conditions. Instead, the findings suggest a need to move beyond viewing leadership as a single factor directly associated with teacher well-being and to consider how leadership may operate through a broader school workplace system.

From this perspective, the key issue is not simply whether leadership is related to teacher well-being, but how leadership and organizational practices may shape the relational, organizational,

and work-related conditions that teachers experience. The functional relationships among leadership, organizational practices, relational conditions, working conditions, job demands/resources, workload, and autonomy therefore remain an important area for further conceptual and empirical development.

Future research

Future research should therefore move beyond examining multiple factors simultaneously toward investigating the mechanisms and pathways through which leadership and organizational practices shape teachers' work experiences and well-being. Longitudinal and multi-level designs may be particularly useful for examining changes in workplace conditions over time and distinguishing associations from directional relationships.

Further research should also examine how cultural and contextual conditions influence the implementation and experience of leadership practices related to teacher well-being. This may clarify whether relationships identified in the literature operate similarly across educational settings or require context-sensitive approaches.

The review ultimately raises a question rather than providing a definitive answer: how, and to what extent, do leadership and organizational practices influence the workplace conditions experienced by teachers, and how do these conditions subsequently relate to teacher well-being?

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