Teacher personality potential and well-being as drivers of learners' personality development, health, and well-being

A series of briefs by UNESCO IITE

Brief 2

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Acronyms

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CALM	Community Approach to Learning Mindfully
EASP	Early Advancement in Social-Emotional Health and Positivity
ENTREE	Enhancing Teachers Resilience in Europe
HMP	Healthy Minds Program
MBCT	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
MBSR	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
MT	Mindfulness Training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PERMA	Wellbeing model that outlines Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
PPI	Positive Psychology Interventions
SMART	Stress Management and Resiliency Techniques for educators
TSWQ	Teacher Subjective Well-being Questionnaire
TWBS	Teacher Well-Being Scale
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
WSA	Whole School Approach

Executive Summary

Teacher well-being, alongside professional performance requirements, is a strong focus for education systems today (UNESCO, 2024). This brief explores personal and school-related factors that affect teachers' well-being and job satisfaction, and recommends diagnostic tools and support practices. Special emphasis is placed on teachers' personal and professional development, self-efficacy, and collective efficacy.

This brief was prepared as part of international initiative *Empowering through Education for Health and Well-being in a Learning Environment That Fosters Personality Development*, which aims to advance teachers' professional development. The initiative is implemented jointly by UNESCO IITE and the Investment in the Future Charitable Foundation.

Introduction

Researchers and practitioners worldwide continue to reflect on how the coronavirus pandemic and broader social changes have affected education. Shifts in this sphere are reflected not only in the widespread adoption of digital technologies, but also in the growing focus on psychological well-being and social interaction. Emerging trends are increasingly evident, including a person-centred approach, personalised and individualised learning, promoting emotional intelligence, and managing the educational process with attention to emotions, moods, and relationships (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024).

In such circumstances, it is important for education systems to go beyond academic outcomes and promote learners' personality development, health, and well-being (UNESCO, 2023). In recent decades, many countries have introduced relevant programmes that position teachers as key agents of change; consequently, their personal and professional development, well-being, and health have also become important objectives in education.

Achieving these objectives also requires close attention in light of high attrition rates and the growing shortage of teachers. According to projections made by UNESCO and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, an additional 44 million teachers will be needed to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030 (UNESCO, 2024). Teachers report large class sizes, excessive workloads, and mental health challenges (Arnold & Rahimi, 2024). Violence against teachers by students is on the rise, ranging from insults and mockery to theft and physical assault. Such experiences negatively affect teachers' physical and mental health and reduce their motivation to stay in the profession (Berlanda et al., 2019; Henderson, 2023). Teacher shortages are also largely influenced by working conditions, including op-

portunities for career development, the level of trust and recognition from colleagues, and the degree of autonomy teachers are given, among other factor (UNESCO, 2024). In this context, international organisations aim to reimagine the teaching profession, recognising the importance of improving teachers' working conditions, elevating the status of the profession, and encouraging professional development through lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2024). Thus, the current challenge is not only to attract new teachers but also to support those already working in schools and help them develop their unique personal resources. These resources, encompassed in the concept of **personality potential**, are increasingly identified as key factors in teacher resilience and efficacy in a rapidly changing environment.

The importance of personality development is highlighted in The Next 50 Years of Work, a report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG), which notes that in any profession, high-demand skills will include technological literacy, creativity, communication skills, self-regulation, adaptability, and optimism (Hoteit et al., 2024). At the same time, adaptability alone is not enough; preadaptability – proactive development of skills that may have little immediate value but will become useful in future circumstances – is also essential (Асмолов и др., 2018). Indeed, today's teachers need to adopt a preadaptive mindset. Their key qualities closely align with those highlighted in the BCG report and include adaptability, effective interaction with learners and colleagues, leadership, and intercultural competence (Sulaiman & Ismail, 2020; Eliwatis et al., 2022; Gümüş, 2022).

Additionally, teachers serve as role models for learners, shaping the development of their social identity and personality (Krivokapic, 2018). By participating in professional communities and refining their skills, teachers also become role models for their colleagues, particularly

those who are new to the profession. By demonstrating methods, explaining their decisions, and connecting theory with practice, they help colleagues adopt new approaches to teaching children (Lunenberg et al., 2007). Since teachers influence both the educational process and its participants, it is important that they have opportunities for personal development, and that schools create conditions supporting their well-being and basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and social connectedness (Коваль и др., 2024).

Teacher's Personality Potential

Studies examine various qualities of educators – the personality-related factors that influence their well-being and professional performance. D. A. Leontiev and others group some of these traits under the concept of "personality potential." This refers to the capacity for self-regulation – a system of psychological characteristics that enables a person to handle everyday tasks successfully without being driven solely by internal impulses or external pressures. Personality potential allows individuals to chart their own life paths and achieve consciously chosen goals while remaining true to their values and responsive to a changing environment.

The components of personality potential include reflection, tolerance for uncertainty, self-efficacy, autonomy, optimism, and resilience (Леонтьев и Аверина, 2011). It is reflected in a teacher's daily practice, particularly in their chosen style of communication with learners.

Teachers with well-developed personality potential take responsibility for their decisions and commitments, remain resilient in the face of challenges, and consistently reflect on and understand their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. When working with learners, they use structuring and autonomy-supportive communication styles. The structuring style involves explaining what the teacher expects from the learners and how they should act to achieve the desired outcome. The teacher takes learners' abilities into account, offers guidance, and provides meaningful, constructive feedback. An autonomy-supportive style involves understanding learners' preferences and attitudes toward the subject to sustain their interest and engagement in the lesson.

Teachers with less developed personality potential are more likely to adopt demotivating communication styles. A teacher who favours a controlling style disregards learners' perspectives and insists that they think, behave, and respond exactly as directed. A chaotic or permissive style is characterised by unclear, inconsistent, and sometimes contradictory expectations from learners, while the teacher is minimally engaged in what is happening during the lesson. As a result, children may be unsure how to complete tasks and which skills to focus on, and may lose confidence in their abilities

(Леонтьев и Аверина, 2011; Aelterman et al., 2019; Гордеева и Сычев, 2024).

Additionally, teachers' communication styles and classroom management skills, as well as learners' academic performance, are influenced by the Big Five personality traits: kindness, extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience (Göncz, 2017). Studies reveal that conscientiousness, extraversion, openness to experience, and emotional stability positively influence teacher effectiveness and reduce the risk of burnout (Kell, 2019; Kim et al., 2019).

The most frequently mentioned teacher characteristic is conscientiousness – linked to diligence and responsibility – according to a word frequency analysis of 16.5 million English-language books published between 1800 and 2019. It is followed by kindness, openness, extraversion, and emotional stability. The high frequency of terms such as "patient" and "tolerant" highlights the perception of teachers as open-minded individuals who respect young learners' personalities and accept the uniqueness of their behaviour and activities (Xu, 2024). Studies also identify which teacher qualities are particularly valued by learners, colleagues, and supervisors: responsibility, diligence, proactiveness, goal-orientation, creativity, punctuality, attentiveness, sociability, fairness, empathy, and high standards. Research shows that a teacher's performance and interactions with others are influenced by characteristics such as self-efficacy, causal attributions (attributing behaviour to internal factors, such as ability or effort), emotional intelligence, emotional regulation (regulating one's emotional expression), and mindfulness (Shchaveleva et al., 2021; Bardach et al., 2022).

Thus, a modern teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but a unique individual who shapes a positive school environment, thereby fostering learner motivation and development. Cultivating teachers' personality potential addresses the pressing needs of education and can contribute to enhancing its quality.

Teacher Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy influences one's ability to self-regulate and is therefore important across various areas of life. It reflects a person's belief in their ability to complete new or challenging tasks and achieve desired goals. Sources of self-efficacy include past experience of success (mastery experiences), learning by observing others (vicarious experiences), verbal persuasion, and a calm and confident psychological and emotional state (Bandura, 1993). Thus, to develop and maintain self-efficacy, individuals should be motivated, provided with opportunities to try new behaviours and learn from others' experiences, and guided in managing their emotions while performing tasks (Warner & French, 2020).

Self-efficacy is one of the most important personality-related factors influencing teacher well-being (Taylor et al., 2024). It gives teachers confidence in their ability to impact learners' academic performance, even in the face of potential challenges (Шиленкова, 2020). The higher a teacher's self-efficacy, the greater their job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Sulla & Rollo, 2023), work engagement (Han & Wang, 2021), and overall commitment to their school (Waweru et al., 2021). Self-efficacy in teachers is associated with higher self-esteem (Pereira et al., 2021) and lower occurrence of burnout (Fathi et al., 2021; McCullough et al., 2022; Li, 2023; Kochetkov et al., 2023; Olivier et al., 2024).

Teacher self-efficacy has been examined in various contexts, such as attitudes toward inclusive education (Yada et al., 2022), intercultural competence (Павлова и др., 2022; Schwarzenthal et al., 2023), and the use of ICT (Абуханова и др., 2021). Thus, teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are likely to embrace their roles as inclusive educators with greater resilience and examine ways of overcoming challenges, having confidence in their ability to accommodate all learners (Woodcock et al., 2022).

Teacher performance and job satisfaction are influenced not only by self-efficacy but also by the openness to professional collaboration (Zhang et al., 2023). This, in turn, fosters the development of collective efficacy, which goes beyond merely the sum of individual teachers' beliefs.

Collective Teacher Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) is the collective belief of teachers in their ability to positively affect children's education, alongside family and environment. With some exceptions, this concept has been found to be culturally universal (Da'as et al., 2022). Collective teacher efficacy should be distinguished from individual self-efficacy. A teacher may have a high assessment of their own performance while lacking confidence in the abilities of the teaching team as a whole.

According to J. Hattie, collective teacher efficacy is one of the top factors influencing learners' academic performance across all levels of education (Hattie, 2015; Hattie & Zierer, 2019). Other studies suggest that CTE is more closely associated with children's learning outcomes than individual teachers' self-efficacy (Shengnan & Hallinger, 2021). Teachers with high collective efficacy are more likely to prevent and manage disruptive learner behaviour by supporting, recognising, and rewarding appropriate behaviour rather than relying on punishment (Gulsün et al., 2023).

Although collective efficacy and individual self-efficacy are distinct concepts, they share the same sources. For example, mastery experiences gained through collective efforts – such as reducing disciplinary issues – demonstrate that it is possible to achieve results collaboratively (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019).

Collective efficacy is closely related to the organisational climate in a school (Donohoo et al., 2020; Anderson et al., 2023). Researchers have identified five enabling conditions for collective teacher efficacy:

- empowered teachers;

- embedded reflexive practices;

- goal consensus and cohesive teacher knowledge, referring to teachers' shared understanding of effective instructional methods, techniques, and practices;

- supportive leadership.

Also essential are communication and socio-emotional skills of school management, as they help ensure that all members of the teaching team are heard (Loughland & Ryan, 2022).

Pedagogical Constructor for Young Teachers: A Methodological Guidance Project[1]

The project is ongoing since 2022, implemented by the Y. Altynsarin National Academy of Education,[2] the Methodology Centre at the Department of Education of the Akimat of Kostanay Region, and the Centre for Teaching Excellence at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, Kostanay,[3] Republic of Kazakhstan

The project "Pedagogical Constructor for Young Teachers" serves as an example of creating conditions that support collective teacher efficacy. The project focuses on introducing reflective practices and fostering a shared understanding among teachers of effective instructional methods.

The project brings together more than a thousand young teachers with up to three years of experience, offering them training, opportunities for experience sharing, guidance, support, and mentoring at the start of their careers.

The training programme includes a series of webinars, seminars, and hands-on sessions covering classroom management, understanding the regulatory framework, lesson planning, creating a safe and supportive environment, formative and summative assessments, reflective practices, research, and inclusive education. Each webinar series, centred on a specific module, concludes with an in-person bootcamp[4] session where young teachers are introduced to their colleagues' best practices and participate in master classes.

It is recommended that upon completion, each webinar series should be followed by regular refresher training and seminars, in-service mentorship, and feedback to participants. This approach helps early-career educators overcome challenges and provides a foundation for ongoing professional growth and the development of self-efficacy.

The best practices generated by the project have been compiled and approved for dissemination and replication by the Centre for Teaching Excellence at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (Astana, 2023), and methodology guidelines have been published. The project serves as a model for initiatives aimed at supporting early-career teachers.

Thus, in addition to personal qualities and professional skills, teachers require supportive workplace conditions. These include access to resources, sufficient time, opportunities for professional development, assistance from colleagues and supervisors, and the chance to share practices through classroom visits or exchanges with other schools striving to promote teacher well-being (Skinner et al., 2022).

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1 Project details are available on the website of the Methodology Centre at the Kostanay Region Department of Education:
https://metodedu-kost.kz/ru/news/428-sekrety-effektivnogo-uroka-dlya-molodykh-pedagogov.html,
https://metodedu-kost.kz/ru/news/404-pogruzhenie-v-sekrety-uroka.html,
https://metodedu-kost.kz/ru/news/374-pravovoj-kompas-dlya-molodogo-uchitelya.html.

2 Y. Altynsarin National Academy of Education: https://uba.edu.kz/ru.

3 Centre for Teaching Excellence, Kostanay: https://cpm.kz, https://beyim.edu.kz/.

4 In education, the term "bootcamp" refers to short-term, intensive, and immersive courses that enable learners to acquire new knowledge and skills quickly and effectively.

Teacher's Well-being

Student well-being and the creation of necessary conditions for it is a key goal in education (WHO, 2023; UNESCO & UNICEF, 2024). To achieve this, it is important to support **the psychological well-being** of teachers themselves (Arnold & Rahimi, 2024; Taylor et al., 2024). In the literature this concept is interpreted in various ways, with at least five distinct approaches to its definition, based on:

● the concept of subjective well-being;

● positive psychology with an emphasis on personality development;

● occupational and organisational psychology (job satisfaction and emotional well-being);

● understanding the characteristics of the teaching profession;

● understanding health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

In this brief, teacher well-being refers to psychosocial well-being, encompassing psychological well-being as well as social and collective well-being, i.e. the well-being of the individual within a group and of the group as a whole. Variations may occur when discussing specific models and studies.

The report by the Oxford University Wellbeing Research Centre emphasizes that low levels of teacher well-being and mental health worldwide have a detrimental impact on schools (Toropova et al., 2021; Taylor et al., 2024). Supporting evidence is often scarce due to the use of questionnaires based on general concepts of well-being, without addressing the specific challenges of the teaching profession (Hascher & Waber, 2021). Specialised tools that help better understand specific aspects of teachers' work-related well-being include: the Teacher Well-being Scale (TWBS) (Collie et al., 2015), the Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ) (Renshaw et al., 2015), and the PISA-2022 teacher questionnaire (OECD, 2021). Well-being studies differ in the number and types of indicators examined, so their findings are valid only within the context of each specific study and not for well-being in general. Nevertheless, in practice, their results are often generalised.

International Barometer of Education Staff (I-BEST[5]) for measuring teachers' health and well-being

The Education and Solidarity Network and the Foundation for Public Health (France), in partnership with Education International and the UNESCO Chair on Global Health & Education, conduct the International Barometer of the Health and Well-Being of Education Staff (I-BEST). In 2023, more than 26,000 educators from Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia took part in this biennial online survey.

I-BEST examines socio-demographic and professional profiles, workloads, work-life balance, health and well-being, teachers' need for social protection, the use of digital tools, and school safety. The survey provides insights into teachers' satisfaction with their quality of life, physical and emotional health, work-related stress, recognition by society and school administration, career development opportunities, and salary. The data collected can be used to improve teachers' working conditions and promote sustainable development of educational systems (Billaudeau et al., 2023).

Teachers' well-being has a significant impact on the overall quality of education. Teachers with high levels of well-being seek professional development and create supportive learning environments in school settings, contributing to learners' academic success and mental health (Mo, 2024). Such teachers tend to have enhanced occupational commitment, high levels of work engagement, and are less likely to experience burnout (Zhou et al., 2024).

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5 International Barometer of Education Staff (I-BEST):
  https://www.educationsolidarite.org/en/our-actions/international-barometer-of-the-health-and-well-being-of-education-personnel.

Teachers' well-being is determined by several factors:

- objective (age, gender, marital status, education, years in service, and working conditions);

- subjective (general health and vitality, personality traits, self-assessment of professional competence, motivation, perceptions of their work and the school environment, and relationships with colleagues, administrators, learners and their parents).

Most objective factors have little impact on teacher well-being. In contrast, relationships play a crucial role: international research indicates that the quality of relationships is closely linked to teacher job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention (Opoku et al., 2020; Toropova et al., 2021). When teachers feel isolated from colleagues or disconnected from the school community, their well-being may decline (Hascher & Waber, 2021). Among positive personality factors, autonomous work motivation and psychological capital – defined as a combination of hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy – are particularly noteworthy. These factors are reflected in models of teacher well-being.

Teacher Well-being Models

A model developed by the OECD focuses primarily on **teachers' occupational well-being**, emphasising its close connection with educational institutions and systems (Figure 1). The model defines four key dimensions of well-being: cognitive, subjective, physical and mental, and social.

Cognitive well-being reflects the degree to which teachers are able to take up new information and concentrate on their work and it also relates to teachers' self-efficacy. **Subjective well-being**, based on E. Diener's work, reflects a balance of positive and negative emotions and overall life satisfaction. In this model, it also encompasses a sense of meaning and purpose in life, as well as job satisfaction. **Physical and mental dimensions of well-being** refer to physical and mental health and can be measured through the presence or absence of psychosomatic complaints, such as headaches, stress, depression, and burnout. **Social well-being** refers to the quality and depth of social interactions with various stakeholders, such as learners and their parents, colleagues, and administration. The model shows how teachers' well-being is shaped by the working environment through working conditions, job resources, and job demands. Other factors include school characteristics and teacher characteristics (Viac & Fraser, 2020; Granziera et al., 2021).

Policy settings of educational systems

Material conditions	Quality standards	Distribution and allocation	Career structure

Quality of the working environment

Job demands	Job resources

Teachers' well-being

Cognitive well-being	Subjective well-being	Physical and mental well-being	Social well-being

School characteristics →

← **Teachers characteristics**

Inward outcomes

Stress and burnout	Motivation to leave teaching

Outward outcomes

Classroom processes	Students' well-being

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for teachers' occupational well-being (Viac & Fraser, 2020)

The second well-being model which represents key drivers of **teachers' job satisfaction** distinguishes between individual elements and school elements (Figure 2).

Individual elements encompass physical health, emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, self-efficacy, resilience, and problem-solving. **School elements** include salary satisfaction, job security, work-life balance, continuous learning and development opportunities, class size, workplace recognition, school climate, and supportive relationships within the school community (Taylor et al., 2024; UNESCO, 2024).

Applying this model, along with consideration of each school's unique ecosystem, empowers school leadership to tailor their strategies and interventions, ultimately contributing to holistic well-being of their teaching staff (Taylor et al., 2024)

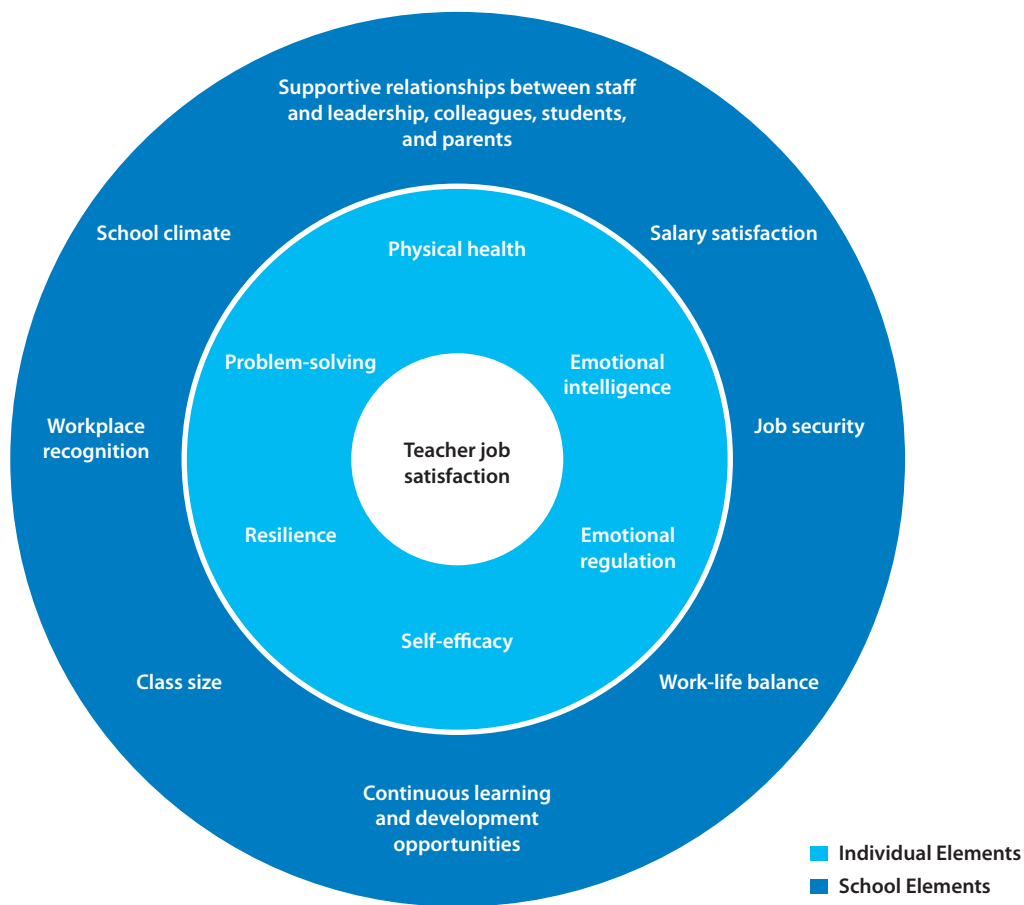**Figure 2.** The Teacher Well-being Framework: key individual and school drivers of teacher job satisfaction (Taylor et al., 2024)

Similar groups of factors are described in other studies. School-related factors of teacher well-being include school climate and job crafting (Dreer, 2022), school culture (Thien & Lee, 2022, 2023), and ancillary functions (Dinero & Oco, 2024).

School climate is determined by five factors: the openness of the school towards new methods and development; adequate school equipment, such as teaching materials and media; teachers' feelings of belonging to the school community; teachers' autonomy and participation in school decisions; and the quality of teacher-learner relationships. Positive perception of school climate not only contributes to job satisfaction, but also has a positive impact on teachers' self-efficacy (Fang & Qi, 2023). Autonomy and participation in school decision-making promote productivity, a sense of competence, and job satisfaction, while reducing burnout (Taylor et al., 2024; Ying et al., 2024). Professional development opportunities also contribute to teachers' well-being and job performance (Ying et al., 2024). In contrast, excessive **ancillary functions**

can lead to burnout and negatively affect performance (Dinero & Oco, 2024). For example, spending time on administrative tasks has been reported as a key cause of stress for teachers in OECD countries (OECD, 2020).

Job crafting refers to teachers' proactive efforts to modify their professional activities in ways that align their work with their personal preferences, goals, and values:

- task crafting (shaping the boundaries and processes of job tasks);

- relational crafting (shaping their relationships with colleagues);

- cognitive crafting (shaping one's personal attitudes toward the job).

Research suggests that both school climate and job crafting positively contribute to teacher well-being and job satisfaction. Thus, in addition to a supportive

work environment, individual work-related behaviour is important (Dreer, 2022).

School culture includes all elements of the school climate but also emphasizes how formal relationships and interactions between school leaders and teachers affect the well-being of the school team. By creating an environment of trust and a positive atmosphere, while involving teachers in decision-making, school leaders support teachers' sense of belonging and motivation to improve performance (Thien & Lee, 2023; Taylor et al., 2024).

The Role of School Leadership and Policy Context in Promoting Teacher Well-being

Both school leaders and education policymakers can promote teacher well-being and create supportive environments – for example, by providing access to appropriate support services. Researchers highlight several key principles for achieving this:

- acknowledge the importance of teacher well-being (Reeve et al., 2022);

- commit to mental health promotion and stress prevention among teachers;

- prioritise staff health and well-being over productivity objectives;

- effective communication: ensure that all community voices are heard;

- inclusive participation: governments, in partnership with teachers, school leaders, union, and health care system representatives, actively participate in enhancing teacher health, safety, and well-being (Arnold & Rahimi, 2024).

At institutional level, teacher well-being is facilitated by providing sufficient autonomy, ensuring the availability of resources, minimising time pressure and narrowing the breadth of required tasks, providing feedback and social support from colleagues, and offering developmental coaching (Mo, 2024). Based on this, school leaders need to:

- foster an environment where teachers feel that their work and perspectives are valued;

- encourage meaningful learning for professional development;

- empower teacher autonomy in decisions and in implementing changes to their work (Cann et al., 2021) (Figure 3).
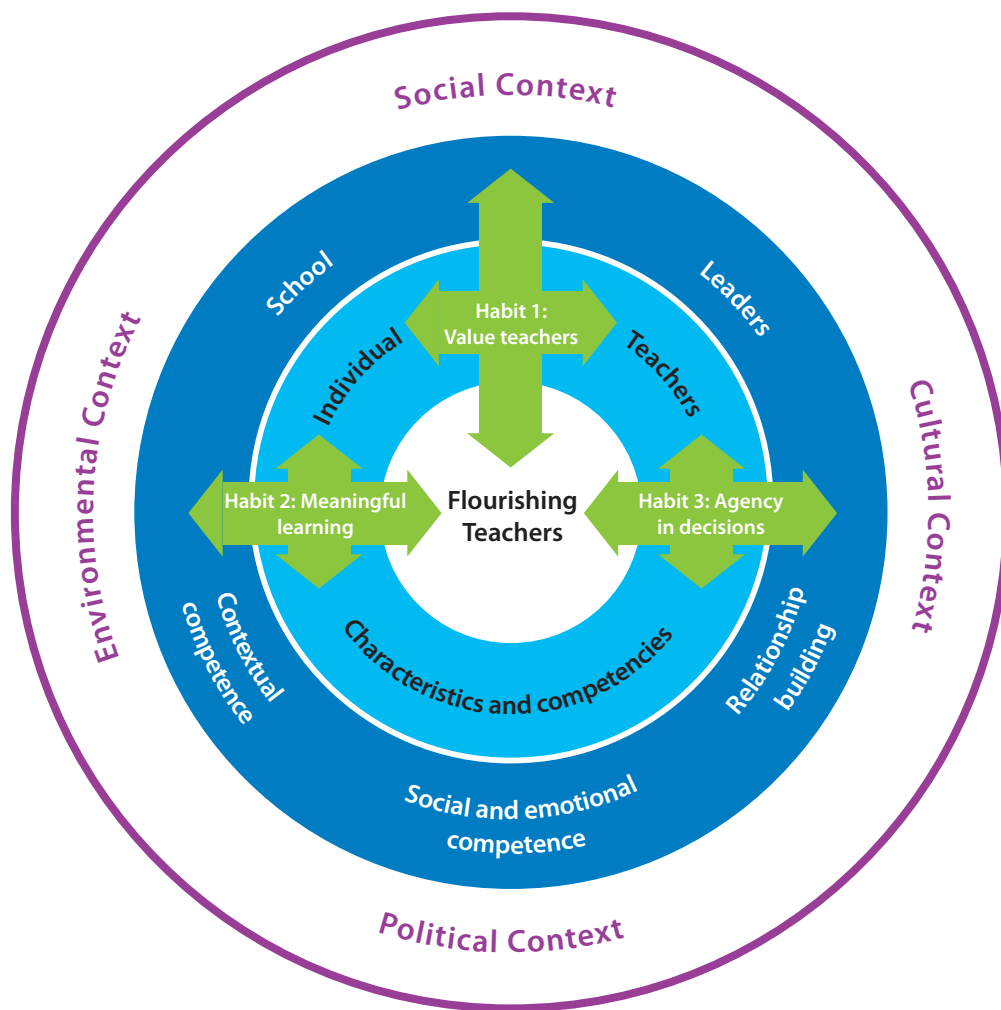
Figure 3. A Model of Positive School Leadership to improve teacher well-being (Cann et al., 2021)

It is also essential that school leaders foster constructive relationships between teachers and learners, act fairly and consistently in disciplinary matters, ensure school safety, and engage parents and the local community in school life. Positive and supportive school leadership helps transform the school into a cohesive team (McCallum, 2021; White & McCallum, 2022; Liu, 2023).

The leader's personality is also of significance. Leaders who motivate their staff to achieve high standards, engage them in working toward common goals, and delegate responsibilities contribute to the team's overall well-being (Akbar et al., 2024). When the leader is authentic and acts in accordance with their declared beliefs and values it strengthens teachers' commitment to the school organisation (Xu & Pang, 2024). The leader's ability to regulate their own emotions and provide emotional support to others is also valuable, particularly during a crisis (Floman et al., 2024).

Teacher Well-being Support Practices

As shown earlier, wellbeing interventions for teachers can take place in the context of organisational and whole-school (WSA) approaches (Taylor et al., 2024; Fox et al., 2022). At the individual level, they include professional development activities, mindfulness and positive psychology interventions, physical activity, and other health-promoting practices (Taylor et al., 2024). Mindfulness practices have a special place (Berger et al., 2022), such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (Gold et al., 2010; Frank et al., 2015; Gouda et al., 2016; Beshai et al., 2016; Rupprecht et al. al., 2017), Mindfulness Training (MT) (Roeser et al., 2013), and a Community Approach to Learning Mindfully (CALM) (Harris et al., 2016). Evidence supports the effectiveness of interventions aimed at stress management and fostering resilience, such as SMART (Taylor et al., 2016), as well as mental training focused on self-regulation of

attention, self-inquiry, and self-knowledge. Such training helps individuals get rid of limiting beliefs, set and achieve personally relevant goals, aligned with one's core values, and ultimately perceive meaning and significance in their lives (Dahl et al., 2020).

mindfulness among teachers correlates with improved emotional regulation, effective stress management, and a more balanced perspective on their profession, consequently mitigating burnout tendencies (Liu & Du, 2024).

1. Mindfulness Practices

Mindfulness refers to intentionally giving one's full attention to the current moment without judgment. Proficient

Practices: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and the Reconnedcted programme

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a structured eight-week meditation and mindfulness course that includes weekly in-person group sessions lasting 2.5 to 3 hours. Each session focuses on a specific topic, such as stress management, coping with difficult emotions, and related areas. Classes are led either by a part-time school employee or by an external instructor.

Teachers from the UK, Germany, and the USA who completed the course reported reductions in depressive symptoms and stress levels, improved sleep, increased mindfulness and mindfulness-related skills (such as observation, nonjudgment, and nonreactivity), as well as improvements in self-regulation, self-efficacy, and coping abilities. Teachers became more aware of their sources of stress and developed a more balanced perspective on work demands. These benefits were largely sustained for three to four months. Satisfaction with the MBSR course was high, with 82% of teachers indicating they would recommend it to their colleagues (Gold et al., 2010; Frank et al., 2015; Gouda et al., 2016; Rupprecht et al., 2017).

The Reconnected[6] programme helps educators manage stress, enhance self-awareness, and develop emotional regulation skills. It includes practical, physical, and everyday activities such as mindful yoga, walking, eating, breathing exercises, and empathetic listening. The programme consists of eight weekly in-person training sessions, each lasting 1.5 hours, and participants also have access to online resources for meditation and theoretical lessons.

Teachers reported reduced stress, improved sleep, and increased mindfulness and self-compassion. These effects persisted for five months, and positive changes were also observed in teacher-learner interactions (Hwang et al., 2019).

Many educational institutions may find it challenging to hire a professional qualified to train teachers in mindfulness skills. However, online resources are available for guided meditations and theoretical lessons. For example, the Healthy Minds Programme (HMP), a smartphone-based meditation app, can help support the mental health and well-being of school staff (Hirshberg et al., 2022).

2. Positive Psychology Interventions

Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) enhance the well-being of both teachers and learners (Sandholm et al., 2023; Yeh & Barrington, 2023). For example, the Early Advancement in Social–Emotional Health and Positivity (EASP) programme had direct effects on changes in well-being dimensions, including positive emotions and mindsets, sense of accomplishment, character strength, engagement, and resilience, and indirectly influenced self-efficacy and autonomous motivation for teaching.

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6 Implemented by Mind with Heart, an international charity https://www.mindwithheart.org/.

As an outcome of EASP, educational materials were produced, including a booklet on positive parenting, a smartphone app featuring exercises, games, situational theatre for teachers and parents, and other educational resources and activities (Lee et al., 2024).

3. Training programmes and observation learning

To enhance teacher well-being, training programmes have been offered, including Practice-Based Coaching (Golden et al., 2024) and opportunities to observe teachers who demonstrate high levels of well-being (Dreer, 2022, 2023). Research findings indicate that such observations influence aspects of the PERMA[7] model of well-being among students in training to become teachers. This is congruent with the general tenet of social cognitive theory that watching others can influence a person's thinking, behaviour, and learning. By observing the well-being of in-service teachers, student teachers report higher rates of their own well-being (Dreer, 2023).

4. Lifestyle changes

Lifestyle changes – such as increased physical activity, improved nutrition, and better sleep – enhance teachers' psychological well-being and reduce burnout. They also enable teachers to perform their educational tasks more effectively and promote healthy lifestyles among learners, positioning teachers as role models (Corbett et al., 2022; Jakstas et al., 2023).

5. Social and emotional learning practices

Schools across countries implement social and emotional learning through digital games. For example, "Teaching to Be: A Path to Wellbeing,"[8] a European project, developed an educational video game, which was used in Spain to support teachers' professional well-being. In Norway, a digital game-based learning intervention was used, where teachers played an active role in solving game tasks relevant to their professional well-being in school context (Martinsone et al., 2024; Merino-Cajaraville et al., 2024; Lillelien et al., 2024).

The duration of the interventions described above typically ranges from eight (most often) to sixteen weeks. Sessions are held up to four times per week and last between 20 minutes and three hours. Some programmes also include at-home practice activities and provide additional resources. Key results for teachers include:

● significant reduction in stress and depression;

● increased self-compassion;

● getting rid of physical symptoms;

● changes in mindfulness and concentration;

● better self-regulation, self-efficacy, and the ability to cope with adversity.

Teachers who participate in such programmes indirectly influence learners' well-being, as children report moderate reductions in stress, improved self-regulation and school-related self-esteem, and fewer interpersonal problems (Gouda et al., 2016).

Comprehensive Programmes to Promote Teacher Well-being

1. Positive Education: A Professional Learning Programme

The Positive Education programme, adapted from the European ENTREE[9] project, aims to promote teachers' self-regulation, resilience, and overall well-being. It encompasses six training modules: Resilience; Building Relationships; Emotional Well-Being; Stress Management; Effective Teaching; Classroom Management, and an additional module named Education for Well-Being, focused on developing the ability to foster positive emotions in oneself and others (Fernandes et al., 2020; Mansfield, 2020). Teachers who completed the training reported personal and professional growth, along with positive changes in their students. These teachers later applied positive education methods – for example, in communicating with learners and colleagues and in supporting learners' social and emotional development (Sandholm et al., 2023).

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7 The PERMA Model: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning & Accomplishment: https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model/.
8 Teaching to Be: a Path to Wellbeing: https://teachingtobe.eu/.
9 ENTREE Online Learning Centre: http://www.entree-online.eu/.

2. Developing Environment Programme

The Developing Environment Programme[10] implemented by the Investment in the Future Charitable Foundation aims to create an educational environment that turns existing conditions into opportunities for developing the personality potential of both children and adults (Дирюгина и др., 2023). It offers educational institutions a comprehensive approach to transforming relationship culture, introducing new forms of engagement, relying on teacher initiative, and building communities. The programme engages a wide range of participants – teachers, learners, parents, and social partners. The advanced training courses it offers support personal and professional development of administrators and teachers, introduce them to modern methods and tools, and help bring them together into professional learning communities (PLCs).

Creating Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

PLCs are established in many countries around the world and have become an integral part of pedagogical culture. A key feature of PLCs is participants' commitment to continuous improvement through ongoing communication and collaboration. These communities share mutually accepted norms, provide a forum for discussing professional challenges, and foster interactions that help resolve them – for example, by enabling participants to receive feedback from colleagues on their practice.

Generally, all PLCs provide resources for educator development. However, they differ in their modes of interaction, ranging from one-way resource sharing to mutual learning and collaborative creation of educational materials (Чернобай и Калина, 2022). For PLCs to function effectively, school schedules must allocate time for their activities, including class observations and joint projects. Both horizontal communities – focused on techniques and approaches for specific grades or subjects – and vertical communities – spanning different disciplines and grade levels – are equally important (Пинская и Михайлова, 2020).

Research shows that teachers in educational institutions with PLCs have significantly higher average levels of job engagement and well-being compared with their counterparts in schools without PLCs. Moreover, those who actively contribute to PLCs report the highest levels of job satisfaction (Агапова, 2023; Коваль и др., 2024).

PLC Creation Practices[11]

Two schools in Petrozavodsk had long ranked at the bottom of the city's ratings and were perceived as places with the most "challenging" learners, a large proportion of whom had disabilities or came from families with limited educational and economic resources.

In these schools, mutual visits to lessons and extracurricular activities were organised, and specialists from various fields – such as psychologists, social educators, speech therapists, teachers of extracurricular activities, teachers of supplementary education, and heads of sections, clubs, and projects – began sharing their experiences. PLCs emerged to bring together teachers working in the same class – particularly those with challenging learner profiles; early-career professionals; communities focused on educational guidance and socio-psychological support; and teams working to establish a creative educational environment. Each PLC consisted of five to 22 members, and many teachers participated in more than one community.

The focus of each PLC was determined through discussion of the relevant issues. Challenges were identified, and the team worked collaboratively to find solutions. Teachers drew on both the strategies set by the administration and on their own initiatives. Participation in these collaborations was voluntary, with topics and activities emerging organically from how teachers defined the school's objectives and challenges and responded to their colleagues' needs.

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10 The Developing Environment Programme (until 2023 – Personality Potential Development Programme): https://vbudushee.ru/en/education/personality-potential-development-program/.

11 Пинская и Михайлова, 2020.

School principals fostered an environment that encouraged active knowledge sharing and professional development. They provided modest but meaningful financial incentives and secured resources to broaden teachers' professional and personal growth. Teachers also had opportunities to engage with specialists and receive high-quality training in cultural and educational institutions.

As a result of these sustained and purposeful efforts, both schools have become successful and highly popular.

Overall, participation in the Developing Environment Programme helps schools sustain a culture of collaboration, foster mutual respect and psychological safety, and promote teachers' initiative, engagement, and commitment to professional growth. Teachers who feel part of a professional community are more involved in their work and less susceptible to burnout. Research supports these effects: after a year in the programme, teachers' social well-being improves, reflected in a more positive attitude toward others and a stronger sense of belonging to the community (Агапова, 2023; Коваль и др., 2024). As a result, this systematic approach enhances the well-being of everyone involved – leaders, teachers, students, and parents (Коваль и др., 2024).

The models, factors, and support practices presented here demonstrate the complex and multifaceted nature of teacher well-being, a complexity that must be considered when drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

Conclusion

Every school is a unique ecosystem, and every teacher is a unique individual. Therefore, when addressing teachers' personal and professional development and well-being, it is essential to choose programmes and implementation strategies that are tailored to the specific needs of the educational institution and its staff.

A teacher's ongoing learning and personality development are particularly important, as they are valuable in themselves and also contribute to overall well-being. Teacher well-being depends not only on available resources but also on the ability to utilise them, which is linked to personal qualities and potential. Reflexivity, therefore, is a key aspect of a teacher's personality potential and maturity, as well as their broader cultural and pedagogical competence, helping them shape an individualised path for maintaining well-being and growth. Self-efficacy – another aspect of personality potential – along with a high level of collective teacher efficacy, has a significant impact on learners.

Individual and collective efficacy, along with teacher well-being, can be facilitated by a supportive school environment. One key factor is leadership that prioritises teacher well-being and actively involves teachers in decision-making. Additionally, specialised programmes and practices can positively influence both individual and collective well-being.

Key messages

- Across countries and levels of schooling, teachers experience higher levels of stress, depression, anxiety, and poorer physical and mental health compared with professionals in other fields. At the same time, teachers' personal and professional development, along with their well-being, are among the most important factors influencing the educational process.

- Children's well-being and academic performance largely depend on the well-being and personality development of their teachers. In turn, teacher well-being is influenced by both personal and school-related factors, all of which should be a central focus for education systems and school leadership.

- Relationships and social support are among the most important factors influencing occupational well-being and job satisfaction. Professional learning communities can address these factors, provided that teachers actively engage in collaborative activities.

- Leaders play a crucial role in fostering a positive environment for teacher well-being by involving them in collective decision-making and considering their perspectives on a wide range of school management issues.

- Practices and interventions designed to improve teacher performance should be viewed through the lens of supporting teacher well-being. Each initiative should support self-efficacy and create opportunities for teachers' self-actualisation and professional growth.

- Educational institutions influence the well-being and performance of teachers and staff, which in turn affects the overall effectiveness of the institution.

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Brief 2

This brief explores personal and school-related factors that affect teachers' well-being and job satisfaction and recommends diagnostic tools and support practices. It was prepared as part of international initiative *Empowering through Education for Health and Well-being in a Learning Environment That Fosters Personality Development*, which aims to advance teachers' professional development. The initiative is implemented jointly by UNESCO IITE and the Investment in the Future Charitable Foundation.