



Factors that Promote Teacher Well-being in the Physical Environment: The Context of a Rural High School

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Abstract

Although factors that affect teacher well-being are better understood, there is a lack of clarity on factors that bolster teacher well-being in rural schools. This study illustrates the factors that promote teacher well-being in a physical environment in a rural school in Limpopo province in South Africa. This research employed participatory action research within the emancipatory paradigm. Ten participants from a rural school in Limpopo gathered data by means of photovoice using cameras, focus groups, observations, and individual interviews. We report on the first four of the six phases of participatory action research. Thematic analysis surfaced three main themes: safety; a conducive office environment with ergonomic office furniture, resources, and thermal comfort; and environmental aesthetics, and water availability. The factors that promote teacher well-being are based on the participants' affections, attitudes, and evaluations of their school's physical environment. These findings add empirical knowledge to the understanding of the factors that promote teacher well-being in a rural school context.

Keywords: *Teacher Well-Being; Rural School; Safety and Well-Being; Environmental Aesthetics; Office Environment*

Introduction

Most of the studies consulted investigated the well-being of teachers focusing on different dimensions of teacher well-being (Kruger, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016; Price & McCallum, 2015; Soini, Pyhältö & Pietarinen, 2010). Moreover, the literature consulted on teacher well-being mainly derives from well-developed countries and this leads to a lack of insight on how issues of teacher well-being can be addressed in the context of rural schools in developing countries like South Africa. The studies of Du Plessis and Meistry (2019), Mtsi and Maphosa (2016) and Masinire (2015) add constraining factors such as high learner drop-out rate, poor parental involvement, poor physical facilities particularly in rural schools, lack of promotional opportunities, work overload, limited

job resources, understaffing, poor learner discipline, unfavourable working conditions, leadership and leadership styles of school principals, as well as various changes taking place within the education context. The research is divided on how to deal with the factors highlighted above to enhance teacher well-being. Some interventions focus on social capital which is about expectations and interactions that promote trust, respect, value and collaboration (Roffey, 2012) while others emphasize equipping teachers with skills such as problem-solving, self-care, maintaining a work-life balance (Mansfield, Beltman, Weatherby-Fell & Broadley, 2016). This study aligns with interventions used by Wessels and Wood (2019) that involve engaging teachers in collaborative processes that enable them to learn how to improve and sustain their well-being. This research contributes to research on teacher well-being by adding another dimension, that of school physical environments. Specifically, this study identified aspects of the schools' physical environment that can be improved to enhance the teachers' well-being. There is a scarcity of research on factors that promote teacher well-being in rural schools in South Africa.

Additionally, school contexts differ, and rural schools have naturally some distinctive characteristics. Therefore, factors promoting teacher well-being in schools in rural communities might slightly differ from those in townships and urban areas. Research on teacher well-being and quantitative measures that are used in most studies on this aspect are likely to exclude factors that promote teacher well-being that are unique to teachers in rural school environments. Rural schools face severe challenges unique to their environment including lack of water, sanitation, or electricity, and classrooms are in a terrible state (Du Plessis & Meistry, 2019), and burnout has been highlighted as a challenge in attracting and retaining teachers (Handal et al., 2013). It is in these resource-deprived, high-need environments that teachers in rural schools are expected to flourish. They are expected to create safe, inclusive classrooms that promote the cognitive growth and well-being of their learners (Burns & Lawrie, 2015). These issues have negative implications for teacher well-being. Identification of factors influencing teacher well-being might enable those that are responsible for education in rural schools to undertake actions accordingly to enhance teacher well-being.

Teacher well-being in this study is referred to as a state in which a teacher is in harmony with the various aspects of the school environment. Well-being is affected by factors in the school environment, in that some are perceived as promoting it and others constraining it. In this research, factors that were perceived to promote teacher well-being were those that teachers were satisfied with. These factors were based on the evaluation of the school's physical environment based on their perception of being good in promoting both physical and mental well-being. In that case, teacher well-being is a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, physical, and cognitive well-being. The school environment is "an embracing concept that includes physical facilities, the attractive landscape of the school premises as well as the culture and psychosocial climate of the school" (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015:3). Although the school environment is mainly concerned with the school buildings, school surroundings, resources as well as other physical facilities are also included. In this study, the term school environment refers to the physical infrastructure such as buildings, school grounds including the landscape, water and sanitation, and psychosocial environment. This study aims to respond to the question: what factors promote teacher well-being in the school's physical environment?

Research Method

The emancipatory paradigm which focuses on changing the system in which the researchers find themselves (Denscombe, 2003) was used. The paradigm aims to increase "awareness of contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings", to direct "attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes" (Lather, 1986:259) as well as to empower the subjects of the research (Noel, 2016). In line with this paradigm, a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, with such principles as participation, openness, empowerment, accountability,

and reciprocity, was used. At the end of the study, the participants were aware of the conditions of their school environments that affect their well-being. They were involved in the processes of transforming these environments. This study was qualitative, following a naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in natural settings.

Two members of the SMT (principal and the departmental head), two educators who were members of the school health committee, three educators whose subjects registered high learner enrolments, two members of the SGB who represented the parent component as well as one district official who was working in the wellness section participated in the study. In summary, the total number of participants was ten.

The study was conducted in six phases. The first encompassed data collection using cameras. The second included a focus group interview where participants shared their views about the photos, they had taken in the school environment. In the third phase, an individual interview was conducted with the principal of the case study school to obtain data about his role in promoting healthy school environments that enhance the well-being of educators. The fourth involved data analysis and discussing themes from the data collected. These themes informed the actions, action plans, and interventions to bring about change. The fifth comprised the research team engaging in the implementation of the change intervention, while the sixth was concerned with the evaluation of change interventions to determine the success and failure of the intervention implementation. All participants participated in data collection, discussions, implementation, and evaluation of strategies as this is a norm in PAR. This research reports on the first four phases of this study.

Data collected through photovoice, focus group interviews, observations, and individual interviews were transcribed after each data set was collected. Thematic data analysis was used to analyse data in this study. Thematic data analysis was suitable for generating themes using broken bits of collected data and summarising key features of large data sets. Trustworthiness was ensured using member checking where the results were returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences. Where discrepancies were detected, the necessary corrections were done to ensure that the information provided by the participants was not distorted in any way. Data from the four strata indicated above was triangulated.

Research Results

Three themes emerged from the data. The first pertained to safety, and the second had to do with an office environment and the third was about the schoolyard environment. The question that guided data collection on these factors was: what factors promote the well-being of teachers in the physical environment of your school? The participants gathered this data using photovoice and focus group discussions. Each of these factors is discussed hereunder exposing their effects on the well-being of teachers.

Safety and Security

Participants preferred to be in a safe and secure working environment. The study found that a safe and secure environment promotes educators' physical and emotional well-being.

“A safe school is like a haven. You are relaxed, not worried about anything else except learners and what you have to teach”; “a safe school affords peace of mind, something that boosts both health and well-being”.

The statements expressed by the participants about the availability of the palisade fence specify that they were pleased with the safety of educators at the school. Musu-Gillette, Zhan, Wang, Zhang, and Oudekerk (2017) indicate that poor school security caused by broken fence structures allows gangs access into and out of the school. In support of the above, Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014) point out that through these openings gangs can enter the school and sell drugs and commit other criminal activities. From the participant's utterances, it can be concluded that teachers cannot have enhanced well-being in an environment that is unsafe for them and learners. Kwatubana and Nhlapo (2020) espouse that school safety influences an individual's well-being, health, and productivity. This implies that the well-being of teachers flourishes in a conducive working environment characterized by the absence of crime and violence (Kapur, 2018).

The safety features that promote teachers' well-being were palisade fencing, burglar proofing, and access control. The participants exposed that good and well-maintained palisade fencing guarantees the safety of both learners and teachers, thereby safeguarding both physical and emotional well-being. It also protects the school properties from theft and acts of vandalism and teachers from victimization.

“The school removed the old wire fence that initially surrounded it and replaced it with palisade fencing. This makes it difficult for intruders and thieves to invade the school. The palisade fence is an advantage as it guarantees the safety of school property as well as that of the educators and learners”.

Having palisade fencing provide feelings of being safe from being physically attacked, threatened, or having their personal belongings forcefully taken from them. Poor safety and security in the school contravene the rights of learners and educators enshrined in Chapter 2, section 24(a) of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa which states that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing. May (2014) maintains that poor security fencing in schools threatens the safety of educators and learners as unsafe and insecure school environments make schools prone to violence and criminal activities. Moreover, studies by Kapur (2018) and Grobler (2018) show that poor security subjects staff members to criminal acts such as physical and verbal abuse which may lead to reduced physical and emotional well-being. Grobler (2018) adds that schools with poor security are easy sites of school violence.

The second safety feature identified as having a positive impact on teacher well-being is burglar-proofing. The empirical study revealed that burglar proofs were installed on the doors and windows of the major school buildings such as the staffrooms, administrative offices, and computer and science laboratories.

“The computer centre is secured as there are burglar proofs on the doors and windows. This prevents thieves from accessing the computer centre. The availability of burglar proofs on the doors and windows of the staffrooms is an advantage because at times educators mistakenly forget to close the windows when they knock off. Consequently, burglar-proofing deters thieves from entering the staffroom and accessing valuable belongings that are left in. Burglar proofs on the windows and doors of the staffrooms provide a safe environment for educators as they can lock themselves in when learners protest or threaten their safety”.

This safety feature was identified as effective in deterring thieves and vandals from accessing the school buildings due to their visibility. Burglar-proofing protects teaching equipment, teachers, and their belongings. Several studies concur with the results of this study about the importance of burglar-proofing in preventing burglaries. For example, a study by Pease and Gill (2011) showed that schools without burglar-proofing had 75% more chances of being burglarized than those installed with burglar proofs. Furthermore, burglar-proofed buildings result in higher failed burglaries. Similarly, Tseloni, Thompson,

Grove, Tilley and Farrell (2017) accentuate that schools without proper fencing and burglar-proofing make it easy for thieves to break in and steal and vandalize school properties.

The third feature indicated as having a positive effect on educator well-being is access control. How people enter or leave the school premises must be monitored; otherwise, it would pose safety and security risks to the lives of educators and learners.

“All parents, visitors, and departmental officials are to access the school through the gate manned by the security officer. The visitors have to register their names, identity numbers as well as contact numbers in the access control book.; the guardroom nearby the school gate makes it easy for the security personnel to see everything that is happening at the gate. It also has signages that caution visitors, learners, and educators of prohibited things at the school”.

The access control at the gate that regulates the movement of people in and out of the school premises is regarded as having a positive impact on educator well-being. The availability of access control at the gate can create a sense of being safe for teachers as they perceive their safety as guaranteed. Recording the particulars of the visitors in the access control book helps curb criminal activities by outsiders inside the schoolyard. It also assists in tracking visitors who might have committed criminal acts at a particular time at the school. Furthermore, the signages with warnings and prohibited objects raise awareness of those not allowed at the school. This may lead them to experience a high sense of security. The Department of Basic Education in South Africa emphasises the importance of access control at the gate and the signing of visitors' registers (The National School Safety Framework, 2015). In summary, the study found that safety and security play an important role in supporting the well-being of educators as they prefer to work in a safe and secure workplace environment. For that reason, one can conclude that safety and security are prerequisites for teachers to experience a sense of positive well-being.

An Office Environment with Ergonomic Furniture, Resources, and Thermal Comfort

This theme focuses on the findings on perceptions of the office environment and well-being. The study revealed three aspects of the office environment that were professed as having a positive impact on teacher well-being, namely, comfortable office furniture, availability of office resources, and office thermal comfort. The study revealed that the offices of the principal and the deputy principal were conducive to work. These offices were characterized by high-quality furniture with good ergonomic comfort and beautiful chairs with comfortable back support.

“Although the offices were initially designed for classrooms, they have been partitioned so that they look more attractive. The offices have beautiful chairs with comfortable back support. This enables the principal and the deputy to work more effectively without getting tired. The offices have big executive tables that provide large surface areas for the principal and the deputy principal to work on”.

The type of furniture indicated here may reduce the risk of aggravating health-related problems such as chronic back pains which harms the functional comfort of teachers leading to low levels of physical well-being. The large executive tables in the offices of the principal and the deputy principal provided a large surface area for a comfortable work area. A literature study by Terek, Sajfert, Zoric, and Isakov (2014) on the impact of ergonomic comfort of furniture of staff members in the workplace reveals that the well-being of staff members flourishes when the working environments have ergonomically comfortable furniture. This could mean that office furniture with poor ergonomic comfort may constrain the well-being of educators leading to a reduced level of physical well-being.

The participants revealed that installing air conditioners in the offices of the principal and the deputy enabled them to regulate the office temperature to the required level. The following statements provide evidence.

“The principal and the deputy principal’s offices have air conditioners which help to regulate the temperature conditions of the offices and make them comfortable to work in. All the staffrooms have been installed with air conditioners that provide favourable environments for teachers to work in as they refresh them when it is very hot”.

Air conditioners in the offices of the principal and the deputy seemed to have provided physical comfort associated with good health. Constant and favourable air temperature has health benefits. This could lead to more productivity as too high or too low temperature could affect concentration span, productivity, and physical well-being. Similarly, Bluysen (2015) supports that optimal thermal comfort promotes job satisfaction, work engagement, and job performance in education.

The availability of office resources was considered an important factor in boosting well-being. Resources are materials that individuals perceive as assistance to them in achieving their goals. The study revealed that there were adequate office resources in the administrative offices.

“The administrator’s office has a photocopier, printer, and a RISO machine. Teachers have access to these machines, which makes their job easier as documents can be printed, duplicated, and distributed to learners or shared with fellow colleagues. Teachers become stressed when the machines are not working as this affects their work”.

The availability of office resources was perceived as having a positive impact on the physical well-being of educators. Having these resources at their disposal may have enabled teachers to perform their duties easily as typed documents could be printed, duplicated, and shared with learners and colleagues. Several studies confirm that the availability of workplace resources supports the well-being of educators. For example, a study by Ohide and Mbogo (2017) in South Sudan with a sample of 10 school principals and 100 educators in 10 private primary schools found that poor workplace resources are associated with a reduced level of well-being and poor learner achievement. Similar findings were reported by Nielsen, Nielsen, Ogbonnaya, Käsälä, Saari, and Isaksson (2017) in their study on workplace resources to improve employee well-being and performance. The study reported that workplace resources have motivational importance on individuals and can potentially increase educators' well-being. Through intrinsic motivation, the resources may fulfill the basic needs of individuals such as the need for competency, autonomy, and relatedness. Furthermore, through intrinsic motivation, workplace resources may enable individuals to attain their work goals leading to better performance and enhanced well-being. Furthermore, a study by Geiger and Pivovarova (2016) with Arizona public school educators found that educators in schools with good working environments that are well-resourced are more likely to experience a high level of physical well-being than the ones working in difficult working environments.

Beautiful Schoolyard Environment and Availability of Running Water

The study revealed two facets of the school environment that were perceived as having a positive impact on the well-being of teachers, namely, attractive surroundings and water availability. Water was identified as a factor that has a positive impact on the well-being of educators. The study revealed an adequate supply of groundwater at the school.

“The school has a borehole as its water source since there is no running water from the municipality; there are two water tanks to ensure that there is adequate water supply. The water is used for watering the vegetable garden, sanitation, and cleaning purposes; the educators’ toilet uses

underground water for flushing. The water tank next to the toilet is used to store water so that the water is always available for sanitation use”.

The water supply was used to irrigate the school’s vegetable garden and for domestic and sanitation purposes. The school did not have a water shortage for drinking, hand washing, and cooking. This can be applauded as many schools in rural areas have a water shortage. Limpopo province is recognised as one of the water-stressed South African provinces. Access to safe drinking water sources, appropriate sanitation facilities, and good hygiene are fundamental to the health and survival of the people (Murei et al. 2022). This is consistent with the study by Komarulzaman, de Jong, and Smit (2019) on the effect of water on absenteeism in schools in Indonesia. Using good quality water may reduce educators' absence from school because of diseases related to poor water quality. However, as much as groundwater is considered a better alternative source of drinking water than surface water, its quality is not always up to the standard. Learners and educators may be absent from school because of the effects of diarrhoea caused by unsafe water. Numerous studies accentuated the importance of good-quality water. For example, Morgan, Bowling, Bartram, and Lyn (2017) contend that schools should have an adequate supply of safe drinking water to ensure that the general cleanliness of the school environment is maintained, and the physiological needs of educators are met. Similarly, WHO (2019) highlights that in most rural schools there is a lack of purified drinking water and handwashing facilities, and this has a negative effect on the health of teachers and learners.

The general outlook of the schoolyard was perceived as playing an important role in the well-being of teachers. The parts of the schoolyard with lawn and flower beds were appreciated by the participants and regarded as creating an attractive environment that improves the quality of their lives.

The school entrance is so invitational and attractive because of the flowers grown on either side of the gate. There is a water tank next to the school entrance that stores water for watering the flowers and a school vegetable garden. There is a lawn grown in front of the staffrooms and administrative office; there is a rockery surrounded by the lawn on which flowers are to be grown to make the landscaping of the school look more attractive”.

The findings of the study correspond with other studies that found that an attractive landscape supports the well-being of educators. Participants were pleased with the landscape condition of the school which was covered with lawns and had flowerbeds. Participants implied that the attractive landscapes of the school provided healthy school environments that increased the well-being levels of teachers. Bryant (2014) shares the same sentiments that looking at the school landscape with trees and plants through the window contributes to an improved quality of life as it lowers the blood level and reduces the effects of stress. The landscape covered by lawn absorbs carbon dioxide and breaks it into carbon and oxygen making oxygen readily available for respiration. Moreover, a landscape with lawns and trees reduces temperature level by 20 to 30 percent compared to asphalt or pavement surface (Bryant, 2014). This is important in Limpopo a province where temperatures can be higher than 45 degrees during the summer months. Similarly, Bryant (2014) accentuates that a landscape with trees and plants contributes to an improved quality of life as it lowers the blood pressure level and reduces the effects of stress.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the school’s physical environment to which teachers are exposed plays an important role in their well-being. Teacher well-being is essential to fulfill their role of teaching, supporting, and producing good results. It can be argued that factors that promote teacher well-being are context specific. This research was conducted in a rural high school with contextual factors specific to that environment. The school's physical environment speaks to the contribution that safe, clean, and comfortable surroundings make to a conducive setting where teacher well-being can thrive.

The factors that promote teacher well-being are based on the participants' affections, attitudes, and evaluations of their school's physical environment. The findings highlight the importance of safety measures and plans; a conducive office environment with ergonomic office furniture, resources, and thermal comfort; environmental aesthetics, and water availability. The findings also focus on the importance of a conducive work environment in rural schools. This finding is supported by Kruger (2019) who maintains that among others, workplace well-being encompasses all aspects of working life and working conditions including workspace design, comfort, safety, ergonomics, equipment, and resources.

The availability of safety features and measures such as palisade fencing, burglar proofing, and access control was perceived to promote physical safety and that of their belongings. When such measures and plans are in place increased feelings of safety are experienced in this school. It seems that these safety measures were adequate to create feelings of safety. In other contexts, such as in township schools, higher security measures have long been used including surveillance cameras and armed responses. School safety can be regarded as one of the resources that can stimulate teacher well-being at work. It is only the study conducted by Naegeli Costa, Park, and Kira (2021) that points to the importance of security as an aspect of physical resource needs for teacher well-being. To our knowledge, there is no study that mentions safety as a factor that promotes teacher well-being in a rural school. Feelings of not being safe can trigger anxiety which harms the emotional well-being of educators.

The finding on the physical space indicated a need for comfort and an office environment conducive to working. The physical space includes ergonomic furniture, resources, and thermal comfort. The finding highlights the importance of quality spaces for physical comfort. This means that an office environment can challenge or support teacher well-being. In the office environment, ergonomic furniture was regarded as having a positive impact on well-being. Chairs that can prevent strain in the spine can be beneficial in preventing spinal pain. Repetitive strain disorders account for about one-third of the related injuries which lead to absenteeism in the workplace (Whysall, Haslam & Haslam, 2006). The findings of a study by Van Niekerk, Louw and Hillier (2012) support the role of a chair intervention in reducing musculoskeletal symptoms among workers who are required to sit for prolonged periods. In addition, in a study by Hoeben and Louw (2014) the introduction of an ergonomic chair showed a reduction in the frequency of pain and muscle spasms, as well as a reduction in the variance of the symptoms. There are no studies that indicate that having ergonomic furniture promotes teacher well-being.

This study confirms the importance of the availability of office resources such as photocopiers, printers and RISO machines. Thus, the availability of these resources assists in achieving high-quality professional performance and maintaining their own well-being. On the contrary, a shortage of resources or not being in working conditions can harm teacher well-being. Research on rural schools in South Africa attests to the shortage of resources. Not having resources can add to teacher stress, while having access to these resources is associated with a high level of physical well-being. A study by Geiger and Pivovarov (2018) with Arizona public school teachers supports the hypothesis of working conditions being a mediating factor in the interplay between school demographics and teacher attrition. This could mean that providing rural schools with functional office resources might curb teacher attrition, which is a concern in rural schools in South Africa. The outcome of this study is corroborated by that of Barbieri, Sulis, Porcu and Toland (2019) that found that the teachers' perception of a poor working environment, in terms of a shortage of resources and teaching staff, harms both physical and psychological dimensions of teachers' well-being. Participants expressed satisfaction with a thermal environment (offices) supported by air conditioners. The concern for the participants was the high temperatures experienced in the province. Offices can be thermally uncomfortable when it is too hot or too cold. This can lead to physical stress responsible for illnesses and poor performance. Working in too high or very low temperature creates health-related problems associated with decreased job performance and decreased and physical well-being (Lan, Lian & Pan, 2010). Thus, thermal comfort is associated with physical well-being. Sadick and Issa (2017) attest that the physical comfort of a workplace plays a salient role in enhancing the

physical well-being of teachers. However, no studies supported the finding that air conditioners may enhance well-being.

The last finding pertained to environmental aesthetics and the availability of water. The general outlook of the schoolyard was perceived as playing an important role in teacher well-being. The landscape, the big schoolyard with lawn and flower beds were appreciated by the participants and regarded as creating an attractive environment that improves the quality of their lives. Green spaces have always been regarded as important for stress relief and other health benefits. It can be applauded that participants were mindful of the effect of the green spaces in the school surroundings on their health and well-being. According to Nisbet, Zelenski and Murphy (2011), people connected to nature tend to have greater eudaimonic well-being (meaningful, purposeful, and satisfying). The study's findings correspond with other studies that found that an attractive landscape supports well-being. In their study, Bell and Dymont (2008), Zhang, Mavoa, Zhao, Raphael and Smith (2020) highlight the growing body of evidence that green school grounds, as a school setting, can contribute to children's and adolescents' physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. Although these studies substantiate the positive effect that environmental aesthetics has on the physical well-being of learners, no studies could be found that support the finding on the impact on teacher well-being. Availability of water was identified as a factor that has a positive impact on the well-being of teachers. The study revealed that there was an adequate supply of groundwater at the school. The water supply was used for irrigation of the school's vegetable garden, domestic use, and sanitation purposes. Although the school used a pit toilet system for teachers and learners, water is needed for handwashing. This is one of the fortunate schools as the water shortage in rural schools is highlighted in many studies in South Africa. This situation is the same in many rural schools in Africa. Morgan, Bowling, Bartram, and Kayser (2020) found 1% of rural schools in Ethiopia and Mozambique to 23% of rural schools in Rwanda had improved water sources on their premises. However, numerous studies accentuated the importance of good-quality water. Schools should have an adequate supply of safe drinking water to ensure that the general cleanliness of the school environment is maintained, and the physiological needs of the school community are met. Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, as well as promoting good hygiene, are key components in the prevention of communicable diseases and diarrhoea. Although this study is consistent with most of the studies supporting the importance of safe drinking water for hygiene, no studies were found supporting the finding on the importance of availability of water for teacher well-being.

Conclusion

This research contributes to the literature on teacher well-being by highlighting factors that have the potential to strengthen teacher well-being in rural schools. Teacher well-being is bolstered when teachers have access to resources that can help them to cope and flourish. The findings of this study provide important insights into what factors such as safety measures and plans; a conducive office environment with ergonomic office furniture, resources, thermal comfort; environmental aesthetics, and water availability mean to teachers in a rural high school concerning their well-being. To them, the notion of well-being is not complete without these factors. This means that teacher well-being can be supported by improving the quality of the physical environment to help them to maintain positive well-being.

Overall, the findings of this study have implications for interventions that will improve the well-being of teachers in rural schools. There is unique data coming from this study. There is a paucity of literature on factors such as safety, ergonomic furniture, air conditioners, environmental aesthetics and water availability as resources for teacher well-being. There is a need for more studies on these factors as it is not clear at this point whether they are unique to schools in rural environments.

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