

## Determinants of Early Childhood Teachers' Subjective Well-being in Indonesian Archipelagic Regions: A Demographic and Social Factors Analysis

**Dony Darma Sagita<sup>1</sup>✉, Sari Wardani Simarmata<sup>2</sup>, Uliya Khoirun Nisa<sup>3</sup>, Luis Santos<sup>4</sup>**

Program Studi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia<sup>1,2</sup>

Program Studi Guru Sekolah Dasar, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia<sup>3</sup>

University of the Philippines Diliman, Philippines<sup>4</sup>

email: [donyds@ecampus.ut.ac.id](mailto:donyds@ecampus.ut.ac.id)

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### Article info

### Abstract

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Corresponding author

*This study aims to analyze demographic and social factors that influence Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) of PAUD teachers in the archipelago. The research method uses a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, the research sample is 223 teachers. The sampling technique uses convenience sampling. The instrument used is the Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ). The results showed that all demographic variables, namely age, gender, education level, and teaching experience, have a positive and significant relationship to SWB, with education level being the strongest predictor among demographic factors ( $r = 0.352^{**}$ ). Meanwhile, in social factors, the principal's leadership showed the highest correlation ( $r = 0.441^{**}$ ) to SWB, followed by co-worker support, community involvement, and relationships with students' parents. These findings indicate that teacher SWB is not only influenced by individual characteristics, but also by the quality of social interactions in the work environment and community. This study recommends the importance of strategies to improve teacher SWB through strengthening professional capacity and a supportive work environment.*

**Keywords:** Subjective Wellbeing, Early Childhood Education Teachers, Factor Analysis

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor demografi dan sosial yang mempengaruhi Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) guru PAUD di wilayah kepulauan. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain cross-sectional, sampel penelitian berjumlah 223 guru. Teknik penarikan sampel menggunakan convinience sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa seluruh variabel demografi yaitu usia, jenis kelamin, tingkat pendidikan, dan pengalaman mengajar, memiliki hubungan positif dan signifikan terhadap SWB, dengan tingkat pendidikan menjadi prediktor terkuat di antara faktor demografi ( $r = 0.352^{**}$ ). Sementara itu, pada faktor sosial, kepemimpinan kepala sekolah menunjukkan korelasi paling tinggi ( $r = 0.441^{**}$ ) terhadap SWB, diikuti oleh dukungan rekan kerja, keterlibatan masyarakat, dan hubungan dengan orang tua siswa. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa guru SWB tidak hanya dipengaruhi oleh karakteristik individu, tetapi juga oleh kualitas interaksi sosial di lingkungan kerja dan masyarakat. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pentingnya strategi peningkatan SWB guru melalui penguatan kapasitas profesional dan lingkungan kerja yang mendukung.

**Kata Kunci:** Subjective Wellbeing, Guru PAUD, Faktor Analisis

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## INTRODUCTION

Children's education at an early age is an important basis and foundation in preparing a better and qualified future generation (Imara et al., 2024; Saputra, 2018; Wulandari et al., 2024; Yuningsih et al., 2024). Therefore, it requires the participation of teachers and parents in fulfilling children's developmental tasks at this time. At home, children are fully responsible for getting children's needs and learning. Meanwhile, in PAUD schools or kindergartens (TK), teachers become the main and first pillar in directing and creating optimal fulfilment of child development tasks (Desmita et al., 2023; Karuru et al., 2024; Salum et al., 2024). This condition is in accordance with Permendikbud No. 146 of 2014 which emphasises a holistic-integrative approach to the aspects of fulfilling children's developmental tasks (religious and moral values, motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art) (Fadlillah, 2016; Innes et al., 2023; Marlisa, 2019). This condition is a challenge for PAUD teachers to create innovative, creative and fun learning so that teachers are able to direct the fulfilment of these children's developmental tasks ideally.

Geographically, Indonesia is an archipelago that is expected to be able to provide equitable education for all lines in Indonesia. This geographical condition provides its own challenges for the implementation of early childhood learning in kindergarten or in Indonesia called PAUD, especially for teachers who devote themselves to the idea of 3T areas and islands far from the city centre ((Djunarsjah & Putra, 2021; Rahmatunnisa et al., 2018)). These conditions not only affect students, but also teachers who can affect their subjective well-being (SWB). Subjective Well-being (SWB) is an emotional reaction that refers to the condition of human cognitive and affective evaluations about his life, how satisfied he is with himself, his current condition, satisfaction with his profession and the fulfilment of his ideal life (Diener, Lucas, et al., 2018; Diener, Oishi, et al., 2018).

Teachers' SWB must be improved so that the process of achieving educational goals can be carried out properly. However, various factors such as socio-demographic conditions (age, marital status, and length of work experience can affect teachers' SWB (Azizan & Mahmud, 2018; Román et al., 2017). In addition, social factors such as social support, interpersonal relationships in the work environment, and attachment to the local community have also been shown to be important determinants in shaping teachers' psychological well-being (Damayanti & Purwantini, 2025; Konu et al., 2002). In the context of implementing education, the issue of teacher welfare becomes increasingly complex due to geographical challenges, limited access, and workloads that are not always balanced with compensation (Indrahadi et al., 2020).

Various studies related to SWB have long been conducted in Indonesia, but the tendency of findings only talks about urban areas and areas that are easily accessible to researchers. Wahyudin's research results found that most honorary elementary school teachers in Bandung City had a high level of SWB in 2021 (Wahyudin, 2011), Dwi Pratiwi Suherman's research findings (2024) showed that the average subjective well-being of honorary teachers at SMKN 8 Garut was quite high and various other findings about teacher SWB in urban areas and easy access (Dwi Pratiwi Suherman, 2024).

PAUD teachers should have complete learning facilities, ongoing professional support, and guaranteed welfare. However, the reality shows that 37% of PAUD teachers in the archipelago still teach without adequate basic facilities; 43% cannot access ongoing professional development; and 56% cannot find a way to go to training centers (Darwis et al., 2021). Data from the Ministry of Education shows that the teacher-student ratio in the archipelago is 1:25, far above the ideal standard of 1:15. In addition, 64% of PAUD institutions in the region do not have play facilities that meet safety standards and encourage child development. Challenging geographical conditions also cause 72% of PAUD teachers in the archipelago to have to travel more than an hour to reach their teaching location, with 23% of them even having to cross the ocean with transportation that is not always available regularly (Maulana et al., 2022).

However, there has been no research that directs the conditions of teachers in remote areas and island areas that are far from big cities and adequate facilities. Where in these areas teachers must challenge regional conditions that tend to be extreme, limited accessibility, unique demographic and social factors. This condition must be resolved immediately, because Early Childhood Teachers' in the isolated areas, especially island areas, must be able to adjust their skills and professionalism as teachers with teachers in urban areas (Gunadi et al., 2022; Maricuțoiu et al., 2023; Nurichsania & Rachmajanti, 2018). They realize that the differences and challenges they face are different from teachers in other areas, such as limited learning support infrastructure, inadequate Educational Teaching Aids (APE), limited access to information, and the socio-economic conditions of the local community which are still weak and the level of concern for education is still lacking (Rahmawati et al., 2022).

Previous studies on the subjective health of ECE teachers have shown some unresolved issues. A study conducted by Wu et al. (2019) in an agricultural area found that teachers in remote areas experienced higher levels of stress and lower levels of life satisfaction. However, these studies have not examined how the island context, with its different geographical and accessibility difficulties, impacts the dynamics of teacher well-being. Research by Hasanah and Supardi (2020) and Mulyati and Prihatin (2021) looked at the subjective health of ECE teachers in Indonesia. However, both studies concentrated on urban areas and areas with easy access, so they are less representative of the reality of teachers in island areas who face many problems. Widyastuti and Munandar (2020) found a correlation between teachers' personal health and teaching achievement, but they did not discuss how demographic and social factors typical of the islands affect teachers' personal health. In addition, research by Supriyanto and Handayani (2022) emphasized the importance of considering the psychological needs of ECE teachers in remote areas. However, they have not analyzed specific predictor factors in the context of island geography with unique socio-economic conditions, limited infrastructure, and access to information.

Every teacher in Indonesia is guaranteed welfare by the government in accordance with applicable laws, both moral and material welfare so that it will have an impact on their appearance and performance in carrying out learning (Tanjung, 2013; Veirissa, 2021). Early Childhood Teachers' who have high SWB show better teaching performance and are creative in developing learning methods for their students and vice versa (Kumar, 2022; Maricuțoiu et

al., 2023). Then the findings of Prasetyo, et al. (2019) explained that there was a positive and significant correlation between the level of teacher SWB and the level of activity, participation and cognitive development of children (Hasyah, 2021). However, characteristics like this are rarely found in teachers in island areas or 3T areas in Indonesia. Findings in China revealed that these geographical conditions and accessibility have an impact on teacher SWB (Jiang & Yip, 2024). Teachers who carry out their profession as teachers in 3T areas or areas far from urban centers. Where Jiang explained that the stress level of teachers from these areas tends to be higher and their life satisfaction is low. This reality is also likely to occur in Early Childhood Teachers' in areas in Indonesia, especially in areas with similar conditions, especially since Indonesia has a diverse socio-cultural context (Indrahadi et al., 2020; Konu et al., 2002).

In island areas such as Mentawai Islands Regency or Nias have characteristics that distinguish them from mainland areas, such as access to basic services, fewer social networks, and isolation, which have an impact on the psychology of academics in the realm of education or schools (Vito et al., 2016). Early Childhood Teachers' in this area are often faced with multidimensional problems, such as lack of educational facilities, lack of incentives, limited teaching aids, and little professional training. These challenges cause low job satisfaction and affect their SWB (Mujib et al., 2022; Nurichsania & Rachmajanti, 2018). The decline in the quality of teacher SWB has a negative impact on the effectiveness of learning, work motivation, and the quality of early childhood learning and care (Collie et al., 2018). Therefore, the design of policy interventions, training, and programs to improve teacher welfare contextually needs to be provided for teachers in island areas.

This study examines the components of demographic and social conditions that influence the SWB of PAUD teachers in the Indonesian archipelago. The condition of teacher SWB can be influenced by demographic conditions, such as age, gender, marital status, education level, and teaching experience (Diener, Oishi, et al., 2018; Diener & Scollon, 2014). However, social factors such as principal leadership, community involvement, relationships with students' parents, and support from colleagues also influence teacher SWB in implementing learning in schools (Collie et al., 2018; Dicke et al., 2020). Therefore, special attention is needed to fulfill the psychological needs of Early Childhood Teachers' in the archipelago and 3T areas. PAUD teachers need to develop their professional skills and improve their pedagogical competence. By understanding the demographic and social components that influence the subjective well-being of PAUD teachers in the archipelago, it is hoped that a comprehensive approach can be developed to improve the quality of life of teachers as well as the quality of early childhood education in the region. In addition, this study can also be a basis for further research on the relationship between teacher subjective well-being and early childhood education outcomes in areas with special characteristics

## **METHODS**

This study used a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design to simultaneously examine the relationship between various demographic and social factors on the subjective well-being of PAUD teachers at a certain point in time, which allows for

efficient data collection from a population spread across an archipelago with limited accessibility. The study sample consisted of 223 PAUD teachers working in the Mentawai Islands, Nias, Natuna, and several other Indonesian archipelago areas, selected using a convenience sampling technique considering the proportion of demographic characteristics and geographic location. Data collection was carried out through a bold distribution instrument using Google Form distributed through the network of the Indonesian Kindergarten Teachers Association (IGTKI) at the provincial level to maximize the reach of respondents in the archipelago that is difficult to access directly.

The research instrument used the Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ) developed by Renshaw et al. (2015) and has been through the process of adaptation into Indonesian with construct validity tested through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) resulting in adequate model fit indices ( $CFI = 0.92$ ,  $TLI = 0.90$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.058$ ) and good reliability ( $\alpha$  Cronbach 0.89). Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26.0 with a series of statistical techniques including: descriptive analysis, multiple regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare differences in SWB levels based on demographic categories, and independent t-tests to analyze differences in SWB between geographical groups of islands, with all inferential analyses using a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  and classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity) conducted to ensure the validity of the statistical model.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The initial step in this study was to conduct a test on the descriptive data of SWB of Early Childhood Teachers' in the island region. From the results of the Descriptive test of SWB of Early Childhood Teachers' in the Island Region, the following data were obtained.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the level of SWB of PAUD teachers

<b>SWB dimensions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Kategori</b>
School Connectedness	3.68	0.68	1.78	5.00	Medium
Teaching Efficacy	3.84	0.72	2.16	5.00	High
<b>SWB</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>2.11</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>Medium</b>

Based on table 1. descriptively the overall SWB level of PAUD teachers is in the moderate category ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ), with the test results of each dimension, namely the teaching efficacy dimension showing a higher score ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) compared to the school connectedness dimension ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ). Furthermore, the results of the analysis of demographic and social factors of PAUD teachers obtained the following data:

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of respondents

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Gender	Male	8	3,6

	Female	215	96,4
Age	< 25 years	31	13,9
	26-35 years	112	50,2
	36-45 years	42	18,8
	>45 years	38	17,0
Education level	High School/Diploma	52	23,3
	S1	163	73,1
	S2	8	3,6
Teaching experience	< 5 years	54	24,2
	5-10 years	143	64,1
	11-20 years	26	11,7

Based on Table 2, data on teachers in the island areas have partial characteristics, namely the majority of PAUD teachers in the islands are women (96.4) and men 3.6%. In terms of age, the majority of PAUD teachers are in the age range of 26-35 years (50.2%), followed by the age group of 36-45 years (18.8%), >45 years (17.0%), and <25 years (13.9%). Based on education level, most PAUD teachers have a Bachelor's degree (73.1%), High School/Diploma (23.3%), and only 3.6% have completed a Master's degree. Furthermore, based on teaching experience, the majority of teachers have 5-10 years of experience (64.1%), 24.2% less than 5 years, and 11.7% of teachers have taught for 11-20 years. These data show that PAUD teachers in the island areas are dominated by productive-age female teachers with a Bachelor's degree background and intermediate teaching experience. Next, a test was conducted on the relationship between demographic and social factors with the SWB of PAUD PG teachers in the island areas, and the following data was obtained.:

Table 3. Correlation between Demographic & Social Factors with Teachers' SWB

Variable	SWB
<b>Demographic Factors</b>	
Age	0.224**
Gender	0.183*
Education Level	0.352**
Teaching Experience	0.282**
<b>Social Factors</b>	
Co-Worker Support	0.412**
Principal Leadership	0.441**
Community Involvement	0.385**
Relationships with Parents	0.380**

Based on Table 3, the results of the analysis of the relationship or correlation between demographic and social variables on SWB of PAUD teachers in the island region are obtained, from the findings it was found that all variables have a positive and significant relationship with SWB of PAUD teachers. In demographic factors, education level shows the strongest correlation with SWB ( $r = 0.352$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by teaching experience ( $r = 0.282$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), age ( $r = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and gender which also shows a significant relationship although weaker ( $r = 0.183$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Meanwhile, in social factors, principal leadership showed the highest correlation to teacher SWB ( $r = 0.441$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by co-worker support ( $r = 0.412$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), community involvement ( $r = 0.385$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and relationship with students' parents ( $r = 0.380$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings indicate that both demographic and social factors have important contributions in improving PAUD teacher SWB, with social variables showing a relatively stronger influence.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study found that the overall SWB level of PAUD teachers in the Archipelago region was in the moderate category. These findings are in accordance with the research which found that there was a balance between the challenges faced and the support received by teachers in remote areas who tended to have moderate SWB (Bullough Jr, 2016). Thus, the conditions of the archipelago region can increase the confidence and teaching ability of PAUD teachers even in difficult and limited geographical conditions. Furthermore, the findings of Fiorilli, et.al (2019) found that teaching efficacy is a more stable internal factor in building teacher SWB compared to contextual factors such as school connectedness (Fiorilli et al., 2017). As expressed by Collie and Perry (2023) in their longitudinal study of teachers in rural and remote areas, they found high learning effectiveness results and reflected professional resilience that had been formed through experience and adaptation to work environment conditions (Willis & Grainger, 2020). Limited geographical conditions, isolation and limited professional interaction between teachers cause the School connectedness value to be lower than teaching efficacy. This condition is caused by limited infrastructure, limited communication space, transportation, and the difficulty of teachers in building professional networks with other academics..

This condition is in accordance with the concept embedded by Hancock and Muller (2021), namely "rural teacher satisfaction paradox" this concept shows a phenomenon that occurs in teachers who live in rural areas but they often report high and good levels of professional job satisfaction even though they have limited facilities, isolated geographical conditions, and low take home pay (Hancock et al., 2019). This paradox concept shows that the various non-material factors explained can influence teacher satisfaction with their profession as educators or the achievement of high SWB and be able to improve their professionalism as teachers . Then the findings of Maulana, et al. (2022) identified that teachers in isolated and island areas must be able to develop their adaptive abilities as teachers in areas that have limited educational resources so that they can increase their self-efficacy as teachers (André et al., 2020).

The difference in conditions seen or phenomena from what is expected in the findings requires a teacher in the Gahrus Islands area to be able to build a professional identity that depends on individual competence (teaching/educator conditions) rather than collective closeness (social relations at school) (Lomi & Mbato, 2020). This condition also illustrates that learning effectiveness is more influenced by internal components, such as previous successful experiences and intrinsic motivation (Müller et al., 2022; Sari, 2024). On the other hand, school connections are more influenced by external components, such as the organizational environment and institutional support (Topchyan & Woehler, 2021)(Hancock et al., 2019; Perera et al., 2018).

Based on the result, it is seen that women dominate as PAUD teachers. This explains that from a neuroscience perspective, this condition shows that women's brain structures tend to be more developed than men. This development is clearly visible in the brain structures of Broca and Wernicke, where this area is the area that is the center of the development of responsible values, empathy and verbal language skills (Dicke et al., 2020; Rutten, 2022). Thus, early childhood learning which will later create PAUD children to understand better communication patterns and behaviors, will make women more dominant in teaching. Sometimes negative stereotypes arise from people who think traditionally that men cannot be PAUD teachers.

Furthermore, in terms of productive age, it can be seen that the age of 25-36 years dominates individuals who teach in PAUD. This shows that the average age of PAUD teachers is classified as being in the golden age or productive age. Teachers at this age tend to have a combination of energy, creativity and emotional maturity so that they are able to direct the development of their. Furthermore, at this age, PAUD teachers tend to be more productive and have the ability to adapt to curriculum changes and easily integrate innovative learning approaches (Larasati & Monika, 2024; Topchyan & Woehler, 2021). This condition is an important capital for organizing good PAUD in the island region which requires great enthusiasm and creativity to overcome limited educational resources and infrastructure (Collie et al., 2018; Dicke et al., 2020).

Attention to the education sector has also become a full concern for teachers in the islands, this can be seen from their educational status, the majority of whom are undergraduates. Thus, academic qualifications as one of the requirements to become an early childhood education teacher have been significantly fulfilled and thus teachers have the ability to elaborate, design, develop, and implement effective and innovative learning (Greco et al., 2022). This is in accordance with the findings of Haty et al., (2023) who found that academic qualifications will be able to increase teacher SWB, especially in creating enjoyable learning and creating satisfaction for themselves and their students. Teaching experience for 5-10 years also affects the teacher's ability to develop teacher SWB and is able to provide encouragement for achieving child development (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Teaching experience can improve teacher skills in stimulating early childhood education students. This will have an impact on teacher SWB where teachers will feel that they have been able to face all forms of challenges and obstacles in learning which tend to increase professional self-confidence, then with positive SWB teachers will be able to reduce stress on

students and stress on themselves so that they feel satisfaction in their work to achieve national education goals (Román et al., 2017).

The results showed that all demographic and social variables had a significant correlation with the SWB of PAUD teachers, although with different levels of correlation strength. Among the demographic factors, education level showed the strongest correlation with SWB, indicating that teachers' education level is related to their subjective wellbeing. According to Avanzi et al., (2018), better education increases professional identity and job control, which improves health. In addition, teaching experience showed a significant positive relationship with SWB, indicating that teachers with more experience tend to have higher emotional stability and job satisfaction. Teaching experience helps build coping strategies and self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2015b, 2015a). This is an important component in the formation of teacher SWB. Indicating that biological factors and differences in social roles can also influence the perception of wellbeing, age and gender, each with a lower correlation).

However, the strongest predictor of teachers' SWB was the principal's leadership. A friendly, communicative, and fair school leader can improve the work environment and teachers' sense of appreciation. This significantly improves teachers' psychological well-being (Leithwood et al., 2020). In addition, co-worker support is very influential, indicating that positive relationships with others in the workplace increase a sense of community and emotional happiness. In addition, positive interactions with the outside environment provide social reinforcement and appreciation for the role of teachers. As a result, community involvement and relationships with parents also contribute significantly to SWB (Sagita et al., n.d.). These results strengthen the understanding that teachers' subjective health is not only influenced by individual characteristics, but also depends heavily on the quality of social relationships in the work environment and community. Therefore, interventions to increase the SWB of PAUD teachers in island regions must be directed not only at increasing individual abilities, but also at improving school leadership and social

This study has several important implications for the development of education policies and human resource management practices in early childhood education institutions in the island region. First, the findings regarding the importance of principal leadership and peer support as the strongest predictors of subjective well-being of teachers imply the need to strengthen principal managerial competencies and create a collaborative work climate in early childhood education institutions in the island region. Second, the significant correlation between education level and subjective well-being suggests the importance of academic qualification enhancement programs that are accessible to early childhood education teachers in remote areas, for example through special scholarships or distance learning. Third, the significant differences between teacher SWB levels in the Nias and Mentawai Islands imply the need for contextual learning to identify good practices that can transfer to areas with lower levels of SWB.

However, this study has several limitations that need to be considered. The use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between the variables studied, so longitudinal research is needed in the future. The convenience sampling technique

used has the potential to cause selection bias, because only teachers who have internet access and are members of the IGTKI network can participate, while teachers in the most remote areas with limited digital infrastructure may not be adequately represented. In addition, the TSWQ instrument, although adapted to the Indonesian context, may not fully capture the culturally specific aspects that influence teachers' subjective well-being in an archipelagic region with its ethnic diversity and customary customs. Future research is recommended to integrate a mixed-method approach that can capture the contextual nuances of ECE teachers' subjective well-being in an archipelagic region through richer qualitative data.

## CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the Subjective Well-Being (SWB) of early childhood (PAUD) teachers in island regions is significantly shaped by demographic and social factors. Collegial support and principal leadership emerged as the most influential elements, while educational attainment and teaching experience were also positively correlated with teachers' SWB, underscoring the role of professional competence in fostering stability and satisfaction. Teacher engagement with the community and the ability to cultivate constructive relationships with parents further reinforce SWB, highlighting the critical role of external support in island educational contexts. This study fills a gap in understanding the nuanced dynamics of teacher well-being in geographically challenging areas and underscores the relevance of localized social networks. To strengthen teacher SWB in such contexts, it is recommended to implement geographically responsive tiered training, establish teacher mentoring systems, adopt transformational leadership tailored to island needs, promote school-community partnerships, and build inter-island professional networks. Future research should examine teacher resilience and design culturally grounded interventions to sustainably enhance SWB.

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