

**Exploring factors associated with the
occupational well-being
of early childhood educators in Hong Kong:
An application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system**

By

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Statement of Originality

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Abstract

Teaching in early childhood education is recognized as a rewarding but stressful occupation, with research indicating high levels of stress among kindergarten teachers (Brown, Ralph & Bember, 2002; Chan, 2002; Tsai, Fung, & Chow, 2006; Kyriacou, 2001). Early childhood educators (ECEs) in Hong Kong face multifaceted challenges to their occupational well-being (OWB). This study investigated how environmental factors across multiple ecological levels influenced ECEs' OWB, using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, chronosystem) as a guiding framework. A two-wave longitudinal mixed-methods design was employed. Survey data were collected from 144 ECEs in Wave 1 and 49 in Wave 2, and qualitative interviews were conducted with 15 participants. This approach enabled an in-depth examination of individual, interpersonal, organizational, and societal factors shaping teacher well-being over time.

OWB plays a pivotal role in the effectiveness and efficiency of educators to engage students with quality teaching and learning (Brown, Ralph & Bember, 2002; Chan, 2002; Tsai, Fung, & Chow, 2006). While many studies have highlighted the importance of educators' OWB in delivering high-quality education and childcare services, there is limited research on how different environmental factors, particularly in the context of Hong Kong, can affect early childhood educators' OWB. The current study aims to investigate how environmental elements influence the OWB of early childhood educators in Hong Kong, framed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

Key findings revealed that microsystem factors – including strong job support, a sense of meaning in work, and high-quality leadership – were significantly related to better OWB outcomes, such as higher job satisfaction and lower burnout. At the mesosystem level, work–family conflict emerged as a critical stressor, correlating with reduced job satisfaction and

heightened stress. Exosystem and macrosystem influences, such as frequent policy reforms, heavy administrative burdens, and a prevailing Confucian work culture, were related to educators' well-being. Additionally, a chronosystem perspective highlighted the cumulative impact of prolonged stressors: participants reported that sustained challenges, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, intensified their role demands, strained mental health, and undermined feelings of job security over time.

This ecological approach contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the multi-level determinants of occupational well-being in the ECE sector. By illuminating how influences at the micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-levels work together to affect teacher outcomes, the study underscores the need for multi-level strategies to support educator wellness. The findings inform policy and institutional initiatives – for example, enhancing workplace support, fostering work–life balance, reducing bureaucratic workload, and acknowledging cultural expectations – to improve well-being and encourage retention among early childhood educators. Ultimately, this research offers actionable insights for creating a more supportive and sustainable work environment in early childhood education.

Keywords: early childhood educators, occupational well-being, ecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner

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List of Abbreviations

ECE	➤ Early Childhood Education
OWB	➤ Occupational Wellbeing
EDB	➤ Education Bureau
SWD	➤ Social Welfare Department
FQKE	➤ Free Quality Kindergarten Education
PEVS	➤ Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme
MBI	➤ Maslach Burnout Inventory
BEd	➤ Bachelor of Education
NCS	➤ Non-Chinese Speaking
SEN	➤ Special Educational Needs
SCCW	➤ Special Child Care Workers
CCW	➤ Child Care Workers
CCS	➤ Child Care Supervisors



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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The research problem

Early childhood educators are widely regarded as the most vulnerable to stress at workplace (Fletcher, 2011; Kwon, et. al, 2020 & Stein, R. et al, 2022). This vulnerability can be linked to several factors, including the physical and psychosocial environment of their workplaces. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023) has linked these environments to the sources of work-related stress prevalent in many early childhood organizations. The ‘Happy Teacher Project’ further underscores this issue. Many educators participating in the project reported being under constant stress, leading to low levels of occupational well-being. This constant stress and low well-being not only affect the educators themselves but also have potential implications for the quality and sustainability of the workforce in the early childhood sector (Kwon, et al., 2022). It's crucial to consider the difficulties encountered by early childhood educators. These challenges might involve large class sizes, scarce resources, and demanding expectations from both parents and educational institutions. Additionally, the physical demands of caring for young children, combined with the emotional effort required to support their growth, can lead to elevated stress levels commonly experienced by these educators. Furthermore, the low levels of occupational well-being reported by educators can have a ripple effect on the entire educational system. Educators who are stressed and have low occupational well-being may struggle to provide high-quality education, potentially impacting student outcomes. Moreover, these conditions can lead to high turnover rates, affecting the sustainability of the workforce in the sector. Therefore, addressing the stress and improving the occupational well-being of early childhood educators is crucial.

Data revealed that approximately 13.8 thousand early childhood educators are responsible for educating 143.7 thousand of kindergarten-aged children each day in the Hong Kong (see Table 1, EDB, 2023). Research conducted in Hong Kong has indicated that early childhood educators at the beginning of their careers tend to have lower occupational well-being (OWB) compared to their more experienced counterparts (Chan, 2002; Li, et al. 2021). This disparity can be attributed to a variety of factors. The first significant factor is the demanding nature of the workplace. Early childhood education is a profession that demands significant commitment and hard work. Educators are often tasked with managing large classrooms, developing engaging lesson plans, and addressing the individual needs of each student. These demands can be particularly overwhelming for novice teachers who are still adjusting to the job. As a result, these educators often report lower levels of occupational wellbeing (Kwon, et al. 2022; Li et. al. 2021). Alongside the challenges of the job, many early childhood educators also face difficulties in achieving a healthy work-life balance. The long hours and emotional demands of the job can lead to educators' feeling of overworked and burnout. This can have a detrimental impact on their physical health, as evidenced by reports of poor sleep quantity and quality (Leung, 2019). Poor sleep can further exacerbate feelings of stress and burnout, creating a vicious cycle that can be difficult to break. Lack of rest can impair cognitive function, reduce energy levels, and negatively affect mood, all of which can hinder an educator's ability to perform their job effectively. From the EDB statistics recorded in 2023 (see Table 2), there are approximately 23% of the kindergarten manpower are working in their first 4 years, meaning that every 2 teachers out of 10 who are considered as novice teachers are in demand of better support for developing strategies to cope with the above-mentioned occupational well-being challenges.



Table 1

Statistics of kindergarten students and teachers in Hong Kong during 2023/24 academic year

	No. of students	No. of educators	Teacher to Students Ratio
Scheme Kindergartens	109,616	10,180	10.8
Non-scheme Kindergartens*	34,119	3,663	9.3
Total:	143,735	13,843	10.4

Note: * Out of 268 non-scheme kindergartens, only 250 kindergartens reported their school data to EDB for record

Table 2

Years of work experience over kindergarten teachers serving at Scheme Kindergartens during 2023/24 academic years

Teaching experience	< 4 years	4-7 years	> 7 years
Scheme KGs	23%	20%	57%

On the other hand, during the first few years of transiting from pre-service training to front-line practice in a kindergarten context presents a unique set of challenges for novice kindergarten teachers. This period of transition is marked by various adaptive changes as these educators adjust to the realities of their new roles (Li et. al. 2021). These challenges are not limited to novice teachers alone. In Hong Kong, both novice and experienced kindergarten teachers often grapple with heavy workloads. These workloads encompass a wide range of responsibilities, including lesson planning, teaching, administrative tasks, and assessments. The cumulative effect of these responsibilities can result in long working hours. This, in turn, leaves educators with insufficient time for personal and family life, which can negatively affect their occupational well-being. The issue of stress and overwork among kindergarten teachers in Hong

Kong is pressing and calls for immediate attention and support to address their occupational well-being. It's important to note that while both novice and experienced early childhood educators experience different levels of work stress, the specific environmental factors contributing to this stress are not well understood. As little work has been done to classify these environmental factors into systematic categories and explore their corresponding influence on the occupational wellbeing of early childhood education educators. This research seeks to address this gap by offering a more comprehensive understanding of the environmental factors influencing the occupational wellbeing of early childhood educators in Hong Kong, utilizing Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. Grasping these factors is essential for creating effective strategies and interventions to support early childhood educators in various ECE settings across Hong Kong, aiming to enhance their occupational wellbeing.

1.2 The background of the research problem

This study is set within the wider context of occupational well-being in the early childhood education sector in Hong Kong. The research problem stems from the need to explore the factors affecting the occupational well-being of early childhood educators who face career challenges in Hong Kong, using Bronfenbrenner's ecological system as the guiding theoretical framework.

Occupational well-being refers to the overall experience of satisfaction, health, and comfort that educators have in their professional lives. It is a complex concept that includes physical health, mental well-being, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. When occupational well-being is high, it can result in greater job satisfaction, enhanced performance, and improved student outcomes. Additionally, it can lower the risk of burnout and reduce educator turnover (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Early childhood educators encounter numerous challenges that can

affect their occupational well-being. These include demanding workloads, extended working hours, and elevated stress levels. Such challenges may result in burnout, diminished motivation, and emotional exhaustion, ultimately negatively impacting the quality of education delivered to students. In Hong Kong, these challenges are particularly pronounced, highlighting the need for interventions to support educators' occupational well-being (Li, Yang et al., 2021). Despite the importance of occupational well-being, there is a lack of comprehensive research exploring the factors associated with it among early childhood educators in Hong Kong. This research gap is particularly evident when considering educators in different roles and ranks within kindergartens. Recognizing these factors is essential for creating effective interventions that support the occupational well-being of educators (Li, Yang et al., 2021). Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the factors that affect occupational well-being. This theory suggests that an individual's development and well-being are shaped by their interactions with different environmental systems, including the microsystem (direct environment), mesosystem (connections between elements of the microsystem), exosystem (indirect influences), macrosystem (broader cultural context), and chronosystem (changes over time). By utilizing this theory, the research seeks to gain a deeper insight into the factors affecting the occupational well-being of early childhood educators within the Hong Kong context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

1.3 The significance of the research

The importance of the current study can be viewed from two distinct perspectives. It can contribute towards the theoretical level about ecological perspectives in the early childhood educators' occupational wellbeing as well as making practical impact to enhance better quality development in Hong Kong ECE field.

Early childhood education is considered as laying an essential learning foundation during the golden period in human life while the quality of early childhood educators is vital to help children better achieve their learning potential (Cohen, 1997; Kwon et al, 2022 & Rossmiller, 1992). Research has established that there is a close relationship between teacher wellbeing and the quality of early childhood education (Waters et al., 2014; World Economic Forum, 2022; Education International, 2020). Educators' occupational well-being can have a direct impact on children's physical and mental health, as well as their approach to learning. When teachers exhibit high well-being and are more satisfied with their job and feel supported by their school context, they are more likely to develop a positive and engaging environment for their students' active learning (Kwon et al, 2022). On the other hand, when teachers' well-being is challenged and they experience emotional exhaustion or feel unsupported in their work, it can lead to burnout and negatively affect their ability to teach effectively (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Many prior research studies examined predicting factors for teacher well-being and effects on children's learning outcomes, not many literatures applied Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspectives to analyse how the environmental factors influence teachers' occupational wellbeing, especially in the context of Hong Kong early childhood settings.

The present study aims to contribute theoretically to the early childhood education sector in Hong Kong by investigating the environmental perspectives affecting educators' occupational well-being. Despite the significance of this topic, there is a lack of sufficient research exploring the environmental factors influencing educators' wellbeing at early childhood education workplace in Hong Kong. The study will address this gap by answering the following the key research question: Which ecological system layers (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem,

macrosystem, chronosystem) are associated with occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong?

The study will also contribute to the early childhood education sector in Hong Kong by identifying the concerns amongst the educators serving different roles in early childhood education settings towards the environmental factors affecting their occupational well-being. This information can be used to develop strategies and targeted interventions to improve the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in different roles.



Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter illustrates a broad review on academic literature related occupational well-being among early childhood educators in the context of Hong Kong. The review examines the definition of occupational wellbeing and its components amongst the early childhood education industry, relationship between early childhood educators' occupational well beings towards their provision of quality education. Further literature review will be explored to illustrate the changing face of early childhood education in the context of Hong Kong. An ecological framework is proposed as a way to understand and address the multiple individual and contextual factors that influence early childhood educators' well-being. Environmental factors using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as a philosophical framework will be reviewed. This framework emphasizes the importance of considering the interplay between the family environment, workplace environment, social-economic environment, community environment as well as a broader cultural environment in relation to teacher well-being in the Hong Kong early childhood education sector.

2.1 Occupational well-being of early childhood educators

2.1.1 *The Concept of Occupational Wellbeing*

Occupational well-being (OWB) refers to the overall quality of an individual's experience at work, encompassing positive states such as satisfaction, engagement, and enthusiasm, while minimizing excessive negative states like stress, burnout, and anxiety (Li, Yang et al., 2021). It is a multifaceted construct that integrates employees' physical and psychological health, job satisfaction, and workplace engagement (Li, Deng et al., 2024). Research in occupational health psychology has consistently demonstrated the significant influence of work conditions such as job demands and organizational support on employee well-

being and performance (Li et al., 2025; Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Early studies on work stress emphasized the detrimental effects of excessive demands and adverse psychosocial factors, showing that stressful job characteristics, such as high workload or low control, are closely linked to mental and physical health problems. By the 1990s, reviews of longitudinal studies highlighted the complex and reciprocal relationship between job stressors and strain, where high stress not only leads to burnout and health issues but also creates a feedback loop in which distressed workers perceive or induce more stressors over time (Zapf et al., 1996). These findings underscored the importance of longitudinal research designs with theory-driven time lags and controls for confounding variables to better understand causality (Zapf et al., 1996). Over time, this methodological rigor has confirmed that chronic work stress contributes to outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and other health issues, reinforcing the notion that occupational well-being is deeply intertwined with the work environment.

One core outcome of prolonged work stress is burnout, a state of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy. Burnout was first identified in human service professions, but it is now recognized across occupations as a critical indicator of diminished well-being. It arises when employees are exposed to intense or prolonged job demands without sufficient resources to cope or recover. Key drivers of burnout include overtaxing workloads, role conflict, lack of control or autonomy, insufficient rewards or recognition, breakdown of community, poor relationships with colleagues at work, perceived unfairness, and value conflicts in the workplace (Leiter & Maslach, 2004). In fact, Leiter and Maslach (2004) delineated six areas of work life that must be in balance to sustain employee well-being: workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values. A chronic mismatch between a person and any of these work life areas increases the risk of burnout (Leiter &

Maslach, 2004). For example, an employee facing too high a workload with too little control or support is likely to experience exhaustion and cynicism over time. Similarly, feeling under-rewarded or treated unfairly at work can erode one's engagement and lead to cynicism. This areas-of-worklife model has been influential in emphasizing that improving occupational well-being is not solely about individual resilience, but about creating better alignment between the employee and the organization. Interventions that ensure manageable job demands, provide appropriate rewards and recognition, foster a supportive community, maintain fairness, and align work with employees' values are all seen as strategies to prevent burnout and promote well-being (Leiter & Maslach, 2004).

Another significant area of occupational well-being research centers on the positive aspects of well-being, with a particular emphasis on work engagement. Work engagement is commonly described as a fulfilling and positive affective state characterized by vigor, which reflects high levels of energy and resilience in the workplace; dedication, which embodies a strong sense of significance, enthusiasm, and challenge in one's work; and absorption, which refers to being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in work. (Halbesleben, 2010).

Engagement can be viewed as the antipode of burnout – rather than feeling exhausted and cynical, an engaged employee feels energized and connected to their work. However, engagement is not merely the absence of burnout; it is a distinct construct with its own drivers and outcomes. Halbesleben (2010) conducted a meta-analysis on work engagement, revealing a strong negative correlation between engagement and burnout. This finding suggests that these two constructs tend to occur inversely, with high levels of engagement typically associated with low levels of burnout, and vice versa. Importantly, the meta-analysis demonstrated that job resources, such as social support from colleagues and supervisors, autonomy in decision-making,

opportunities for growth and development, and recognition, are key antecedents of work engagement (Halbesleben, 2010). These resources provide employees with the capacity to meet job demands and to derive meaning and motivation from their work, thereby enhancing engagement. Conversely, job demands such as heavy workload, role conflict, time pressure were more strongly related to burnout than to engagement, reflecting that excessive demands drain energy and can lead to exhaustion (Halbesleben, 2010). Personal resources like optimism and self-efficacy were also found to correlate positively with engagement, suggesting that individuals who have a resilient and optimistic disposition are more likely to remain engaged even when facing challenges (Halbesleben, 2010). In terms of outcomes, engaged workers tend to experience higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment and better psychological health, whereas burnout is associated with various negative outcomes such as health complaints, absenteeism, and turnover intentions. The dual focus on reducing burnout and fostering engagement has become a cornerstone of occupational well-being strategies. Together, these findings support the influential Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that job demands primarily predict strain and burnout, while job resources predict engagement and positive well-being, and that engagement in turn can buffer the impact of demands on burnout.

Beyond the immediate work environment, the interface between work and personal life is another crucial component of occupational well-being. Research on work-family balance has shown that conflict between work and family roles can be a significant stressor, whereas positive spillover between those roles can enhance well-being. Quick and Tetrick (2011) emphasize the critical importance of work-family balance in occupational health, highlighting the challenges employees face in managing multiple roles. They note that an imbalance can manifest as work-to-family conflict, where work demands interfere with family responsibilities, or family-to-work

conflict, where family obligations disrupt workplace performance. High levels of work-family conflict (WFC) are associated with stress, burnout, and lower life satisfaction, as conflicting demands in one's personal and professional spheres create tension and overload. Common contributors to WFC include long work hours, job overload, inflexible schedules, and unsupportive work climates, as well as heavy family responsibilities or lack of support at home. In their comprehensive review, Greenhaus and Allen (2011) synthesized research on this topic and developed a model integrating both work-family conflict and work-family enrichment. The model considers how individuals' involvement in work and family roles, the characteristics of those roles, and one's effectiveness and satisfaction in each role collectively determine the sense of balance (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Work-family enrichment, also referred to as facilitation, represents the positive dynamic between work and family roles, wherein experiences in one domain enhance the quality of life in the other. For instance, skills or a positive mood developed at work may contribute positively to family life, or benefits gained from family experiences may improve performance and well-being at work. The review identified various factors that can mitigate conflict and promote balance. On the work side, supportive supervisors and colleagues, flexible work arrangements, and an organizational culture that values employees' non-work life can significantly reduce work-family conflict (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). For instance, having control over one's schedule or the ability to occasionally work from home can help an employee manage family needs without undue stress. On the family side, support from one's spouse or family members and equitable division of home responsibilities can lower family-to-work conflict. Individual personality traits also influence work-family dynamics. Employees with high neuroticism are more likely to perceive conflict between work and family roles, while those with a strong internal locus of control, characterized by confidence in their ability to shape outcomes,

tend to manage work-family challenges more effectively (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Overall, the work-family interface research underscores that occupational well-being is not just determined at work—it is also influenced by how work fits with the rest of an employee's life. Organizations that acknowledge the importance of work-life balance and adopt supportive measures, such as flexible working hours, comprehensive leave policies, and childcare assistance, play a vital role in enhancing the overall well-being of their employees.

Theoretical and empirical developments in the field of occupational well-being have also led to practical implications for improving workplace health. A major insight is that interventions to enhance well-being should be systemic, targeting both the reduction of stressors and the bolstering of resources. For example, job redesign efforts that reduce excessive demands or increase employees' control over their work can alleviate stress and prevent burnout.

Concurrently, strengthening resources such as social support networks, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth can promote engagement and resilience. Quick and Tetrick (2011) propose a comprehensive framework known as the "PATH" model (Practices for Achieving Total Health), which emphasizes investment in various key areas, including work-life balance initiatives, employee development programs, health and safety measures, recognition systems, and participative decision-making. This holistic approach aligns with the public health model of workplace prevention, encompassing primary interventions designed for all employees, such as healthy work policies and wellness programs; secondary interventions targeting individuals at risk, such as stress management training and counselling for those experiencing high strain; and tertiary interventions aimed at supporting employees already affected, such as employee assistance programs for addressing burnout or providing mental health treatment. Empirical evidence suggests that organizational-level interventions, such as improving team

communication, increasing job autonomy, or fostering a more inclusive and fair culture, tend to have broader and more sustainable impacts on well-being than interventions that focus only on individuals (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Nevertheless, individual-focused techniques like cognitive-behavioural stress management or resilience training have shown modest but meaningful benefits in helping employees cope with stress (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). The implication is that the best outcomes arise when organizations create a supportive environment and also empower employees with tools to manage stress, creating a positive feedback loop for occupational well-being.

The importance of fostering occupational well-being has been thrown into sharp relief by recent challenges, notably the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic created unprecedented work stressors and forced rapid changes in how work is organized, with significant implications for employee well-being. A scoping review of the early pandemic literature by Betancourt-Sánchez et al. (2020) found that COVID-19 impacted numerous aspects of occupational health. Frontline health care workers, for example, faced extreme demands, long hours, and high risk of exposure to the virus, leading to surges in stress and burnout among medical staff. Betancourt-Sánchez et al. (2020) note that health workers became the most exposed workforce, both physically (risking infection) and psychologically (managing fear, grief, and moral distress), during this crisis. To protect these workers, organizations had to quickly implement safety measures like personal protective equipment (PPE) provision, infection control training, and coaching on handling the extraordinary pressures of pandemic patient care. These measures align with the notion that adequate resources are critical to mitigate high demands in a crisis situation. Across various occupational sectors, the sudden transition to remote work and the implementation of social distancing measures significantly altered work-home boundaries. This shift brought both

challenges and benefits to occupational well-being. While some employees faced issues such as isolation, technostress, and difficulty disconnecting from work, which heightened risks of stress and burnout, others experienced increased flexibility and autonomy, leading to improved work-life balance. The psychosocial impacts on workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as increased anxiety, uncertainty, and shifts in workplace social dynamics, emerged as a significant area of concern (Betancourt-Sánchez et al., 2020). Companies and occupational health professionals responded with various support strategies, from employee assistance hotlines to virtual team-building and more open communication about mental health. The pandemic experience has underscored key findings from earlier research, vividly illustrating how excessive demands, such as crisis-driven workloads and safety concerns, can negatively impact well-being. It also highlighted the critical role of resources and support in mitigating stress and emphasized the importance of work-family dynamics when home and work responsibilities unexpectedly converge. It also highlighted the need for agility in organizational policies to support well-being under rapidly changing conditions. In sum, the COVID-19 era has been a real-world test of occupational well-being frameworks, underlining that attention to employee well-being is not optional, but essential for organizational resilience.

Occupational well-being is a broad and evolving concept that reflects the extent to which workplace conditions promote individuals' ability to thrive or, alternatively, expose them to potential risks and challenges. Key constructs such as job stress and burnout represent the negative end of the well-being continuum, while engagement and job satisfaction represent the positive end. Over decades of research, scholars have developed robust models – from early stressor-strain frameworks to more integrative ones like the JD-R model and the areas of work-life model – that deepen our understanding of the interplay between job demands, resources, and

individual outcomes. Empirical findings across these studies (Halbesleben, 2010; Leiter & Maslach, 2004; Zapf et al., 1996) consistently emphasize that a supportive, resource-rich work environment not only prevents ill-being (e.g., reduces burnout and stress-related disorders) but also actively promotes well-being (e.g., boosts engagement, morale, and productivity). Furthermore, attention to work-life balance and the external context of work has expanded the scope of occupational well-being, recognizing that employees cannot be expected to compartmentalize their work and personal lives without consequence (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Theoretical advancements have thus translated into a more holistic view of the worker as a whole person. The implications for organizations are profound: promoting occupational well-being is linked to better employee health, motivation, and retention, which ultimately benefits organizational performance. Especially in light of recent challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic (Betancourt-Sánchez et al., 2020), it has become clear that investing in occupational well-being is both a humane practice and a strategic imperative. As the world of work continues to evolve, the insights from occupational well-being research, such as balancing demands with resources, preventing burnout while promoting engagement, and adopting a holistic approach to worker health, will remain essential for creating healthier and more resilient workplaces.

2.1.2 The importance of occupational wellbeing among early childhood educators and its relationship to quality of education delivery

Occupational wellbeing among early childhood educators (ECEs) is critical due to their influential role in children's developmental and educational outcomes. Educators in early childhood settings shoulder significant responsibilities, including fostering developmental milestones, promoting social-emotional growth, and ensuring children's safety and welfare. However, the unique stressors faced by early childhood educators such as low compensation,

high workload, emotional labor, and insufficient resources can substantially impact their occupational wellbeing, subsequently influencing their effectiveness in caregiving and teaching roles (Li, Leung et al., 2021; Whitaker, Dearth-Wesley, & Gooze, 2015).

One essential aspect of occupational wellbeing is the psychological health of educators. Psychological wellbeing encompasses emotional resilience, reduced burnout, job satisfaction, and professional engagement (Halbesleben, 2010). Research has consistently shown that ECEs with higher psychological wellbeing demonstrate more positive interactions with children, better classroom management, and greater overall effectiveness in teaching (Jeon, Buettner, & Snyder, 2014). Conversely, educators experiencing chronic stress or burnout tend to display lower emotional availability, decreased patience, and reduced enthusiasm, adversely affecting children's emotional and academic experiences (Whitaker et al., 2015).

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, is prevalent among early childhood educators due to intensive emotional demands, often paired with inadequate structural support (Leiter & Maslach, 2004). High levels of burnout not only deteriorate educators' health but also contribute to increased turnover rates, negatively impacting educational continuity and quality (Jeon et al., 2014). Turnover is particularly detrimental in early childhood settings because young children thrive on consistency and stable relationships with caregivers.

Quality education delivery in early childhood settings is directly linked to educators' wellbeing. Educators experiencing manageable workloads, sufficient autonomy, and adequate resources are more likely to maintain high levels of motivation, creativity, and effectiveness. Conversely, inadequate working conditions and chronic stress negatively affect educators' ability to deliver high-quality education, reducing their capacity for responsive, nurturing, and

stimulating interactions essential for young children's development (Halbesleben, 2010; Jeon et al., 2014).

Moreover, occupational wellbeing among early childhood educators directly correlates with child outcomes. Educators' emotional health influences classroom climate, children's emotional regulation, social interactions, and academic achievement. Jeon et al. (2014) found that classrooms led by emotionally healthy and engaged educators tend to exhibit higher levels of positive interactions, fostering children's secure attachments, emotional security, and social competence. Conversely, children taught by stressed or disengaged educators may experience higher levels of behavioral challenges, reduced emotional wellbeing, and lower academic performance, underscoring the importance of addressing educator wellbeing as a critical component of early childhood education quality (Whitaker et al., 2015).

Furthermore, creating supportive community environments within early childhood settings significantly enhances occupational wellbeing. Social support, including strong collegial relationships, mentorship opportunities, and collaborative work environments, reduces feelings of isolation and stress among educators, fostering greater engagement and job satisfaction. Educational leaders play a pivotal role in establishing supportive work cultures that prioritize wellbeing, recognize educators' contributions, and provide transparent and equitable treatment, thus promoting greater occupational satisfaction and commitment (Quick and Tetrick, 2011).

Professional recognition and adequate compensation are also critical to enhancing occupational wellbeing among early childhood educators. Current remuneration levels in the early childhood sector often do not reflect the profession's emotional and cognitive demands, contributing significantly to dissatisfaction and high turnover rates (Whitaker et al., 2015).

Policy-driven improvements in educators' financial incentives, benefits, and professional status are necessary to retain experienced professionals and sustain high-quality educational outcomes.

Taking everything into account, occupational wellbeing among early childhood educators is essential not only for the educators themselves but also for fostering optimal developmental environments for young children. The reciprocal relationship between educator wellbeing and child outcomes underscores the necessity of addressing occupational stressors comprehensively. As the early childhood sector continues to navigate challenges, prioritizing and enhancing educator wellbeing emerges as an indispensable investment, directly contributing to sustained, high-quality educational experiences for future generations (Betancourt-Sánchez et al., 2020).

2.1.3 Occupational Wellbeing of Early Childhood Educators: Predictors and Outcomes

Occupational wellbeing (OWB) has garnered increasing attention in the context of early childhood educators, due to its link with both teacher outcomes and the quality of education provided (Li, Yang et al., 2021). A positive level of OWB is associated with desirable consequences such as better job performance, a supportive classroom climate, and stronger intent to remain in the profession. Conversely, poor OWB – characterized by high stress or burnout – can lead to serious personal and organizational costs, including health issues, absenteeism, and turnover. This chapter reviews the literature on key predictors (antecedents) and outcomes (consequences) of occupational wellbeing among educators, with a focus on early childhood teachers. In particular, it highlights how job support, job stressors, and psychosocial work factors shape OWB, and how OWB in turn influences job satisfaction, turnover intentions, work engagement, burnout, work–life conflict, and teachers' emotional states on the job. These, in turn, shape the quality of educational interactions educators have with children, influencing classroom climate, emotional responsiveness, and overall educational effectiveness (Jeon et al.,

2014; Whitaker et al., 2015). The review draws on both classic studies and recent empirical findings, integrating research from Hong Kong and relevant international contexts.

Predictors (Antecedents) of ECE's Occupational Wellbeing

Research guided by frameworks such as the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R) suggests that job resources boost wellbeing while job demands erode it (Li, Yang et al., 2021). Early childhood educators frequently operate under challenging conditions characterized by extended working hours, substantial workloads, and significant emotional labor. However, the adverse effects of these stressors can be alleviated through the availability of supportive resources within the workplace. This discussion focuses on three primary categories of antecedents to occupational well-being (OWB): job support, sources of job-related stress, and psychosocial factors, as assessed through the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire.

Job support

Job support refers to the help, guidance, and encouragement that employees receive from their organization, supervisors, and colleagues. It is considered a critical organizational resource that can buffer stress and enhance wellbeing (Tsui et al., 1992; Zhen et al., 2015). According to *Conservation of Resources* theory, social support at work constitutes a valuable resource that protects employees against stress and burnout (Perry et al 2010). Empirical studies have consistently linked higher workplace support to better occupational wellbeing outcomes. For example, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) developed a Job Support scale to assess teachers' perceptions of collegial and supervisory support. Using this measure, recent research on Hong Kong kindergarten teachers found that perceived job support correlates positively with job satisfaction and work engagement, and negatively with stress and burnout (Li, Yang et al.,

2021). In other words, teachers who felt that “teachers at this school help and support each other” reported more positive wellbeing indicators.

Supportive work environments not only improve day-to-day wellbeing but also help prevent long-term negative outcomes. A lack of support has been identified as a factor in teacher attrition. In a study of Norwegian teachers, insufficient supervisor support contributed to a cascade of effects: lower self-efficacy, reduced engagement, and ultimately stronger motivation to quit the profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016). Similarly, in the Hong Kong context, qualitative feedback from early childhood educators highlights the need for more support, resources, and staffing to alleviate stress. The Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers (2019) surveyed over 1,200 local teachers and found an overwhelming majority hoped for greater support from the government and schools in coping with work challenges. These findings underscore that robust job support acts as a protective factor for occupational wellbeing. With adequate social and organizational support, educators are better equipped to handle job pressures, resulting in higher morale and a stronger commitment to their work (Tsui et al., 1992; Zhen et al., 2015).

Job Stress Sources

While support buffers stress, various job stressors serve as antecedents that can undermine occupational wellbeing if not managed. Common workplace stress sources for teachers include excessive workload, time pressure, role conflict, student misbehavior, and emotional demands of caring for young children. Maslach and Jackson (1981) noted that chronic exposure to stressors in caring professions leads to burnout – a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. In their seminal work, Maslach and Jackson characterized burnout as a long-term reaction to persistent interpersonal

stressors in the workplace, distinguished by intense exhaustion, cynicism, and feelings of ineffectiveness (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). These stressors can accumulate from daily hassles such as dealing with challenging child behaviors, or parent communications and structural conditions such as crowded classrooms, long work hours.

Empirical research in Chinese and Hong Kong settings confirms that high job stress is associated with negative outcomes for teachers. For instance, Chao (2010) observed that in school settings, sources of stress like workload, student discipline issues, and administrative demands contributed to lower job satisfaction and higher burnout. High stress not only harms wellbeing directly but also indirectly, by fueling burnout which then drives people to consider leaving their job (Chao, 2010). A study of employees in Guangzhou found that greater occupational stress and lower job satisfaction were strong predictors of burnout, especially on emotional exhaustion, which in turn predicted stronger turnover intention (Lin et al. 2013). In that study, employees reporting high stress and exhaustion were significantly more likely to want to quit. These patterns likely extend to teachers: research has long shown that teacher stress is linked with burnout and disengagement (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

In early childhood education, particular stressors such as long working hours and difficult interactions such as handling children's challenging behavior would put educators' wellbeing at risk (Li et al 2021). A recent Hong Kong survey illustrates the prevalence of stress, with 85% indicating they experience excessive or moderate pressure at work, and 34% identifying as extremely stressed, which is a figure that has increased compared to the previous year (CGTN, 2020). These teachers worked very long hours (over two-thirds worked >50 hours/week) to meet the demands of the job. The toll of such stress was evident in their emotional states – about 85% felt chronically tired and nearly 60% felt discouraged. Such statistics, from the Hong Kong

Federation of Education Workers' survey in 2020, highlight how demanding work conditions can erode teacher wellbeing. They align with international findings indicating that high job demands, such as quantitative workload and time pressure, combined with limited resources, lead to employee strain and burnout (Useche et al 2019). Without interventions to manage workload and support teachers, these stress sources can significantly detract from occupational wellbeing and lead to negative spirals of exhaustion and disengagement.

Copenhagen Psychosocial Factors

The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ) provides a comprehensive framework for assessing how various psychosocial workplace factors impact employee wellbeing. The COPSOQ covers a range of dimensions in the work environment – including job demands, job influence (control), quality of leadership, interpersonal relations, job insecurity, and outcomes like stress and strain (Useche et al, 2019). Burr et al. (2019) introduced the newest COPSOQ III as a standardized tool to measure these psychosocial risk factors across different countries and occupations. It identifies key psychosocial factors of “modern working life” and helps link them to health and wellbeing outcomes. Several core factors from the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ) are particularly relevant to occupational wellbeing.

Job Demands

High job demands, including excessive workloads, time pressure, and emotional demands, frequently heighten stress and trigger strain reactions. COPSOQ-based research highlights that employees encountering elevated demands, such as long working hours and intense work pace, typically report higher psychological distress and increased health complaints (Burr et al., 2019). In teaching contexts specifically, heavy demands such as large class sizes, curriculum pressures, and the emotional labor involved can similarly lead to exhaustion and

burnout if these demands are not adequately balanced by supportive resources (Cumming et al., 2021).

Influence and Control

Having influence and control at work, reflected through decision-making latitude, autonomy, and opportunities for skill development, is another protective factor identified by the COPSOQ framework. Studies utilizing the COPSOQ demonstrate that higher levels of influence in the workplace correlate with lower stress levels. For example, teachers who enjoy greater autonomy over planning and decision-making report enhanced wellbeing, while limited decision authority acts as a significant stressor. Burr et al. (2019) found that influence and skill development formed a composite factor negatively correlated with psychological distress, indicating that teachers experiencing agency and personal growth at work are better protected against the adverse effects of high job demands.

Interpersonal Relations and Leadership

Another critical dimension emphasized by COPSOQ is the quality of interpersonal relations and leadership. Good social relations at work, including supportive relationships among colleagues and effective leadership styles, significantly influence occupational wellbeing. Positive interpersonal interactions and fair, supportive leadership enhance employee morale and reduce strain. Conversely, poor leadership and workplace conflict have been found to exacerbate stress. Research based on COPSOQ revealed that factors representing interpersonal relationships and leadership quality positively correlated with employee mental health outcomes, underscoring that strong relational support and leadership reduce distress (Burr et al., 2019). This aligns with findings in educational settings, suggesting that collegial support and effective principals are instrumental in promoting teacher wellbeing.

Job Insecurity

Job insecurity, characterized by fears surrounding potential layoffs or contract non-renewals, is another relevant psychosocial factor in the COPSOQ framework. COPSOQ research consistently identifies job insecurity as linked to increased stress and poorer wellbeing outcomes (Burr et al., 2019). Although job insecurity may be less prevalent among Hong Kong public kindergarten teachers who typically experience stable employment conditions, it can significantly affect educators in private or non-governmental organizations, especially during periods of policy shifts or economic uncertainty.

Overall, the COPSOQ framework underscores a clear relationship between occupational wellbeing and psychosocial workplace factors. Specifically, conditions characterized by high demands, limited control, inadequate support, and job insecurity collectively diminish occupational wellbeing. In contrast, reasonable job demands, high autonomy and influence, robust social support, and effective leadership promote positive wellbeing (Burr et al., 2019). This pattern is particularly evident in early childhood education settings. For instance, a recent study among Chinese ECE teachers demonstrated that work–family conflict, arising from excessive demands, had direct negative impacts on educators' occupational wellbeing. However, factors that enhanced personal resources could mitigate these negative effects (Burr et al., 2019). Similarly, research mapping the work environments of Australian early educators revealed that current policies frequently overlook crucial psychosocial dimensions, particularly relational and emotional complexities, which are vital for maintaining educator wellbeing (Cumming et al., 2021). Consequently, Burr et al. (2019) recommend regular assessments of psychosocial risks using tools like COPSOQ to identify areas such as workload management, influence levels, support structures, and leadership quality requiring improvement.

Outcomes (Consequences) of Occupational Wellbeing

Occupational wellbeing (OWB) significantly impacts not only educators' immediate health and happiness but also influences their professional attitudes and behaviors. For teachers, occupational wellbeing profoundly affects job satisfaction, turnover intentions, work engagement, burnout susceptibility, work–private life balance, and daily emotional experiences related to their job. Each outcome represents both an indicator of overall wellbeing and a consequence of job-related resources, demands, and supports (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a fundamental aspect of occupational well-being that reflects the degree to which educators experience contentment and hold positive perceptions of their professional roles. It is considered a critical reflection of the match between job expectations and actual job conditions (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). Higher job satisfaction among teachers is associated with better overall wellbeing, reduced stress levels, and resilience against burnout, ultimately fostering higher quality educational environments (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Conversely, dissatisfaction often signals underlying issues such as unmet needs or excessive stress and is frequently linked to higher turnover intentions (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012).

Turnover intention

Turnover intention refers to an employee's desire to leave their job and is closely linked to occupational well-being. High turnover intention among teachers generally stems from factors like dissatisfaction, burnout, and inadequate support (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Numerous studies have demonstrated an inverse relationship between teachers' wellbeing and their intention to leave the profession. For example, emotional exhaustion and lack of institutional belonging significantly predict higher turnover intentions among educators (Leung & Lee, 2006).

Moreover, turnover intention is problematic because it often precedes actual turnover, disrupting educational continuity and negatively affecting student outcomes (Ingersoll, 2001).

Work engagement

Work engagement is another essential aspect of occupational well-being, defined by vigor, dedication, and deep involvement in one's job (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Engaged teachers exhibit high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and sustained focus, positively influencing their job satisfaction and resilience against burnout. Research indicates that optimal job resources such as professional growth opportunities, supportive workplace cultures, and balanced job demands enhance educators' engagement, creating beneficial outcomes for both educators and students (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Conversely, excessive job demands or insufficient resources negatively impact engagement, increasing vulnerability to burnout and dissatisfaction.

Job burnout

Job burnout is a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy that arises as a major negative outcome of declining occupational well-being (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Burnout is particularly prevalent among educators facing high demands without adequate support, leading to severe personal health consequences, reduced job performance, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates (Leung & Lee, 2006). Empirical studies highlight the need for interventions aimed at reducing job demands and enhancing support structures, thereby preventing burnout and improving overall occupational wellbeing.

Work and Private Life Conflicts

Occupational wellbeing also significantly affects the balance between educators' work and private lives. High job demands and chronic stress often cause conflicts between

professional responsibilities and personal life, manifesting as time-related, strain-based, or behavior-related conflicts. Such conflicts are negatively associated with educators' overall wellbeing and their capacity to maintain sustained professional engagement (Wang et al., 2025). Organizational policies promoting reasonable workloads, flexible scheduling, and respect for personal boundaries have been shown to reduce work–private life conflicts, enhancing overall educator wellbeing and job satisfaction (Chao, 2010).

Job-Related Feelings

Educators' daily emotional experiences, spanning from positive emotions like enthusiasm and pride to negative ones like anxiety and frustration, serve as vital indicators of their occupational well-being. These affective states directly reflect the quality of the work environment and significantly influence professional behaviors and performance. Positive emotions foster greater engagement, satisfaction, and commitment, whereas persistent negative emotions signal declining wellbeing, potentially leading to burnout and higher turnover intentions (Chang & Cherng, 2017). Recognizing and addressing these emotional indicators through regular wellbeing assessments and supportive interventions can significantly enhance teachers' occupational wellbeing.

In summary, occupational wellbeing is a broad concept encompassing the resources and stressors in a teacher's work environment and the positive or negative states that result. Key predictors like job support, job stress sources, and psychosocial work factors can set the stage for educators' wellbeing. Sufficient support and positive psychosocial factors can buffer the impact of inevitable job demands, leading to better outcomes. In contrast, excessive stressors and poor work conditions erode wellbeing, often evident through burnout, dissatisfaction, and work-life conflict. The outcomes of OWB, including job satisfaction, turnover intention, work

engagement, burnout, work–life conflict, and emotional states, are tightly interlinked. High occupational wellbeing for early childhood educators tends to foster high satisfaction, strong engagement, and low burnout and turnover intent, enabling teachers not only to thrive personally but also to sustain high-quality educational practice. By addressing the antecedents of occupational wellbeing, stakeholders can indirectly influence the crucial outcomes – increasing teachers’ job satisfaction and enthusiasm while reducing burnout and turnover. Ultimately, nurturing the occupational wellbeing of educators is not only vital for their own health and professional longevity, but it is also in the best interest of students and the educational system. Teachers who are well, engaged, and supported will be more effective in the classroom and more likely to remain in the field, contributing to sustainable, high-quality early childhood education.

2.2 Early childhood education development in Hong Kong: Educator Roles, Policy Evolution, and Contemporary Challenges

The development of early childhood education (ECE) in Hong Kong offers a compelling case for understanding the significance of occupational wellbeing in sustaining a high-quality education system. This section explores the evolution of Hong Kong’s ECE sector by examining the shifting roles of early childhood educators, the trajectory of key policy developments, and the influence of recent socio-political and public health challenges. Once referred to as the “Cinderella” of the education system (Oppen, 1993), Hong Kong’s pre-primary education landscape has undergone substantial transformation, marked by increasing government recognition and support. However, ongoing challenges, including political changes, the COVID-19 pandemic, and demographic shifts, continue to redefine both the expectations placed on ECE professionals and their overall wellbeing.

2.2.1 Overview of Early Childhood Educators in Hong Kong

Early childhood educators (ECEs) in Hong Kong fulfill dual roles as caregivers and teachers. They provide care and education for children aged 0 to 6 years in childcare centers, while in kindergartens, they cater to children aged 2 years and 8 months to 6 years. ECEs are responsible for nurturing young children's physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive development through play-based and early academic activities, laying the foundation for lifelong learning (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). Traditionally, kindergarten teaching in Hong Kong was viewed as a less formal profession compared to primary and secondary teaching – a legacy of ECE's historical exclusion from the formal education system prior to 2000 (Education Commission, 2000). This perception has gradually shifted as the government and public recognize the critical importance of quality preschool experiences. Still, many parents tend to praise ECEs for being “caring” and “loving” while undervaluing their pedagogical skills, reflecting an enduring challenge in professional identity for these educators (Wong, 2021). ECEs thus continually advocate for greater professional recognition, emphasizing that they are not merely babysitters but trained teachers facilitating early learning and development.

Over the past two decades, Hong Kong has made substantial advancements in raising the qualification requirements for early childhood educators, reflecting a commitment to enhancing the quality of early childhood education. Since 2003, all newly hired kindergarten teachers must possess a Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) certification or equivalent, ensuring they have undergone specialized training in ECE (Education Bureau, 2003). The vast majority of current ECEs hold at least a Certificate in Early Childhood Education [C(ECE)], academically known as higher diploma level, and increasing numbers have obtained bachelor's degrees in early childhood education. In fact, the proportion of kindergarten teachers with a university degree

rose from only 12% in 2008 to nearly 72% by 2024, demonstrating a clear trend toward a more highly educated workforce (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018; EDB, 2025). Likewise, since 2009, all new kindergarten principals are required to have a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education [BEd(ECE)] plus one year of post-qualification experience and completion of a principalship training course, underscoring the push for stronger leadership qualifications in the sector (Education Bureau, 2009). These reforms have professionalized the field, aligning Hong Kong's ECE standards more closely with international practices, and have helped improve the quality of teaching and learning in preschools (Rao & Li, 2009).

Within the ECE profession, educators may take on specialized roles or areas of focus while still performing core teaching duties. For instance, some teachers serve in kindergarten-cum-child care centres, which offer integrated services for children from age 2 to 6, requiring staff to cater to both toddler care and preschool education (Rao & Koong, 2006). Other ECEs might specialize in supporting children with special educational needs or in implementing specific pedagogical approaches (such as Montessori or Reggio Emilia methods) within the local curriculum framework. Despite these specializations, most Hong Kong early childhood educators share common responsibilities: designing age-appropriate curriculum activities, maintaining a safe and inclusive classroom environment, assessing children's developmental progress, and engaging parents through regular communication and involvement in school events. With virtually all children aged 3–6 attending kindergarten in Hong Kong (Audit Commission, 2013), ECEs carry the important duty of preparing children for smooth transition to primary education, often under the pressure of a competitive education culture (Ng, 2012). Early childhood educators in Hong Kong adhere to a mandated teacher-to-pupil ratio of 1:15 (excluding the principal), which has been improved to 1:11 when including the principal (Education Bureau, 2012;

Education Bureau, 2017). Additionally, many classrooms benefit from the presence of assistant teachers, who help provide more individualized care and support for students. In recent years, ECEs have also been expected to partake in ongoing professional development and quality reviews as part of the government's quality assurance framework, reflecting higher expectations for accountability and continual improvement in the sector (Education Bureau, 2017a). Overall, the profile of Hong Kong's ECEs today is that of a well-trained, increasingly specialized professional workforce tasked with balancing educational goals, care duties, and administrative requirements to deliver "high-quality kindergarten education" for all children (Education Bureau, 2017b).

2.2.2 Policy Development: From PEVS to FQKES

Hong Kong's early childhood education policies have undergone significant development in the past two decades, marked most notably by the transition from the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) to the current Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES). This section analyzes the evolution of these policies, including their goals, outcomes, and ongoing challenges as discussed in the chapter.

Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS):

Introduced in the 2007/08 school year, PEVS was a groundbreaking but controversial policy that sought to make kindergarten more affordable and to spur quality improvements through market mechanisms (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2006). Under PEVS, the government provided parents of eligible children with a flat-rate, non-means-tested education voucher that could be redeemed at registered non-profit kindergartens. The voucher's value was initially HK\$13,000 per child per year, rising to about HK\$23,230 by the scheme's final year in 2016/17 (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018). The core goals of PEVS were two-fold: (1) to

ease the financial burden on families by subsidizing part of the school fees, thereby expanding access to early education, and (2) to drive quality enhancement by encouraging kindergartens to compete for enrolment (and voucher revenue) through better services, while also mandating quality assurance measures (Lau, 2012). In practice, PEVS required participating kindergartens to be non-profit and undergo a quality assessment accreditation by 2012; it also included a conditional grant for teachers to upgrade their qualifications, thereby tying public funding to professional development (Education Bureau, 2007).

PEVS succeeded in boosting kindergarten attendance and standardized certain quality benchmarks, but it also revealed several shortcomings that drew criticism from parents and educators (Yuen, 2018). By 2012, about 77% of eligible children were enrolled in PEVS-participating kindergartens, indicating considerable uptake (Audit Commission, 2013). The scheme's introduction coincided with a rapid increase in trained teachers – by 2005/06, even before full implementation, over 94% of kindergarten teachers had obtained the required basic teaching qualification (Rao & Li, 2009). Parents' out-of-pocket fees for half-day classes modestly decreased or stabilized during the voucher era, making preschool more affordable for many families (Education Bureau, 2013). However, the voucher model also exposed inherent tensions. First, it perpetuated a two-tier system between non-profit making (NPM) kindergartens that accepted vouchers and private independent (PI) kindergartens that did not (often elite international or for-profit local preschools). Families using PEVS could only patronize NPM schools, limiting their choices, and those who chose PI kindergartens received no subsidy at all, leading to concerns about inequity (Chow, 2017). Second, the voucher amount was the same for half-day and whole-day programs, which inadvertently incentivized schools to offer more half-day classes – a trend observed as the proportion of half-day-only KGs rose significantly during

PEVS years (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018). Whole-day kindergarten remained expensive for parents, as the voucher covered only part of the higher fees, thus not fully addressing the needs of dual-income families who required full-day childcare (Chan, 2019). Third, critics argued that PEVS's market-driven approach treated education as a commodity; while it did introduce accountability measures (like mandatory quality reviews), it also forced kindergartens into competition for enrollment without adequately raising the public funding level per child (Wong & Li, 2015). Teacher salaries under PEVS were not standardized by the government, and many kindergartens faced financial strain trying to improve quality while keeping fees low (HKPTU, 2012). These unresolved issues eventually led to calls for a more direct government responsibility in providing free early education, culminating in policy changes a decade later.

Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES):

After years of advocacy for 15-year free education (covering the 3 years of kindergarten in addition to the 12 years of primary and secondary school), the Hong Kong government launched the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme in the 2017/18 school year to replace PEVS (Education Bureau, 2016). The FQKES represents a shift from the voucher model to direct subsidy funding: instead of giving money to parents, the government now provides funding directly to eligible kindergartens that opt into the scheme. The primary goal of FQKES is to provide tuition-free half-day kindergarten for all children in local non-profit KGs, and highly subsidized full-day programs, thereby truly reducing financial barriers to ECE (Education Bureau, 2017b). Under Hong Kong's Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES), government subsidies are structured to align with session durations. For the 2024/25 academic year, half-day classes receive full funding through an annual subsidy of approximately

HK\$39,200 per student. Full-day sessions attract a higher subsidy of HK\$50,960 per student to address extended operational costs, while long-whole-day programs receive the most substantial support at HK\$62,720 per student annually. These subsidies are designed to cover most expenses, with parents typically required to pay only minimal supplementary fees where necessary (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018; Education Bureau, 2024). Nearly 97% of eligible local non-profit kindergartens joined the scheme immediately, indicating the sector's broad acceptance of the new policy (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018).

There are several positive outcomes from the transition to free kindergarten education. Most notably, parents' average school expenses dropped substantially. In the final year of PEVS (2016/17), parents still paid on average HK\$5,700 per year for a half-day place (and much more for full-day) on top of the voucher; after FQKES started, the average top-up fee for half-day dropped to around HK\$3,000, while for full-day it fell from ~HK\$21,000 to about HK\$8,100 on average (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018). This indicates that kindergarten has indeed become essentially free or much more affordable for most families, achieving a key equity goal of the policy. Additionally, FQKES brought about improvements in teacher remuneration and retention by introducing a basic salary scale. To ensure service quality, the government began providing salary subsidies and recommended pay ranges for different teaching positions, with the median monthly salary of full-time teachers in non-profit KGs rising to about HK\$27,000–29,000 after the scheme's implementation – a notable increase that helped reduce the previously high turnover rates among kindergarten teachers (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2018). The policy also came with additional grants and continued to mandate quality assurance through regular Quality Reviews, thereby reinforcing both accountability and support for quality enhancement (Education Bureau, 2017a). In broad terms, FQKES has reasserted the

government's role in early education, moving the sector toward a more public-good orientation rather than a purely market-driven model (Yuen, 2021). Government control over the formerly private kindergarten sector is re-established in the long run through a policy that links funding to compliance with government standards (Wong, 2021).

Despite its benefits, FQKES faces ongoing challenges and unintended consequences that are highlighted in the chapter. One challenge is ensuring sustainability of quality – the government subsidies must keep pace with operational costs and inflation. Some kindergartens report that the current funding, while adequate for basic needs, leaves little surplus for innovation or facilities upgrades, especially for those running full-day classes that incur higher expenses (Chan, 2020). There is also concern that the uniform subsidy approach might not fully address diverse community needs: for instance, kindergartens serving low-income or ethnically diverse communities may require additional resources (for assistant staff or translation support) to provide equitable quality, which the scheme's one-size-fits-all funding may not cover (Lo, 2019). Additionally, FQKES's emphasis on regulatory compliance – though important for quality – has increased administrative workload on principals and teachers, who must handle extensive documentation for funding and undergo periodic inspections (Education Bureau, 2019). Some educators feel that this bureaucratic pressure can detract from the energy and creativity they devote to teaching (Yuen, 2021). Another issue is that private independent kindergartens now exist completely outside the main funding system; this small subset of schools raises questions about how “universal” the free policy truly is and whether a dual track will persist. Lastly, while FQKES improved teacher pay, parity with primary school teachers has not been fully achieved – kindergarten teachers still generally earn less and have less job security than their counterparts in compulsory education, which can affect long-term recruitment of talent

into the ECE field (Chow & Cheung, 2021). In summary, the evolution from PEVS to FQKES in Hong Kong reflects a major policy shift towards greater public investment and oversight in early childhood education, yielding improved affordability and quality, yet it continues to evolve as stakeholders address the remaining gaps and challenges in the system.

2.2.3 The COVID-19 Impact on ECEs' Occupational Well-Being and New Job Demands and Resources

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020, had unprecedented effects on early childhood education in Hong Kong. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of how the pandemic disrupted ECE operations and how these disruptions affected the occupational well-being of early childhood educators. It applies a job demands and resources lens to analyze the new challenges (demands) introduced by COVID-19 and any mitigating supports (resources) that emerged, highlighting the complex impact on ECE practitioners' professional and personal well-being.

Hong Kong kindergartens were subject to periodic closures and strict public health measures during the pandemic. Almost overnight, ECEs had to pivot to remote teaching modalities, a task exceedingly difficult for educators of very young children (Lau & Lee, 2021). Teachers were suddenly required to create home learning packets, record video lessons, or conduct live online classes for preschoolers – activities far outside the normal scope of kindergarten pedagogy. The chapter notes that these shifts dramatically increased certain job demands on ECEs. One major demand was technological adaptation: many veteran kindergarten teachers were not initially adept with e-learning platforms, yet they had to quickly develop skills in using Zoom, educational apps, or WhatsApp groups to connect with children and parents (Chan, 2021). This learning curve, often without formal training, contributed to stress and longer

working hours as teachers prepared digital content. Another demand was maintaining young children's engagement virtually. Keeping a 4-year-old attentive through a screen requires tremendous energy and creativity, and many teachers reported feeling exhausted by the effort to sustain children's interest remotely while also handling their own anxieties about the pandemic (Li, Yang et al., 2021). Additionally, ECEs faced increased parental interaction and expectations – since parents were supervising children at home, teachers had to communicate more with parents, guiding them on facilitating activities and addressing their concerns about learning loss (Cheung, 2020). When in-person classes intermittently resumed, yet another layer of job demand emerged: enforcing health and safety protocols (Chung et al., 2021). Teachers had to ensure children wore masks properly, washed hands frequently, and kept physical distance during play – effectively adding health monitoring to their daily duties. All these new responsibilities came on top of the emotional strain of the pandemic's uncertainties, creating a significant threat to teachers' occupational well-being.

The occupational well-being (OWB) of ECEs encompasses job satisfaction, work engagement, stress levels, and burnout (Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014). Surveys and studies cited in the chapter show that a large proportion of teachers experienced heightened stress and signs of burnout during 2020–2022 (Tang, 2022). For instance, in one study of early childhood educators, over 60% reported high stress related to COVID-19 adjustments, and many indicated lower job satisfaction due to the loss of normal classroom interactions (Wong et al., 2022). Teachers derive much of their professional joy from the direct, affectionate contact with young children – smiles, hugs, group activities – and pandemic restrictions severely curtailed these rewarding experiences, thereby dampening teachers' sense of accomplishment and connection (Cumming, 2017). Moreover, uncertainty about job security in some private kindergartens, especially those

facing financial difficulties amid enrollment drops, led to anxiety among teachers regarding salary cuts or layoffs (Cheng, 2020). Indeed, the job insecurity emerged as a critical stressor: a survey by a local teachers' union in 2021 found that a considerable number of kindergarten teachers were worried about the stability of their jobs if the pandemic persisted (HKPTU, 2021). All these factors collectively posed a threat to ECEs' mental health and occupational well-being, with anecdotal reports of some teachers contemplating leaving the profession due to pandemic-related hardships.

Alongside challenges, the chapter also describes how certain job resources helped buffer the negative impact of COVID-19 on ECE educators. One positive development was the strengthening of collegial support – many kindergarten teaching teams pulled together closely to navigate the crisis, sharing lesson plans, troubleshooting tech problems collaboratively, and providing emotional support to one another (Li, Yang et al., 2021). This team spirit and solidarity acted as an important resource, as peer support is known to alleviate stress by fostering a sense of shared burden. Another resource was professional development opportunities that arose as the sector adapted; for example, some NGOs and the Education Bureau offered free webinars on e-learning strategies for young children and on teacher well-being and self-care during the pandemic (Education Bureau, 2020b). ECEs who took part in these training sessions gained new skills and coping strategies, which improved their efficacy in the new teaching mode and thus their work engagement. This chapter also highlights parental recognition and gratitude as a job resource that became more pronounced during COVID-19. Many parents, having had to facilitate learning at home, developed a deeper appreciation for the patience and creativity of kindergarten teachers (Liu, 2021). Expressions of thanks from families and communities – whether through messages, parent-teacher meetings over Zoom, or even media stories

highlighting teachers' efforts – provided a motivational boost to ECEs, reinforcing the value of their work in tough times. Additionally, some kindergarten operators responded to the crisis by adjusting expectations and workload: for instance, reducing the length of online sessions or hiring temporary teaching assistants with government subsidy support to help in classrooms when schools reopened with smaller groups (Cheung, 2021). These measures functioned as practical resources that reduced individual teacher workload. In terms of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) discussed in the chapter, Hong Kong's ECEs during COVID-19 faced elevated demands (technological, emotional, safety-related) that risked higher burnout, but the effect was moderated in part by increased personal and organizational resources (peer support, new skills, community appreciation) which helped maintain some level of engagement and morale.

The pandemic experience leaves a complex legacy for the ECE sector. On one hand, it exposed and intensified issues of work stress and well-being, signaling to policymakers and school leaders that teacher mental health needs more systematic support. On the other hand, it accelerated innovations in teaching practice – Hong Kong ECEs are now more adept with technology and diversified modes of communication, which could be harnessed for future pedagogical enrichment (Yuen et al., 2022). The chapter suggests that moving forward, policies should build on the lessons learned by institutionalizing support systems (for example, having contingency plans for remote learning and clear guidelines to protect teachers' workload and wellness during emergencies). In conclusion, COVID-19 profoundly tested the resilience of early childhood educators in Hong Kong, adding to their job demands but also illuminating the critical resources and adaptations needed to safeguard their occupational well-being in the face of unforeseen challenges.

2.2.4 Sectoral Challenges in Early Childhood Education in Hong Kong

This chapter addresses several sector-wide challenges that have recently emerged in Hong Kong's early childhood education landscape. These include declining birth rates, emigration trends, and resulting drops in kindergarten enrolment – factors that collectively impact the sustainability, quality, and equity of ECE provision in the city. The analysis shows that beyond policy and classroom practice, macro-level demographic shifts are now exerting pressure on the ECE sector, calling for proactive strategies.

Declining Birth Rates

Hong Kong's birth rate has been on a steady decline, reaching record lows in recent years, and this has direct consequences for kindergartens. Government statistics indicating that the number of births fell from about 56,000 in 2016 to just around 32,500 in 2022 (Census and Statistics Department, 2023). This sharp drop means that smaller cohorts of children are entering the kindergarten system each year. For context, the kindergarten student population has shrunk accordingly: Education Bureau data show a decline from roughly 185,000 kindergarten pupils in 2015 to about 136,095 in 2024, with further decreases expected (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2022; Education Bureau 2024). Such a demographic contraction poses a sustainability challenge for the ECE sector. Many kindergartens that flourished when birth numbers were higher now face difficulty filling classes. Almost 84% of Hong Kong kindergartens surveyed in 2023 reported a significant drop in their K1 (first-year kindergarten) enrolment for the 2023/24 school year (China Daily, 2023). With fewer students, schools receive less tuition revenue (or in the case of FQKES, less subsidy funding, since it is per pupil), yet their fixed costs—rent, utilities, staff salaries—remain largely the same. Nearly 90% of kindergartens in the survey described being in financial difficulty due to low enrolment, and over 75% had already taken the drastic

step of laying off teachers to cut costs (China Daily, 2023). Low birth rates, therefore, threaten the viability of some ECE centers, especially small, stand-alone kindergartens in districts with sharper population decline. A few kindergartens have even announced closure or consolidation of campuses as they anticipate insufficient student numbers in coming years (SCMP, 2023). This trend, if continued, could lead to an oversupply of kindergarten places relative to children, inefficiencies in resource allocation, and potentially a reduced diversity of provider choices for parents if only larger operators survive.

Emigration and Population Outflow

Compounding the low birth trend is the recent wave of emigration from Hong Kong. Since 2019–2020, significant numbers of residents, including families with young children, have emigrated or moved abroad, driven by factors such as the socio-political climate and better opportunities elsewhere. In the two years following the 2019 social movement and during COVID-19, tens of thousands of students withdrew from Hong Kong schools as their families left the territory (Tam, 2022). Kindergartens have felt this impact acutely – mid-year withdrawals became more common and projected enrolments sometimes dropped unexpectedly when families decided to relocate. Emigration has also affected the ECE workforce: a notable number of experienced kindergarten teachers and principals have resigned to emigrate, leading to a loss of skilled professionals in the sector (Chiu & Lai, 2022). The dual loss of students and teachers intensifies the challenges of maintaining program quality. Schools losing students may cut classes or combine age groups, which can increase workloads on remaining teachers and potentially diminish the individual attention each child receives. Meanwhile, the departure of veteran educators creates gaps in mentorship for newer teachers and can undermine the stability of teaching teams. The chapter suggests that the government has taken note of these trends;

measures such as relaxing class size requirements (to allow under-enrolled classes to continue operating) and providing special relief grants to kindergartens have been implemented to prevent a rash of school closures (Education Bureau, 2022). However, if current emigration and low birth patterns persist, Hong Kong's ECE sector could undergo a contraction, raising concerns about ensuring equitable access to quality early education across all communities.

Declining enrolment and school closures carry implications for equity in early childhood education. One concern outlined in the chapter is that if many non-profit kindergartens (which are the majority under FQKES) close down or merge, families in certain neighborhoods – particularly outlying or less affluent areas – might be left with fewer nearby options. In extreme cases, they might only have private independent providers remaining, which charge higher fees and are not fully covered by government subsidies, potentially pricing out lower-income families. This scenario could undermine the equity gains achieved by the Free Quality Kindergarten Education policy. Moreover, a shrinking sector might reduce competition in ways that are not necessarily beneficial. While a less crowded market could ease pressure on the schools that remain open, it could also limit parental choice and reduce the incentive for schools to innovate or maintain high standards—especially if they assume enrolments are guaranteed simply by their continued existence. Ironically, this trend might present an opportunity to enhance quality. Smaller cohorts could lead to smaller class sizes and improved teacher-child ratios, but only if managed strategically. This would require deliberate policy measures to redirect excess capacity in ways that benefit children, such as providing funding for kindergartens to operate with 10 to 12 students per class, rather than closing classes altogether (Lau, 2023). Another dimension of equity is the impact on ECE educators themselves. As schools lay off staff or freeze hiring, new graduates of ECE programs may struggle to find jobs,

and remaining teachers may face heavier workloads covering duties of departed colleagues. This can affect the attractiveness of ECE as a career, potentially leading to a vicious cycle of talent shortages in the future when birth rates might rebound. Ensuring a stable, motivated workforce is an equity issue too, as the consistency and quality of teacher-child interactions are at the heart of educational equity in the classroom (Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014).

TABLE 3

Number of Kindergartens and Scheme Kindergartens in Hong Kong (2012 – 2025)

Academic Year	Total Number of Kindergartens	Number of Scheme Kindergartens
2012/13	957	N/A
2013/14	969	N/A
2014/15	978	N/A
2015/16	1,000	N/A
2016/17	1,014	N/A
2017/18	1,030	748
2018/19	1,033	753
2019/20	1,046	761
2020/21	1,046	763
2021/22	1,042	762
2022/23	1,026	749
2023/24	1,009	738
2024/25	979	730

Diagram 1

Development of kindergarten demographic in Hong Kong from 2012/13 to 2024/25 academic year

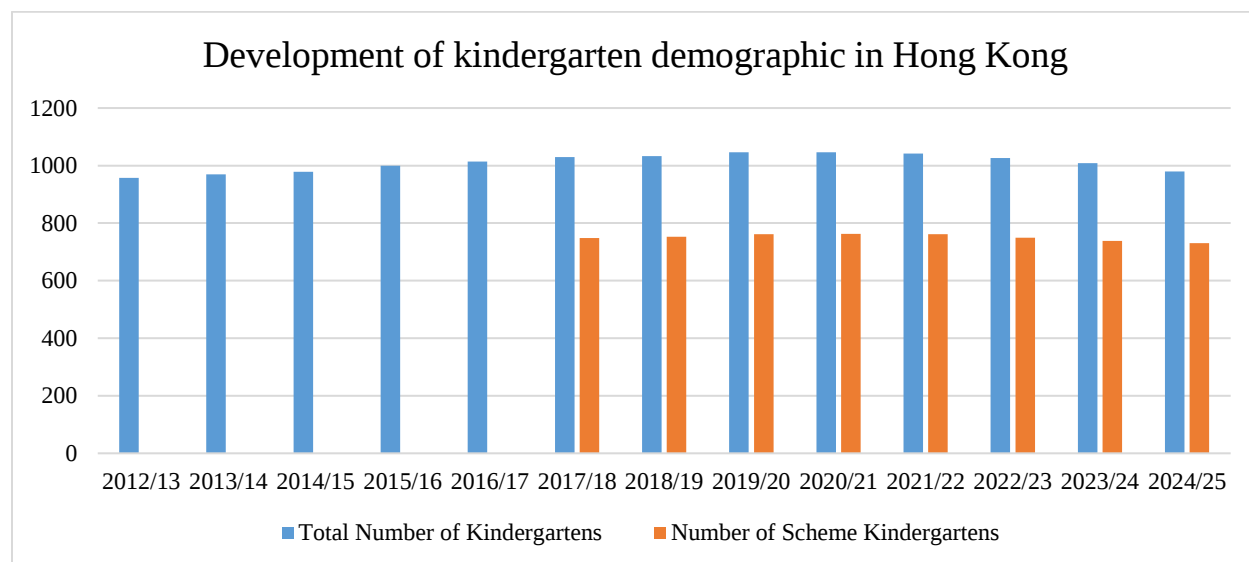
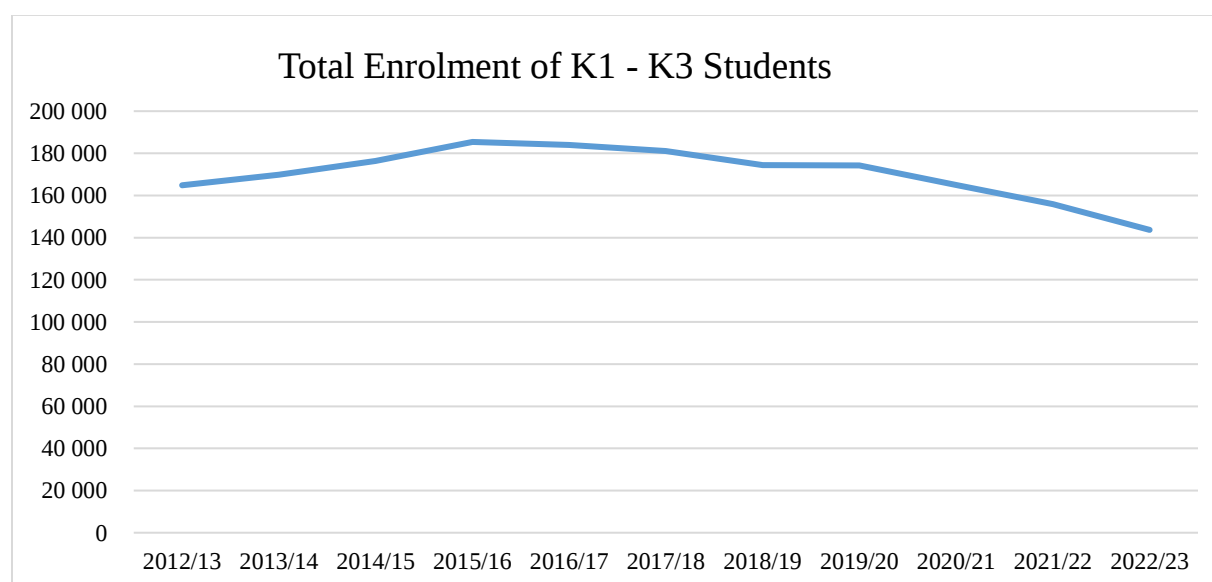


Diagram 2

Total numbers of kindergarten students (K1 – K3) enrolment in Hong Kong from 2012/13 academic year to 2022/23 academic year



More kindergartens with vacancy and its relationship with reduced demand for half-day kindergarten programmes

In recent years, more kindergartens in Hong Kong have been facing a significant challenge with rising student place vacancies, particularly in the K1 level (first year of kindergarten). This issue has become more prominent as demographic trends such as declining birth rates and emigration have reduced the number of children enrolling in kindergartens. Additionally, there is a notable shift in parental preferences from half-day kindergarten programmes to full-day options, which is further exacerbating the problem of vacancies in certain areas.

District-Level Vacancy Analysis

As of July 2023, many districts reported alarmingly high vacancy rates among kindergartens participating in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education (FQKE). For instance: Southern District had the highest vacancy rate, with 95% (18 out of 19) of kindergartens reporting K1 vacancies. Kwai Tsing District followed with 83% (48 out of 58) of kindergartens showing K1 vacancies. Other areas with significant vacancy rates include Eastern (77%), North (76%), and Kwun Tong (74%) (See Table 4).

By September 2024, this trend continued, with some districts seeing slight changes but still maintaining high vacancy rates: Southern District remained at the top, with 94% (17 out of 18) of kindergartens having K1 vacancies. Tuen Mun saw an increase in vacancies, with 83% (48 out of 58) reporting K1 openings. Kwai Tsing and Kwun Tong continued to struggle with 82% of kindergartens in both districts experiencing vacancies (See Table 4).

These high vacancy rates are indicative of the growing challenge kindergartens face in attracting and retaining students, which is closely linked to demographic shifts and changing parental preferences revealed by the market demand trend.

Table 4

Kindergartens with Nursery (K1) Vacancy in 2023

Rank	District	Total Number of KG participating FQKE Scheme	Number of Scheme KG with K1 vacancy (as of July 2023)	%
1	Southern	19	18	95%
2	Kwai Tsing	58	48	83%
3	Eastern	52	40	77%
4	North	42	32	76%
5	Island	25	19	76%
6	Kwun Tong	74	55	74%
7	Tuen Mun	58	42	72%
8	Wong Tai Sin	43	31	72%
9	Shatin	59	42	71%
10	Wan Chai	17	12	71%
11	Shum Shui Po	46	32	70%
12	Tsuen Wan	33	22	67%
13	Sai Kung	41	27	66%
14	Taipo	24	15	63%
15	Kowloon City	49	30	61%
16	Yuen Long	69	37	54%
17	Central & West	25	13	52%
18	Yau Tsim Mong	26	10	38%

Table 5*Kindergartens with Nursery (K1) Vacancy in 2024*

Rank	District	Total Number of KG participating FQKE Scheme	Number of Scheme KG with K1 vacancy (as of Sept 2024)	%
1	Southern	18	17	94%
2	Tuen Mun	58	48	83%
3	Kwai Tsing	56	46	82%
4	Kwun Tong	71	58	82%
5	Eastern	48	38	79%
6	Wong Tai Sin	42	33	79%
7	North	41	32	78%
8	Shum Shui Po	45	34	76%
9	Island	25	18	72%
10	Central & West	25	18	72%
11	Kowloon City	45	32	71%
12	Shatin	58	41	71%
13	Sai Kung	41	28	68%
14	Tsuen Wan	31	21	68%
15	Taipo	24	16	67%
16	Wan Chai	16	10	63%
17	Yuen Long	67	40	60%
18	Yau Tsim Mong	23	12	52%

Enhanced academic qualification of early childhood educators

Recent data retrieved from the Education Bureau (EDB) demonstrate a consistent enhancement in the academic qualifications of early childhood educators in Hong Kong over the past six academic years. Recent statistics from the Education Bureau (EDB) reveal that the percentage of trained teachers with a Certificate in Early Childhood Education (C(ECE)) qualification has risen from 97.3% in the 2018/19 academic year to 98.5% in 2023/24 (Education

Bureau, 2023). This upward trend underscores a sector-wide commitment to professional development and the promotion of higher standards in early childhood education.

Further analysis indicates that both Scheme and Non-scheme Kindergartens (KGs) have a high proportion of degree-holding educators. In Scheme KGs, 69% of teachers are degree holders (7,060 individuals), while 31% are non-degree holders (3,120 individuals). Similarly, in non-scheme KGs, 72% of teachers are degree holders (2,639 individuals), compared to 28% non-degree holders (1,024 individuals). This data suggests that a significant majority of early childhood educators possess higher academic qualifications, regardless of the kindergarten's funding scheme (see Table 6).

Table 6

Academic Qualifications of Teachers in Scheme and Non-scheme Kindergartens during 2023/24

HR Qualification	Scheme KGs	Non-scheme KGs
Degree holders	7060 (69%)	2639 (72%)
Non-degree holders	3120 (31%)	1024 (28%)

The increasing qualification levels among early childhood educators are crucial for delivering quality education. According to Sylva et al. (2010), well-qualified teachers are better equipped to implement effective pedagogical practices that enhance children's learning outcomes. Moreover, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) emphasizes that educator qualifications significantly impact the quality of early childhood education and care (OECD, 2012). Higher qualifications contribute to improved teaching

strategies, better classroom management, and more positive interactions with children (Taguma et al., 2012).

These improvements align with global efforts to elevate early childhood education standards. By investing in teacher qualifications, Hong Kong is fostering an educational environment that supports children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, ultimately contributing to better long-term educational and societal outcomes (UNESCO, 2015).

An analysis of teachers' years of experience in kindergartens participating in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme further illustrates the dynamics within the sector. Between the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years, the total number of teachers in Scheme KGs dropped by 838, from 11,012 to 10,174. The number of teachers with over seven years of experience decreased by 379, from 6,187 (56.2%) to 5,808 (57%). Despite the reduction in overall teacher numbers and experience levels, the proportion of highly qualified educators remains significant (see Table 6 and Table 7).

Table 7

Comparative Analysis of teachers' years of experience in institutions taking part in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme 2021/22 & 2022/23

	Total no. of Teachers in Scheme	Work experience < 4 years	Work experience 4 - 7 years	Work experience > 7 years
2021/22	11,012	2574 (23.4%)	2251 (20.4%)	6187 (56.2%)
2022/23	10,174	2365 (23%)	2001 (20%)	5808 (57%)
Change	Dropped by 838 teachers	Dropped by 209 teachers	Dropped by 250 teachers	Dropped by 379 teachers

The increasing academic qualifications among educators are essential for maintaining and improving the quality of early childhood education in Hong Kong. Well-qualified teachers are more adept at delivering comprehensive curricula and fostering environments conducive to holistic child development. This commitment to educator qualification is particularly significant in light of the slight decline in experienced teachers, as it helps mitigate potential impacts on educational quality.

By investing in the professional development of early childhood educators, Hong Kong aligns itself with international best practices. The city's efforts contribute to a robust early childhood education system that not only benefits children's immediate learning experiences but also supports their long-term educational trajectories and societal contributions (UNESCO, 2015).

Rising drop-out rate of early childhood educators

The enhanced professional standard of Hong Kong early childhood educators is somewhat overshadowed by a concerning trend of qualified teachers leaving the profession. The dropout trend among qualified teachers is a critical issue that needs to be addressed. It could be driven by various factors such as job stress, inadequate compensation, lack of professional development opportunities, or the demanding nature of the job. This trend not only depletes the sector of skilled and experienced educators but also disrupts the continuity of learning for children.

Table 8*Wastage rate of early childhood education teachers from 2017 – 2024*

	School year						
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Wastage Rate of ECE Teachers (%) ^{1, 2}	10.50%	12.30%	12.00%	10.20%	13.20%	17.60%	19.10%

Remarks: 1 Only data from local kindergartens were included

2 The percentage of teachers who left local kindergartens compared to the total number from the previous school year. These "drop-out teachers" were employed last year but are no longer working in any kindergarten this year. It highlights the turnover rate in the local kindergarten teaching workforce.

The public data retrieved from Education Bureau's collected statistics (see Table 8) also revealed the rising wastage rate amongst kindergarten teachers. Although the percentage of trained kindergarten teachers have reached almost 98.5% in year 2023/24 academic year, qualified teachers who chose to drop out from the sector has climbed to historical high of 19.1%. The turnover intention of early childhood educators is very much concerning the sector. A study conducted with over 1100 early childhood educators in Hong Kong revealed that 42% of the interviewees expressed their turnover intention while 54% of the participants reported that over 3 colleagues working in the same organisation had resigned in a single academic year (Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers, 2019). The EDB statistic highlighted the situation of younger teachers resigned than their more experienced counterparts. From 2021/22 to 2022/23 academic year, there's an alarming record of 459 teachers working in the early childhood sector for less than 7 years dropping out from the field, in comparison to 379 more experienced counterparts.

Younger teachers (with work experience less than 7 years) consist of around 43% of the total teacher population. Hence it is crucial to address challenges faced by the novice and junior teachers to reduce job turnover intention among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong (EDB, 2022 & EDB, 2023).

In summary, Hong Kong's early childhood education sector is facing a pivotal moment, dealing with a decline in student enrolment and a reduction in kindergarten numbers while also working to enhance professional standards. Retaining qualified teachers is critical to maintaining the quality of early childhood education. These challenges highlight the urgent need for well-rounded strategies and policies that promote the sector's sustainable growth. To tackle these issues, collaboration between policymakers, educators, and other key stakeholders is essential to ensure sufficient resources, training, and support for early childhood educators. By focusing on the needs of both educators and children, efforts can be made to foster a more supportive and nurturing educational environment in Hong Kong.

Declining needs for half-day kindergarten programmes in Hong Kong

The data from the *Kindergarten Profile* by the Education Bureau reveals notable trends in the modes of Early Childhood Education (ECE) services in Hong Kong between the 2021/22 and 2024/24 academic years (Education Bureau, 2021, 2025). There has been a 4.5% decrease in the total number of Scheme Kindergartens (KGs), from 763 to 730, indicating a contraction in the ECE sector during this period.

Specifically, Full-day Kindergartens cum Child Care Centers (CCC) decreased marginally by 0.41%, from 245 to 244 institutions (Education Bureau, 2021, 2023). This minimal reduction suggests that the demand for full-day programs remains relatively stable. The stability may be attributed to working parents' ongoing need for full-day care to accommodate

their schedules (Census and Statistics Department, 2022) and a preference for programs offering extended educational and care services throughout the day (Education Commission, 2015).

In contrast, Half-day Kindergartens experienced a significant decrease of 9.79%, from 143 in year 2021/22 to 129 institutions in year 2023/24 (Education Bureau, 2021, 2023). This substantial decline indicates a shifting preference away from half-day programs. Possible reasons include an increase in dual-income households where both parents work full-time, reducing the practicality of half-day services (Labor Department, 2020). Additionally, there is a perception that full-day programs provide a more robust educational experience (Education Commission, 2015), and challenges in sustaining half-day programs financially may have led to closures or mergers (Education Bureau, 2017).

Mixed Mode Kindergartens cum CCC saw a modest decrease of 2.14%, from 373 to 365 institutions (Education Bureau, 2021, 2023). Despite the slight decline, mixed-mode programs remain prevalent due to their flexibility. They offer both full-day and half-day options, catering to diverse family needs (Education Commission, 2015), and can adjust their service offerings based on demand trends (Education Bureau, 2017).

These trends have significant implications. The growing demand for full-day ECE services is likely driven by societal shifts such as increased workforce participation among parents, especially mothers (Census and Statistics Department, 2022), and the pursuit of work-life balance, prompting families to seek ECE services that align with standard working hours (Labor Department, 2020). The decreased demand for half-day programs may render them less sustainable (Education Bureau, 2017), leading to service consolidation where some half-day

kindergartens integrate into mixed-mode or full-day programs to remain viable (Education Bureau, 2017).

Policy and resource allocation may need adjustment. Government support could be necessary to sustain half-day programs if they are deemed essential (Education Commission, 2015). Revisiting funding and subsidy models to reflect current demands and encourage a diverse range of services is also important (Education Bureau, 2017). For the future of ECE services, kindergartens may need to adapt their service modes to meet changing demands, possibly by expanding full-day offerings (Education Bureau, 2017), while ensuring that the expansion does not compromise educational quality (Quality Assurance Division, Education Bureau, 2019).

In conclusion, the decreasing number of half-day kindergartens alongside the relative stability of full-day and mixed-mode institutions indicates a significant shift in the needs and preferences of families in Hong Kong. Factors such as increased parental workforce participation and the desire for comprehensive childcare solutions are driving this change (Census and Statistics Department, 2022). It is crucial for policymakers, educators, and service providers to recognize these trends and adapt effectively to ensure that early childhood education services continue to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Table 9

Changes in the Number of Scheme Kindergartens by Mode of Services in Hong Kong (2021/22 to 2023/24)

Mode of ECE services	Scheme KGs (2021/22)	Scheme KGs (2023/24)	Change
Full-day KG cum CCC	245	244	-0.41%
Half-day KG	143	129	-9.79%
Mixed mode KG cum CCC	373	365	-2.14%
Total:	761	738	-3.02%

Remarks:

Full-day KG cum CCC refers to institutions registered as kindergarten and childcare center running solely full-day programmes

Half-day KG refers to institutions registered as kindergarten running solely half-day programme in either morning or afternoon or both sessions

Mixed mode KG cum CCC refers to institutions registered as kindergarten and childcare center running both full-day and half-day programmes

A key factor contributing to the increasing vacancy rates in Hong Kong kindergartens is the reduced demand for half-day programmes. As of the 2024-25 academic year, 736 kindergartens are participating in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education (FQKE) Scheme, yet only 101 kindergartens reported zero vacancies in student enrolments. Among the 101 kindergartens that reported zero vacancies, the majority—75 kindergartens—operate in the solely full-day mode. This dominant representation of full-day programmes highlights the growing demand for extended care options. In contrast, only 23 kindergartens offer a solely half-day mode, indicating that fewer families are opting for this more limited format. Additionally, just 3 kindergartens provide a mixed mode, blending both full-day and half-day options, further

underscoring the marginal appeal of half-day programmes in today's market. This breakdown clearly shows a strong parental preference for full-day kindergarten programmes, driven by the need for flexibility and extended childcare hours in modern family dynamics. The high number of full-day kindergartens without vacancies highlights the growing demand for this mode, while the minimal vacancies in half-day and mixed-mode programmes reflect their decreasing relevance.

The reduced demand for half-day programmes can be attributed to several factors, including the need for parents, especially in dual-working families to have reliable and extended care for their children. Full-day programmes not only offer a more comprehensive educational experience but also allow parents to better manage their work-life balance, a crucial factor in Hong Kong's fast-paced, urban environment.

The low number of kindergartens offering half-day programmes without vacancies further illustrates the waning appeal of this model. In contrast, full-day programmes continue to dominate the enrolment landscape, forcing many kindergartens that operate half-day programmes to either adapt or face challenges in attracting sufficient enrolments. This preference for full-day care reflects a broader shift in Hong Kong society, where dual-income households and longer working hours make extended childcare options more practical. As the demand for full-day programmes grows, kindergartens offering only half-day modes are increasingly under pressure to either switch to full-day or mixed modes or risk high vacancy rates and financial strain.

Table 10

Proportion of kindergartens with full student enrolment in 2024-25 academic year

Mode of kindergarten programmes	No. of kindergartens
Solely Full-Day Mode	75
Solely Half-day Mode	23
Mixed Mode	3
Total number of kindergartens with no vacancy	101

Diagram 3

Proportion of kindergartens with full student enrolment in 2024-25 academic year

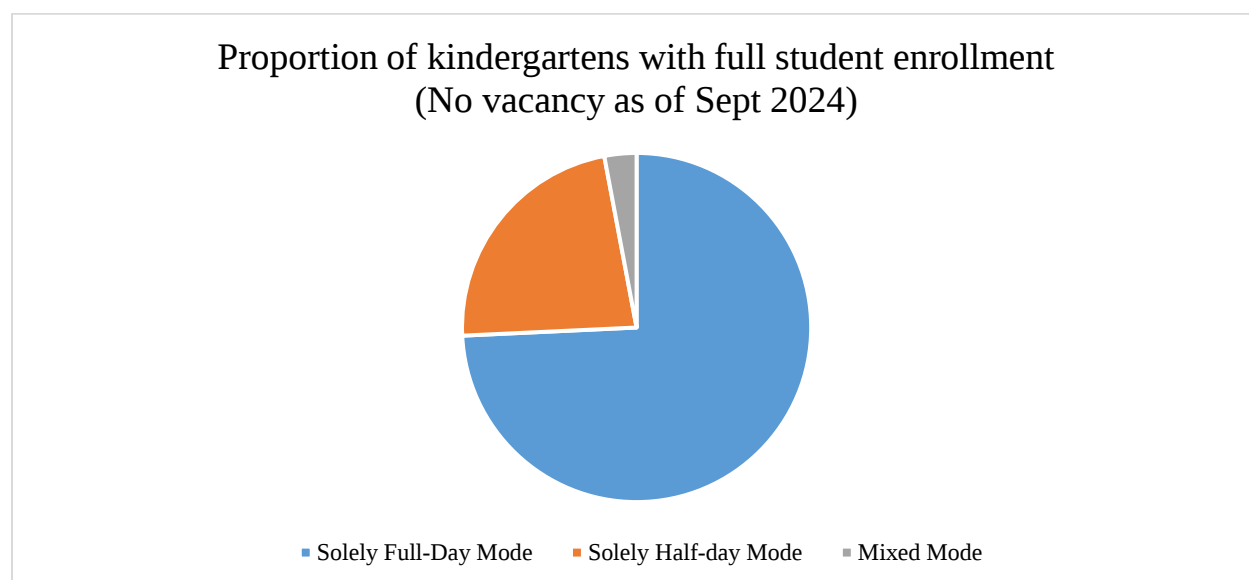


Table 11*EDB Statistic of Kindergarten Education (From 2012/13 to 2023/24 academic year)*

	School year											
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total numbers of kindergartens	957	969	978	1 000	1 014	1 030	1 033	1 049	1 046	1 042	1 026	1009
Of which joining the FQKE Scheme ⁽¹⁾	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	748	753	761	763	762	749	738
Total Enrolment of Students	164 764	169 843	176 397	185 398	184 032	181 147	174 402	174 297	164 935	155 956	143 676	136095
K1 (Nursery)	54 829	57 824	62 369	65 323	57 355	59 350	58 168	58 710	53 877	50 003	46 985	42182
K2 (Lower)	56 483	56 699	58 738	63 315	65 769	58 481	59 978	58 534	57 195	53 199	48 646	47947
K3 (Upper)	53 452	55 320	55 290	56 760	60 908	63 316	56 256	57 053	53 863	52 754	48 045	45966
No. of Kindergarten Teachers	11 817	12 384	12 893	13 552	13 930	14 155	14 145	14 389	14 119	13 486	12 644	11733
Percentage of Trained Teachers ⁽²⁾	95.70%	95.30%	96.10%	96.00%	96.70%	97.30%	97.30%	97.80%	98.10%	98.30%	98.00%	98.50%
With C(ECE) qualification ⁽³⁾ or above	84.80%	87.60%	90.40%	91.20%	92.70%	93.90%	94.40%	95.40%	95.90%	96.30%	96.30%	97.00%
Other kind of teacher qualification (including QKT & QAKT) ⁽³⁾	10.90%	7.70%	5.70%	4.80%	4.00%	3.40%	2.90%	2.40%	2.20%	2.00%	1.70%	1.50%
Student-Teacher Ratio ⁽²⁾⁽⁴⁾	9.3:1	9.3:1	9.1:1	9.0:1	8.7:1	8.6:1	8.4:1	8.3:1	8.1:1	8.0:1	8.0:1	8.3:1
Wastage Rate of Teachers (%) ⁽²⁾⁽⁵⁾	8.30%	8.00%	9.20%	8.60%	10.50%	10.50%	12.30%	12.00%	10.20%	13.20%	17.60%	19.10%
With C(ECE) qualification ⁽³⁾ or above	5.90%	6.60%	7.20%	7.40%	9%	9.20%	11.40%	11.10%	9.60%	12.70%	17.00%	18.60%
Other kind of teacher qualification (including QKT & QAKT) ⁽³⁾	14.20%	13.60%	18.40%	13.70%	18%	26.00%	22.90%	25.30%	19.40%	22.60%	34.40%	24.90%
Untrained ⁽⁶⁾	26.90%	22.50%	31.50%	28%	34.70%	26.80%	29.80%	27.80%	26.80%	25.40%	32.70%	38.20%
Remarks:	All figures above include kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-child care centers, but not special childcare centers with registration under the Social Welfare Department. Figures for the 2020/21 school year refer to the statistics as at mid-October 2020, and others refer to the statistics as at mid-September of the respective school years.											
-1	" FQKE " refers to the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme, which has been implemented since the 2017/18 school year.											
-2	Figures include teachers from local kindergartens, but not from non-local kindergartens.											
-3	C(ECE) – Certificate in Early Childhood Education. QKT – Qualified Kindergarten Teacher. QAKT – Qualified Assistant Kindergarten Teacher.											
-4	Figures are calculated based on half-day equivalent unit.											
-5	Figures represent the percentage of drop-out teachers who left their jobs in local kindergartens in the preceding school year. "Drop-out teachers" refer to the teachers who were teaching in local kindergartens in the preceding school year but were no longer working in any kindergarten during the school year concerned.											
-6	"Untrained" refers to teachers who did not obtain any teacher training qualifications equivalent to C(ECE) or above or other professional qualifications (including QKT & QAKT).											



2.2.5 Occupational wellbeing amongst early childhood educators in Hong Kong

Occupational wellbeing amongst early childhood educators is a concerning topic in Hong Kong, especially when there's alarming rise in wastage rate of teachers observed since 2020/21 academic years, dropping total numbers of kindergartens since 2019/20 academic year and significant dropping trend of kindergarten teachers from the field since 2019/20 academic year (see diagram 3, diagram 5 and table 3). Several factors have been identified in research that contribute to the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong, including high stress level and burnout causing by prolong working hours, heavy job demands, work-family conflict, lack of job autonomy and limited provision of job resources at workplace.

The early childhood profession in Hong Kong is often linked with high stress level and burnout due to the prolong working hours compared to other occupation and the daily teaching process in high-intensity nature and this always causes conflicts towards the individual's roles at home. Early childhood educators in Hong Kong spend an average of 9.2 hours daily in schools, exceeding the optimal 8-hour work period (Wong, 2015). Furthermore, a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Federation of Kindergarten Teachers revealed that more than 90% of the 1,255 respondents reported working up to 70 hours a week, with nearly half of them working between 60 to 70 hours, a significant increase from previous work hours. This prolonged working time is associated with sleeping problems, stress issues, and conflicts in balancing professional and personal roles. The demanding nature of the daily teaching process and administrative burden further exacerbates the challenges faced by kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong (Leung, 2019). These findings underscore the substantial impact of long working hours on the well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

Job demands and work-family conflict are two factors that can negatively impact the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. Job demands refer to the physical, cognitive, and emotional demands of the job, such as stress on time management, workload, and emotional exhaustion. Studies have found that high job demands are associated with greater degree of burnout and lower job satisfaction among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong (Fong et al., 2020; Wong & Tsang, 2016). Work-family conflict, which refers to the conflicts brought by both work and family roles of an individual, has also been found to be negatively associated with the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong (Wang et al., 2025). Fong et al. (2020) found that high demands from the workplace were associated with greater degree of burnout and reduced job satisfaction among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. Similarly, Wong and Tsang (2016) found that high job demands were linked with reduced job satisfaction and higher degree of emotional exhaustion among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. Wang et al (2025) found that work-family conflict was negatively linked with the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. The study suggested that there should be further intervention designed to solve the challenges imposed by work-family conflict and to improve work-life balance so there would be potential to enhance the occupational well-being of kindergarten teachers. Research has shown that teachers' work-family conflict with immediate family members and colleagues can lead to negative outcomes, such as stress, burnout, and lower job satisfaction (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Family-work conflict refers to the extent to which demands from workplace overwhelmed the individual's family responsibilities, and vice versa. Shoshani and Eldor (2016) revealed in their research that teachers who reported higher levels of family-work conflict were more likely to experience burnout and stress. The study found that teachers who experienced higher degree of family-work conflict tend to experience

worse depersonalization, exhaustion in emotion and less sense of personal accomplishment, all of which are key components of personal and job burnout. The negative impact of these challenges on teachers' well-being and job satisfaction can ultimately affect the quality of education that young children receive.

Another factor contributing to teachers' occupational wellbeing is job autonomy, which refers to the degree of control and independence that employees have in managing their work and making work-related decisions. This aspect is crucial because the absence of job autonomy can lead to negative emotions, self-doubt, dissatisfaction, and burnout (Tait, 2008). Job autonomy is an essential aspect of teachers' occupational well-being because it allows them to have a sense of control over their work and make decisions based on their professional judgment. When teachers experience high levels of job autonomy, they are more likely to feel empowered and satisfied in their roles, which can contribute to their overall well-being. On the other hand, a lack of job autonomy can lead to feelings of powerlessness and dissatisfaction, further exacerbating the challenges faced by teachers in high-pressure environments such as Hong Kong. The level of job autonomy can vary depending on the school context. A study examining the occupational well-being of novice early childhood educators in Hong Kong found that job resources, including job autonomy, were significant predictors of occupational well-being (Li, Yang et al., 2021). Studies have also found that higher degree of job autonomy are positively associated with greater work engagement and satisfaction of job among early childhood education educators (Fong et al., 2020).

Research has consistently shown that job autonomy is positively associated with employee well-being (Clausen et al., 2022; Ryu et al., 2022). Teachers who perceive themselves as having autonomy in their work tend to display better job satisfaction level (Dou et al., 2017). Furthermore, the lack of job autonomy has been associated with a cascade of inefficacy and

attrition within the first few years of teaching (Harmsen et al., 2018). In the context of Hong Kong kindergartens, the demands of the daily teaching process and administrative burden can significantly contribute to the long working hours and high levels of stress experienced by teachers. These factors can limit the degree of job autonomy that teachers have, leading to a decline in their occupational well-being. It is crucial to address this issue by providing teachers with the necessary support, resources, and training to help them manage their workload and maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives. Therefore, understanding the level of job autonomy among early childhood educators in Hong Kong is essential for addressing occupational well-being concerns.

The occupational well-being of early childhood education educators can also be significantly influenced by the availability of job resources, which encompass both tangible and intangible assets that aid teachers in effectively carrying out their professional responsibilities (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The demands of the daily teaching process, administrative burden, and prolonged working hours significantly impact the availability of job resources for these educators. Job resources, which include teaching materials, training opportunities, and a supportive organizational culture, are essential for teachers to perform their duties effectively and maintain their occupational well-being. However, the strain caused by the extended work hours and administrative burden has led to a scarcity of these resources, further exacerbating the challenges faced by kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong.

2.3 The Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory

Humans possess a unique capability to shape and modify their environment to suit their needs. This ability is not just about physical alterations to the environment, but also includes the creation of social norms, cultural practices, and institutions. This active engagement with the

environment makes humans active agents in their own development, a concept articulated by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979.

For instance, consider a child growing up in a safe and stimulating environment. Such an environment could include a home with supportive parents, a school with dedicated teachers, and a neighborhood with accessible recreational facilities. In such an environment, the child is more likely to thrive, developing cognitive, emotional, and social skills at a healthy pace. Similarly, adults working in a safe and motivating workplace tend to achieve better both personally and professionally. They are likely to be more productive, have higher job satisfaction, and maintain a better work-life balance.

The environment, therefore, plays a critical role in shaping human experiences and opportunities. It is within this context that Urie Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist, developed the ‘Ecological Systems Theory’. This theory posits that an individual’s development is influenced by a series of interconnected environmental systems, ranging from the individual’s immediate surroundings to broader societal elements. He identified the five different systems: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.

2.3.1 Microsystem

The microsystem, as defined by Urie Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory, is the immediate environment in which an individual closely interacts. This includes various contexts such as the classroom, playground, home, workplace, and religious institutions. In these settings, the developing individual experiences specific activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).



The microsystem plays a pivotal role in shaping human development. It is within this immediate environment that individuals, particularly children, first learn to navigate the world around them. Children who grow up in safe, supportive, and stimulating environments are more likely to thrive (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The quality of the microsystem environment can significantly impact an individual's cognitive, social, and emotional development (Sameroff & Fiese, 2000).

For instance, children who experience positive interactions with their parents and teachers are more likely to develop healthy social skills and self-esteem. These positive interactions can foster a sense of security and belonging, which are crucial for the development of a healthy self-concept and positive interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, children who experience negative interactions with their parents and teachers are more likely to develop behavioral problems and low self-esteem (Pianta & Walsh, 1996). These negative experiences can lead to feelings of insecurity and inadequacy, which can hinder the child's social and emotional development.

However, the microsystem is not a static environment. It is constantly changing and evolving as the individual grows and develops. As the individual's needs and abilities change, the microsystem must adapt to meet those needs (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). For example, as a child grows older, they may require more challenging academic work or more opportunities for social interaction. The microsystem, in this case, the school environment, must adapt to provide these opportunities.

Similarly, as adults develop in the workplace, they seek more stimulating and rewarding work opportunities in order to advance in their career pathway. The workplace, as a microsystem, must adapt to provide these opportunities. This could involve providing

opportunities for professional development, creating a supportive and inclusive work culture, or implementing policies that promote work-life balance.

In conclusion, the microsystem, as the first level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, plays a critical role in human development. It is within this immediate environment that individuals learn, grow, and develop. The quality of the microsystem can significantly impact an individual's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the microsystem environment is safe, supportive, and stimulating, and that it evolves to meet the changing needs of the individual.

2.3.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem, as defined by Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, represents the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates. This level of the ecological system can include various relationships such as those between home, school, and neighborhood peer groups for a child, or among family, work, and social life for an adult (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

The mesosystem plays a crucial role in shaping human development. It is within this environment that individuals interact with multiple settings, each of which can significantly influence their development. For instance, a child's development can be profoundly influenced by the relationship between their home and school environments. If these two settings are harmonious and mutually supportive, the child is more likely to develop positive characteristics such as resilience, adaptability, and a love for learning. They are likely to feel secure and confident, knowing that they have a consistent support system across multiple aspects of their life.

Conversely, if there is a negative relationship between the two settings - for example, if the child's learning style is encouraged at home but not at school, or if there is a lack of communication or cooperation between the child's parents and teachers - the child may experience stress and anxiety. This discordance can impact their overall development, leading to issues such as decreased academic performance, behavioral problems, and low self-esteem.

However, it's important to note that the mesosystem, like all other levels of the ecological system, is not a static environment. It is constantly changing and evolving as the individual grows and develops. As the individual's needs, interests, and abilities change, so too must the mesosystem adapt to meet those emerging needs (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

For example, as a child transitions from elementary school to middle school, their mesosystem will also undergo a transition. The child will be introduced to a new school environment, new teachers, and a new peer group. The relationships among these settings will form a new mesosystem, which will play a crucial role in shaping the child's development during this critical transition period.

Similarly, as adults progress through different stages of life, their mesosystem also evolves. The relationships among family, work, and social life can change significantly over time. For instance, the birth of a child, a job change, or a move to a new city can all lead to significant changes in an adult's mesosystem.

In conclusion, the mesosystem, as the second level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, plays a critical role in human development. It represents the interrelations among the various settings in which an individual actively participates. These interrelations can significantly influence an individual's development, shaping their experiences, behaviors, and

overall wellbeing. As such, it's crucial to foster positive and supportive relationships among these settings to promote healthy human development.

2.3.3 Exosystem

The exosystem, as defined by Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, represents the third level of the ecological system. It refers to larger social systems that do not directly involve the developing person as an active participant but can impact or be affected by events in the immediate setting containing the developing person. This can include various elements such as institutional policies, events that happened to the individual's family members or stakeholders at workplaces, as well as the impact of media can indirectly influence the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Olivia, 2023).

Families' working hours and their demands for childcare services

The exosystem plays a critical role in shaping human development. It is within this environment that individuals are influenced by events and circumstances in a broader context, even though they do not actively participate in these settings. A pertinent example is the impact of parents' working hours on a child's need for extended childcare services, which would both influence the child's learning experience and the workload of corresponding early childhood educators. When parents have flexible or reasonable working hours, they can allocate more time to engage with their children. This increased availability allows them to provide emotional support, fostering secure attachments and healthy emotional development (Bowlby, 1988). They can offer cognitive stimulation through activities like reading, playing, and exploring, which enhances learning and intellectual growth (Hart & Risley, 1995). Additionally, parents can consistently reinforce positive behaviors and address challenges promptly, offering

essential behavioral guidance (Baumrind, 1991). Conversely, long or inflexible working hours can limit parents' availability, leading to reduced parent-child interaction (Brooks-Gunn et al., 2002). There is less time for meaningful conversations and activities that promote bonding and development. This limitation may cause emotional strain on the child, with feelings of neglect or abandonment potentially leading to insecurity or low self-esteem (Steinberg & Silk, 2002). Critical periods for language development, social skills, and moral understanding might not receive adequate parental input, resulting in missed learning opportunities (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

In response to parents' extended working hours, the demand for longer childcare service hours increases (Fuller et al., 2002). This need arises from the necessity to ensure that children are in a safe environment during the hours parents are unavailable. Quality childcare can provide educational and social experiences that promote development in the absence of parental interaction (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2006). Extended hours at a childcare facility also offer a stable routine, which is essential for a child's sense of security (Cassidy, 1994).

While extended childcare services can mitigate some negative effects of parents' long working hours, they introduce new dynamics. The developmental benefits largely depend on the quality of the childcare provided; high-quality programs with trained staff can offer significant support (Vandell et al., 2010). Children have the opportunity to interact with peers, enhancing social skills and emotional intelligence (Denham et al., 2003). However, caregivers may become significant attachment figures, which can be positive but might also complicate the child's primary attachment relationships (Howes & Hamilton, 1992).

Parents' workplaces, policies, and societal expectations about work-life balance are components of the exosystem that indirectly affect the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Companies that do not offer flexible working arrangements force parents to spend less time at home (Hill et al., 2001). In economies where dual incomes are necessary for a household, both parents may need to work long hours due to economic demands (Bianchi, 2000). Societal expectations about career dedication can pressure parents into prioritizing work over family time, reflecting cultural norms (Hochschild, 1997). These exosystem factors necessitate adjustments in the child's microsystem, such as seeking extended childcare services to fill the gaps left by parental absence. Recognizing the influence of the exosystem highlights the importance of considering broader social and institutional factors when addressing a child's developmental needs and educators' occupational and professional demands (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, the evolving trend in families' demands for different modes of kindergarten or childcare programs will impact how early childhood education is provided, leading to transformations in the sector accordingly.

Changing institutional policies as an exosystem factor

The exosystem is not a static environment; it continually changes and evolves as the individual grows and develops (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, the practices and policies of a school and its district can significantly impact the resources and support that kindergarten teachers receive, which in turn affects their ability to provide quality education to their students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). If the school district implements policies that promote professional development and provide adequate resources for facilitating educators to work with dual-work families, teachers will be better equipped to facilitate effective learning experiences for their students (Guskey, 2002). In the context of Hong Kong, families' working hours demands have a

significant impact on the institutional policies of early childhood settings. The city's fast-paced work environment, characterized by long working hours and a high prevalence of dual-income households, requires early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to adapt to the diverse scheduling needs of families (Choi & Cheung, 2013). Many parents engage in non-traditional work schedules, including extended hours, shift work, and weekend employment, increasing the demand for flexible ECEC services beyond standard operating hours.

Early childhood institutions in Hong Kong have responded by extending opening hours in as part of the childcare centres policies, offering flexible drop-off and pick-up times, and providing full-day kindergarten programs and extended childcare hours service. These adaptations aim to support parents in balancing work and family responsibilities, thereby promoting greater workforce participation, especially among mothers (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, 2015). Some centers offer part-time or occasional care options to cater to parents with variable work schedules, acknowledging the need for flexibility.

Moreover, the demand for flexible ECEC services influences staffing policies and resource allocation within institutions. Early childhood settings may need to implement staggered staffing schedules, provide staff training for extended hours care, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements for child-to-educator ratios at all times (Education Bureau, 2017). Institutions might also collaborate with employers and community organizations to support the provision of extended care services, enhancing the support network for working families.

These policy adjustments aim to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of early childhood programs in Hong Kong, acknowledging the changing nature of work and its impact on family life. By aligning institutional policies with families' working hours demands, early

childhood settings contribute to better developmental outcomes for children and support parental employment (Xu, et al., 2023). This alignment not only benefits families but also promotes social equity by providing all children with quality early education opportunities regardless of their parents' work schedules (OECD, 2012).

Media as an exosystem factor

Media and social media significantly influence children's and families' demand for early childhood education by shaping perceptions, disseminating information, and creating social norms regarding educational expectations. Traditional media outlets, such as television, newspapers, and magazines, often highlight the importance of early education through news stories, educational programs, and expert interviews. These narratives can raise public awareness about the benefits of early childhood education, leading parents to prioritize enrolling their children in quality programs (OECD, 2012).

Social media platforms amplify this influence by enabling parents to share personal experiences, reviews, and recommendations about early childhood education providers. Online parenting communities and forums allow for rapid information exchange, where parents discuss curricula, teaching methods, and the reputations of specific kindergartens (Dworkin, Connell, & Doty, 2013). Such peer-to-peer communication can significantly impact other parents' decisions, as they may trust the opinions and experiences shared by fellow parents over traditional advertising or institutional messaging (Shim, 2012).

The influence of media and social media extends to the professional image of kindergarten educators. Positive portrayals of educators in media can enhance their professional status by highlighting their expertise, dedication, and the crucial role they play in children's

development (Barnett, 2003). For example, media stories that showcase innovative teaching methods or successful student outcomes can elevate public perceptions of educators' professionalism.

Conversely, negative media coverage can harm educators' professional image. Instances of misconduct or underperformance, when publicized, can lead to generalized skepticism about the quality of educators in early childhood settings (Osgood, 2006). Social media further complicates this dynamic, as educators' actions can be recorded and shared widely, sometimes without context, leading to misinterpretations that damage their professional reputation (Hildebrandt & Couros, 2016).

Additionally, social media platforms have become spaces where educators can build their professional identity by sharing educational resources, engaging in professional discourse, and connecting with peers globally (Carpenter & Krutka, 2014). A positive online presence can enhance their professional image and demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development. However, it also requires educators to be mindful of their digital footprint, as personal and professional boundaries can become blurred (Sargeant, 2019).

As the individual's needs and abilities change, the exosystem must adapt accordingly (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). For instance, as a child transitions from elementary to middle school, changes in the school district's policies or the parents' work situations can significantly impact the child's learning environment and experiences (Eccles, 1999). Adjustments in educational practices or shifts in parental employment can alter the support systems available to the child, thereby influencing their developmental trajectory.

In conclusion, the exosystem, as the third level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, plays a critical role in human development. It represents the broader context that indirectly influences the individual's development. Understanding the dynamics of the exosystem can provide valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors that shape human development.

2.3.4 Macrosystem

The macrosystem, as defined by Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, represents the fourth level of the ecological system. It encompasses the larger cultural context surrounding the individual, including societal belief systems, cultural norms, ideologies, policies, or laws that indirectly influence the person. The macrosystem involves the broader cultural and societal influences that shape an individual's development and evolve over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The macrosystem is a critical component of the ecological systems theory as it provides a broader context for understanding the individual's development. Unlike the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem, which are more immediate and tangible, the macrosystem represents the overarching patterns of the micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other broader social context. It is less about specific interactions and more about the societal blueprint that dictates what forms those interactions should take.

The cultural and societal influences that shape an individual's development are not static and evolve over time. The macrosystem is a dynamic system that is influenced by historical, social, and political factors. For example, the cultural norms and values that shape an individual's development in one society may not be the same as those that shape development in

another society after migration or job relocation. This highlights the role of the macrosystem in shaping our understanding of normality and acceptability.

One of the factors that influence the macrosystem is the cultural beliefs and values of a society. These beliefs and values shape the norms and expectations that individuals are expected to follow. For example, in some cultures, it is considered disrespectful to speak to an elder in a certain way. In other cultures, it may be acceptable to speak to an elderly person in a more informal manner. These cultural norms can significantly influence an individual's behavior and interactions with others.

Another factor that influences the macrosystem is the policies and laws of a society. Policies and laws are created to regulate the behavior of individuals in a society. They are designed to promote the individual's well-being and the society as a whole. For example, policies and laws that promote equal opportunities for all individuals regardless of their race, gender, or socioeconomic status can have a positive impact on the macrosystem. These policies and laws can shape societal structures and influence individual behaviors and attitudes.

The macrosystem also includes the broader cultural and societal influences that shape an individual's development. These influences can include the media, religion, and other cultural institutions. The media, for example, can shape the way individuals perceive the world around them. It can influence their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Religion can also play a significant role in shaping an individual's development. It can provide individuals with a sense of purpose and meaning in life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In conclusion, the macrosystem, as the fourth level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, plays a critical role in human development. It represents the broader cultural and societal



context that indirectly influences the individual's development. Understanding the dynamics of the macrosystem can provide valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors that shape human development.

2.3.5 Chronosystem

The chronosystem, as defined by Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, represents the fifth and final level of the ecological system. It considers the role of time in shaping development, including both personal life events and broader historical events (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The chronosystem adds the useful dimension of time to the ecological systems theory, demonstrating the influence of both change and constancy in the individual's environments. It is an essential component of the ecological systems theory because it highlights the importance of understanding the dynamic nature of development.

Development is not a static process but rather an ongoing dynamic process that is influenced by both change and constancy over time. The chronosystem recognizes this dynamism and underscores the importance of considering the temporal context in which development occurs. For instance, personal life events such as birth, death, marriage, divorce, job change, relocation, illness, or any other significant life event can profoundly impact an individual's development. These events can lead to changes in the individual's microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem, thereby influencing their development. Similarly, broader historical events such as wars, economic crises, natural disasters, technological advancements, societal changes, or any other significant historical event can also have a substantial impact on development. These events can lead to changes at the societal level,

influencing cultural norms, societal structures, policies, and laws, thereby indirectly affecting the individual's development.

The chronosystem also emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical context in which development occurs. It recognizes that individuals do not develop in isolation but are part of a broader historical and cultural context. This context shapes their experiences, influences their perceptions, and guides their actions and interactions. Historical events such as wars, economic crises, and natural disasters can have a significant impact on development. For example, a war can lead to changes in societal structures, disrupt the normal functioning of institutions, and result in trauma, loss, and displacement. These changes can significantly impact an individual's development, influencing their physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being. Similarly, economic crises can lead to changes in economic structures, result in unemployment, poverty, and economic insecurity, and increase stress and anxiety. These changes can also significantly impact an individual's development, influencing their physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being. Natural disasters can lead to changes in the physical environment, result in loss of life and property, disrupt the normal functioning of institutions, and result in trauma and displacement. These changes can also significantly impact an individual's development, influencing their physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being.

In conclusion, the chronosystem, as the fifth and final level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, plays a critical role in human development. It represents the temporal context that influences the individual's development. Understanding the dynamics of the chronosystem can provide valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors that shape human development.

2.4 Factors affecting teachers' occupational wellbeing analysed by the Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory

The theory of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems provides a practical theoretical framework for understanding the various environmental factors that can influence the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. The theory provides a holistic and comprehensive approach to understanding the complex relationships between individuals and their environment, and the impact of these relationships on development and experiences amongst early childhood educators. The ecological system theory emphasizes that individuals can be influenced by a variety of environmental factors, starting from the immediate surroundings of the individual (microsystem) to larger societal factors (macrosystem) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In the context of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the various factors that influence their occupational well-being. This theory posits that an individual's development is shaped by their interaction with various interconnected systems, ranging from their immediate environment to broader societal influences. The microsystem includes factors from their immediate work environment and family. The mesosystem includes the relationships between the teachers and other stakeholders in the education system, such as parents, administrators. Factors influencing work-family conflict will also be explored. The exosystem includes factors such as government policies, funding and economic factors, and societal expectations of teachers. The macrosystem includes broader cultural factors towards work-live balance, and cultural values towards early childhood education.

Research has indeed shown the utility of the ecological systems theory in understanding the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. A study by Chan et al. (2018) found that factors such as job demands, support from colleagues, and school culture were important predictors of teacher well-being. Another study by Lee et al. (2021) revealed that societal factors such as government policies and societal expectations of teachers also significantly influenced teacher well-being. The ecological systems theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the occupational well-being of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. It highlights the complex interplay of various factors, ranging from immediate interpersonal relationships to broader societal influences. Understanding these relationships can provide valuable insights into the factors that affect teacher well-being and can inform interventions to improve teacher well-being in Hong Kong and other similar contexts.

2.4.1 Microsystem Level Application

The microsystem is the most immediate system in which an individual directly experiences in life, which includes the people and institutions in the individual's immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the case of a kindergarten teacher, the microsystem includes various factors that can influence the teacher's experiences and well-being in family and workplace domains.

Family domain of microsystem

The first factor influencing kindergarten teachers' well-being in Hong Kong is the family microsystem. Occupational well-being of early childhood education educators can be influenced by factors related to their personal lives, including **1) Support received from their family relationships, 2) Roles and duties in the core family, and 3) Family-related emotional demand.** For example, a study conducted by Leung and McBride-Chang (2016) revealed that quality of teachers' relationship with their spouses was positively associated with their job satisfaction, and

that this relationship was partially mediated by self-efficacy. In other words, teachers who reported higher quality relationships with their spouses also reported greater self-efficacy in working as a teacher, which in turn was associated with higher job satisfaction. Similarly, positive relationships with their own children can also impact kindergarten teachers' occupational well-being. This suggests that the quality of a teacher's personal relationships can influence their overall well-being, which in turn can impact their job satisfaction and overall effectiveness as a teacher. Positive support received from family relationships can act as a protective factor against burnout and other negative outcomes associated with occupational stress (Shoshani and Eldor, 2016). A study conducted by Bakker et al. (2014) discovered that teachers who reported higher degree of support from their spouses and families have less opportunity to experience burnout and a higher potential to report active work engagement. The study also found that work engagement mediated the relationship between family support and burnout, suggesting that supportive family relationships can enhance teacher's engagement at work and lower the risk of burnout at workplace.

The roles and duties that kindergarten teachers have within their core family can have a significant impact on their well-being. (Chan, et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2021; Tung et al, 2020). Core family refers to the immediate family members of a person, such as their spouse, children, and parents. A study in Hong Kong revealed that family-related roles and responsibilities were significant predictors of teacher burnout (Chan et. al, 2018). Teachers who had higher degree of family-related roles and responsibilities reported higher levels of exhaustion in emotions, higher degree of depersonalization, and less sense of personal accomplishment, all of which are symptoms of burnout. In the context of Hong Kong, kindergarten teachers often have multiple roles and responsibilities within their core family, such as caring for children, managing household responsibilities, and providing support for elderly parents. These roles and

responsibilities can create additional stress and demands on teachers, which can impact their well-being.

On the other hand, research has shown that family-related emotional demand can have a significant impact on the well-being of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. (Hobfoll, 1989; Chan et al, 2018; Yuen et al., 2017, Lam et al, 2021). When individuals have a limited amount of personal and social resources, the demands placed on these resources can lead to stress and burnout (Hobfoll, 1989). In the context of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong, family-related emotional demand can be a significant source of job stress and burnout at workplace, as teachers may find struggle to balance their responsibilities at work with their responsibilities at home. A study found that family-related emotional demand was a significant predictor of teacher burnout in Hong Kong (Chan et. al, 2018). Another study also revealed that family-related emotional demand was a significant predictor of psychological distress among early childhood educators in Hong Kong. The study discovered that educators who experienced higher levels of family-related emotional demand reported higher levels of psychological distress (Yuen et al, 2017).

Workplace domain of microsystem

The next domain influencing kindergarten teachers' well-being in Hong Kong is the workplace microsystem. Occupational well-being of early childhood education educators can be influenced by elements related to their workplace, including *1) work demand, 2) work resources and support, 3) job autonomy and 4) demand for professional development.*

One of the most significant factors affecting kindergarten teachers' well-being in the microsystem at workplace is workload. Kindergarten teachers often have a heavy workload that can lead to stress and burnout. They are often responsible for planning and implementing curriculum, assessing student progress, and communicating with parents. Additionally, they may have to deal with challenging behaviours, special needs, and classroom management issues

(Friedman-Krauss, Raver, Neuspiel, & Kinsel, 2014). In Hong Kong, kindergarten teachers are known to work long hours, which can have significantly influenced their well-being and satisfaction for work. Several studies have investigated the working hours of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong, as well as their effects on teacher burnout, job satisfaction, and other related factors. Kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong are known to work long hours, with many teachers reporting that they work between 9 and 11 hours a day (Cheung et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2015). This is in addition to work that may need to be done at home, such as administering lesson plans, teaching preparation and children's learning documentation etc. Kindergarten teachers are often expected to work during weekends and school holidays in order to fulfil their job requirements or professional development. The long working hours can cause burnout and reduced job satisfaction (Cheung et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019). Similarly, a study by Li and Li (2019) found that long working hours and high levels of workload were significant predictors of teacher burnout among early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. The study also revealed that emotional exhaustion mediated the relationship between workload and job burnout, the researcher suggested that high degree of emotional exhaustion may be one of the key outcomes of long working hours. Moreover, the long working hours for kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong can also impact their work-life balance and lead to negative outcomes in their personal lives. A study by Chan et al. (2015) revealed that teachers who reported longer working hours tend to experience negative impacts on their social lives, such as less time spent with their personal social networks and family, which also lead to a lower level of life satisfaction. However, the study by Li et al. (2021) found that work engagement was negatively related to work stress and burnout among novice early childhood educators in Hong Kong. The study suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing work engagement can reduce work stress and burnout among early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, where



teachers are used to work prolong hours and face high levels of stress, family support and positive relationships with family members can serve as a buffer to reduce the negative impact of work stress on teachers' well-being. Supportive spouses, family members, and flexible work arrangements provided by family-friendly employer can contribute to teachers' overall occupational well-being.

Work resources and support are also important factors that can influence the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators in Hong Kong. Work resources refer to the tangible and intangible resources that are available to teachers in their work environment, such as adequate staffing, materials and equipment, and administrative support. Tangible resource like compensation is viewed as a significant factor that affects kindergarten teachers' well-being. Compensation refers to the financial and non-financial rewards that teachers receive for their work, such as salary, benefits, and opportunities for professional development. Low pay, lack of benefits, and limited opportunities for career promotion can lead to financial stress and dissatisfaction with their work (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). The EDB statistics recorded in 2021/22 academic year revealed that over half (54%) of teachers in Hong Kong kindergarten participating in the FQKES were earning below HK \$30,000 per month, given that the recommended salary range for teachers, senior teachers, vice principals and principals lied between HK\$22,790 – HK\$67,140 (see Table 12). Only around 15% of teachers were earning more than HK\$40,000 per month, of which most of them are senior teachers, vice principals and principals (EDB. 2021). Even though the minimum monthly salary has reached HK\$23,360 in the 2022/23 academic year, the fact that most kindergarten teachers are earning below the mean of recommended salary led to dissatisfaction amongst teachers who aspire career advancement or a more justified tangible compensation for their profession.

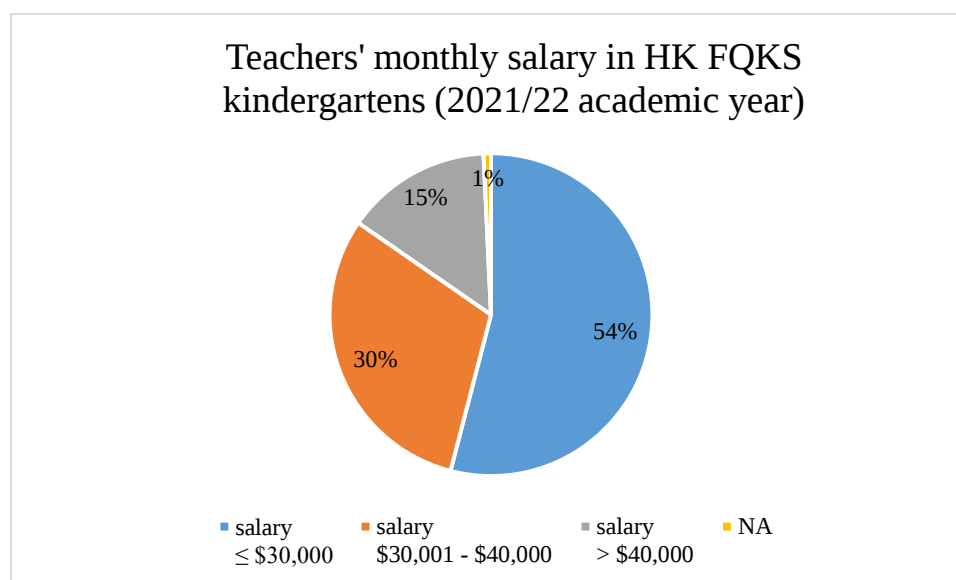
Table 12

Comparative Analysis of teachers' salary ranges in institutions taking part in the Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme

Total no. of Teaching staff	salary $\leq$ \$30,000	salary \$30,001 - \$40,000	salary > \$40,000	NA
11012	5951	3370	1610	81
	(54%)	(31%)	(15%)	(1%)

Diagram 4

Comparative Analysis of teachers' salary ranges in kindergartens participating in the Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme



Intangible resources like work support refers to the emotional and instrumental support that teachers receive from their colleagues, supervisors, and other stakeholders in the education

system. Research has shown that work resources and support can have a significant impact on the occupational well-being of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. Chan et al. (2018) found that work support was a significant predictor of teacher well-being in Hong Kong. The study found that teachers who received higher levels of support from colleagues and supervisors reported higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment in the organization. Another study revealed that work resources were significant predictors of teacher burnout in Hong Kong. The study found work resources such as professional development opportunities, support from colleagues and superiors, and access to resources can significantly influence teacher well-being and reduce burnout, while teachers who received adequate support and resources reported lower levels of burnout and higher levels of job satisfaction (Li et. al. 2021). In the context of Hong Kong, kindergarten teachers often face significant work demands, such as large class sizes, long work hours, and high levels of administrative tasks. Work resources and support can play an important role in mitigating the impact of these work demands on teacher well-being.

The complexity of teacher work within the early childhood context often demands attention and ethical decision-making, which can be enhanced through professional development. Programmes for professional development are a crucial mechanism for educators to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, which can positively associate with improved achievement amongst young children (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cohen & Hill, 2000; IES, 2007; Yuen, 2011). Professional development can provide opportunities for work-embedded learning and support the ongoing development of teachers' pedagogical practices. Access to professional development opportunities can significantly impact kindergarten teachers' well-being. Professional development can provide them with new skills and knowledge, enhance their teaching practices, and lead to the potential advancement in for career pathway. Employees need opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in order to stay engaged, satisfied and motivated in their

work. (Zhang, 2017). Therefore, engaging in professional development can help kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong improve their teaching practices, enhance their knowledge and skills, and ultimately improve the quality of education for young children and creating effective teaching and learning environments. However, professional development that is not aligned with teachers' needs and interests can lead to feelings of frustration and disengagement, which can negatively impact their well-being. By contrast, professional development that is relevant, meaningful, and supportive can enhance teachers' knowledge and skills, promote their sense of efficacy, and improve their well-being (Yuen, 2011). Therefore, it is important for professional development programs to be designed with teachers' needs and interests in mind, and to provide opportunities for collaboration, reflection, and ongoing support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). By doing so, professional development can contribute to the well-being of kindergarten teachers and ultimately sustain the quality improvement of education for young children.

2.4.2 Mesosystem Level Application

According to ecological systems theory, the mesosystem is a part of an individual's development that involves interactions between different elements within the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the case of kindergarten teachers, their mesosystem involves the interactions between their family and workplace including job-related stakeholders like colleagues and parental involvement of their students. These interactions can have a significant impact on their well-being, and identifying the factors that affect them can help address the challenges they face. The study will consider a variety of factors, such as work-family conflict, the challenges of balancing work and family life, and the role of social support networks in helping teachers cope with stress.

Work-life balance

Balancing work and family life is essential to ensure that teachers can manage their workload effectively and balance their work, family responsibilities and other life commitments (Agha, Azmi & Irfan, 2017). Achieving a healthy balance between work and family roles can be a significant challenge for early childhood education educators, as their work often spills over into their personal time. They may have to work evenings and weekends, attend meetings, or complete administrative tasks outside of classroom hours. For kindergarten teachers to reach a balanced level between work and personal life can be a challenge due to the high expectations and workload in the profession. Teachers often struggle with finding the right balance between their work and personal life. Studies have found that when teachers experience difficulty with work-life balance, it can lead to negative outcomes such as stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Barile, N.D.). In many cultures, there is a strong emphasis on work, which can make it difficult for teachers to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Long working hours, heavy workloads, and lack of time for personal interests and family can contribute to stress and burnout among kindergarten teachers (Jahangir & Akhtar, 2020). Additionally, in some cultures, women are expected to take on most of the responsibilities for childcare and household chores, which can make it even more difficult for kindergarten teachers to achieve a positive work-life balance. A lack of balance between work and family life can lead to stress and burnout and negatively impact their well-being (Brouwer & Koster, 2015).

Social support

Early childhood education (ECE) educators' occupational well-being can be significantly impacted by their social relationships with multiple stakeholders, including colleagues, parents, and students (Mashburn et al., 2008). These relationships can be conceptualized within the framework of Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem, which refers to the interactions between the

different settings in a child's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Teachers' well-being at early childhood education sector is often overlooked, and they may experience feelings of isolation and burnout due to a lack of support and collaboration from their counterparts, job-related stakeholders and other social networks in personal life. Positive interactions between early childhood education educators and these stakeholders can create a more supportive and nurturing environment for children, which can lead to better outcomes for both the children and the early childhood education educators themselves. Early childhood education educators who had positive relationships with their colleagues experienced less stress and more job satisfaction. On the other hand, negative interactions between early childhood education educators and these stakeholders can create a stressful and challenging environment for both the children and the early childhood education educators. Early childhood education educators who experienced conflict with their colleagues were more likely to report symptoms of burnout (Spilt et al. 2011). Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2003) found that early childhood education educators who had negative relationships with their students' parents reported lower levels of well-being. Working in team at early childhood education sector can benefit educators' mutual emotional support, resources distribution, and exchange of feedback and ideas. When teachers receive support from their colleagues, they feel more connected and less isolated, which positively affects their well-being. On the other hand, the lack of support and collaboration can lead to feelings of isolation, which can negatively affect their well-being (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Parents are key partners in sustaining quality early childhood education. Parental involvement can have both positive and negative effects on kindergarten teachers' well-being (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2003). When parents are involved in their children's education and support the teachers, it can lead to a positive working relationship. This can help teachers feel

more supported and valued, which can contribute to their well-being. Early childhood education educators who had positive relationships with their students' parents reported higher levels of well-being. However, parental involvement can also have negative effects on teachers' well-being, especially when it is excessive or demanding. For example, parents who are constantly micromanaging their children's education or putting unrealistic expectations on teachers can create a stressful and unsupportive work environment. Teachers feel appreciated and valued when parents show interest in their children's education. This positive relationship can lead to better communication and collaboration between teachers and parents (Cardona & Neas, 2021). However, when parents are overly critical or demanding, it can lead to stress and burnout (Harrington & Voelkl, 2016). Teachers may feel overwhelmed and unsupported when parents are not cooperative, which can negatively affect their well-being. It is essential to prioritize the well-being of kindergarten teachers to ensure that they can provide quality education to young children. Teachers who have more positive emotions and more enthusiastic to their social surroundings tend to develop a good work environment actively with positive social rapport (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Teachers who receive support and collaboration from colleagues and parents are more likely to feel connected and valued, which positively affects their well-being.

Social support can act as a buffer against job stressors, leading to increased positive affect and decreased negative affect which would eventually benefit teachers' occupational wellbeing (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Li & Li, 2020; Shirom & Ezrachi, 2003; Waldinger, 2021). Social support refers to the emotional and practical support offered by others, including colleagues, friends, and family (Thoits, 2011). The interaction between these stakeholders in teachers' work life would also formulate collaborations and multiply the social support perceived. Kindergarten teachers with high levels of social support may experience increased

OWB, as they have access to emotional and practical resources to cope with job demands at their workplace. Ye et al. (2020) found that social support was positively related to OWB among Chinese preschool teachers, including kindergarten teachers. On the other hand, a significant factor that can help alleviate the negative effects of distress on mental and physical health is social support. Research has shown that social support can improve mental health and serves as a buffer against life events with high stress level (Szkody & McKinney, 2019; Cohen & Wills, 1985). Research also revealed the importance of social support and self-control in mitigating the downsides of workplace stress over well-being of early childhood education educators in Mainland China. Perceived social support, as a crucial component of human's coping mechanism, can moderate the relationship between job stress and emotional issues, while self-control can mediate the relationship between emotional issues and job stress (Li & Li, 2020). These findings suggest that increasing social support may be a key strategy for improving occupational wellbeing among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong.

2.4.3 Exosystem Level Application

The exosystem refers to the interactions and dynamics occurring between two or more contexts, with at least one context being external to the immediate setting of the developing individual. Such contexts have indirect effects on the immediate setting of the developing person and the developmental processes that take place within it (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The exosystem of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong refers to the external factors that impact their work environment and professional development in general, including the administrative policies and procedures that govern teaching practices for early childhood education system, 2) mass media and 3) the social media influence. These factors can indirectly influence the wellbeing of kindergarten teachers by creating a stressful work environment, limiting their autonomy and decision-making power, and affecting their emotional state (Yin et al., 2022).

A primary exosystem factor that can impact the well-being of kindergarten teachers is the administrative policies and procedures that govern teaching practices. Such policies are considered as part of the exosystem factors as they may be out of direct control of the individual kindergarten teacher, but they still represent a substantial exogenous factor that influences their teaching performance. Hong Kong is a highly urbanized city with a well-developed education system. The Education Bureau emphasized the importance of child-centredness, holistic education, play-based learning in school-based curricula, education quality and accountability, outcome-based curriculum and continuous school evaluation within the early childhood education system through introduction of Free Quality Kindergarten Education (FQKE) Scheme alongside the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide in 2017 to provide early childhood education in high quality for 3 – 6-year-old students. (Cheuk & Hatch, 2007; Tse, 2005; Yin et al 2023). The scheme aimed to improve access to kindergarten education, increase the quality of education, and enhance the well-being of both children and kindergarten teachers. One of the key changes brought about by the FQKS is the reduction in the teacher-to-children ratio. The government implemented a 1:11 teacher-to-children ratio, which is a considerable reduction from previous ratios of 1:15 (EDB, 2017). The public database released from the Education Bureau revealed that the teacher-to-children ratio of most kindergartens participating in the scheme is gradually dropping below the required standard due to the reducing number of kindergarten children enrolment. Kindergartens offering lower than 1:11 teacher-to-children ratio reached 89% and 99% respectively in AM and PM sessions while kindergartens offering lower than 1:8 teacher-to-children ratio also reached 28% and 63% respectively (EDB, 2022; see Table 13). This change would lead to a potential improvement of kindergarten teachers' occupational well-

being since they can now better manage their classrooms and maintain a higher level of individual attention for each child, leading to improved learning outcomes.

Table 13

Comparative Analysis of teacher: children ratio in AM and PM session of institutions taking part in the Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme

Teacher: Children Ratio	AM		PM	
≤ 1.8	207	28%	472	63%
1:8.1 - 1:10.9	458	61%	268	36%
$\geq 1:11$	82	11%	5	1%
NA	4	1%	6	1%
Total number:	751	100%	751	100%

Another significant impact of the FQKE Scheme is the upgrade in teacher qualifications. The Hong Kong government required all kindergarten principals to pursue a Bachelor degree qualification in Early Childhood Education (BEdeCE) since 2009/10 academic year. The launch of FQKE Scheme in 2017 recommended the priority of appointing and promoting senior teachers for candidates with Bachelor degree in early childhood education or equivalent (Education Bureau, 2020). This has created opportunities for kindergarten teachers to improve their pedagogical knowledge and professional skills alongside a clearer career advancement pathway. However, upgrading qualifications could also mean increment of the workload for kindergarten teachers who are already in the profession. Teachers who have been teaching for years with a Diploma in early childhood education may need to upgrade their qualifications to maintain job security and salaries aligned with the new requirements. Transitioning from a Higher Diploma to a Bachelor Degree, while still working full-time, could be a challenge for teachers. The additional workload of attending classes and completing coursework may impact their well-

being and work performance. According to the Education Bureau statistics released in 2021, 602 out of 751 (over 80%) kindergartens participating in the FQKS are employing over 50% of degree-holder teachers, while also 192 out of 274 (over 70%) non-FQKS kindergartens also reported over 50% of their teaching team obtained undergraduate training (EDB, 2021 & Table 14). The requirement for teachers to upgrade their educational qualifications has become a leading trend in the early childhood education field, which may lead to a higher teacher turnover rate as teachers who have no interest in upgrading their qualifications may face job insecurity and may look for opportunities in other professions. This could be the long-term impact of early childhood education and training in Hong Kong.

Diagram 5

Comparative Analysis of Degree-Holding Kindergarten Teachers in Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme and Non-Scheme Kindergartens in 2021/22 academic year

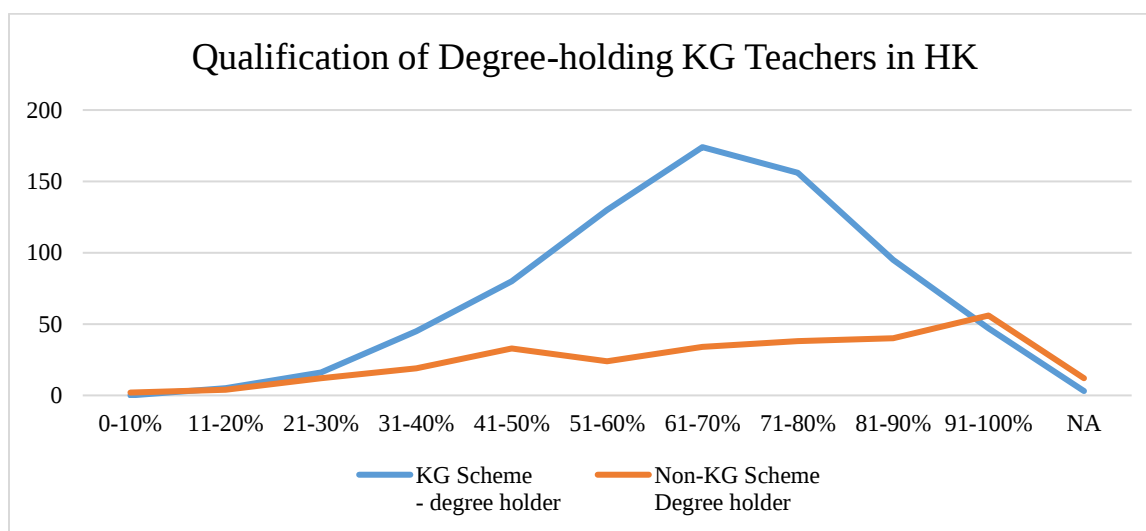


Table 14

Comparative Analysis of Degree-Holding Kindergarten Teachers in Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme and Non-Scheme Kindergartens in 2021/22 academic year

Ratio of teachers in a kindergarten	KG Scheme - degree holder	Non-KG Scheme Degree holder
0-10%	0	2
11-20%	5	4
21-30%	16	12
31-40%	45	19
41-50%	80	33
51-60%	130	24
61-70%	174	34
71-80%	156	38
81-90%	95	40
91-100%	47	56
NA	3	12
Total number:	751	274

The occupational well-being of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong has been under the spotlight during the recent years, with increasing attention being given to the impact of mass media on their job satisfaction and turnover rates. According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers (HKFEW) in 2019, nearly half of the respondents reported that their workload had increased over the past year, over 50% of respondents worked over 60 hours per week and 90% expressed their occupational stress caused by the high workload demand (HKET, 2019). A similar proportion reported feeling underappreciated and

undervalued by society. Another survey conducted by HKFEW in 2020 revealed that 80% of teachers from the kindergarten, primary and secondary school settings reported their exhaustion from work during the pandemic period (SCMP, 2020). These negative perceptions of kindergarten teachers are often perpetuated by media reports, which tends to depict them as overworked and underpaid, leading to decreased job satisfaction and higher rates of burnout. The media influence also contributes to a stressful work environment for teachers by sensationalizing negative incidents that occur in preschools and kindergartens. Incidents like child abuse cases found in Hong Kong kindergartens which were reported by a wide range of media have had significant impact on the occupational well-being of early childhood education educators. These cases have not only caused immense psychological stress on the teachers but have also brought down morale and job satisfaction. Teachers who have been implicated in these cases have been subjected to intense public scrutiny, which has negatively affected their mental health. Teachers may experience anxiety, depression, and stress as a result of being in the spotlight and being accused of such heinous crimes. The media has played a significant role in shaping public opinion on these cases. The media portrays teachers negatively and the public perception of kindergarten teachers might be that they are abusive towards children. This public perception can lead to decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and high teacher turnover rates, which can ultimately negatively affect the quality of early childhood education.

Kindergarten teachers' occupational wellbeing can also be affected by usage of social media. While social media can be a beneficial tool, it can also be a double-edged sword, particularly for teachers in kindergartens. Given the rise of cases such as cyberbullying, online harassment, and personal privacy concerns, teachers are more cautious about using social media, which can ultimately affect their occupational wellbeing and job satisfaction. According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union in 2020, approximately 30%

of teachers reported experiencing cyberbullying or online harassment. Cyberbullying can have severe psychological effects on individuals, leading to stress and anxiety (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020). Teachers who are victims of cyberbullying may face issues such as reduced motivation, burnout, and even depression, which can ultimately affect their performance at work. Social media can create challenges for teachers in Hong Kong regarding their relationship with students and parents. Social media may blur the line between social relationships and professional ones, leading to misunderstandings. While socializing with students and parents is an important aspect of teaching, it can lead to inappropriate interactions, leading to misinterpretations and negative perceptions regarding the teacher (Hershkovitz & Forkosh-Baruch, 2017). Furthermore, teacher actions on social media can create a negative perception of the school as well, and it may become difficult for the educational system to control, leaving schools at risk. Survey conducted by Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union in 2019 revealed that teachers from different sectors all worried about their political stands would be monitored by different stakeholders in the public or colleagues at workplace caused by their personal sharing on social media. 60% of the respondents expressed that they would avoid using social media platforms in order to refrain from bringing political issues to their campuses and impact on the learning and teaching quality (HKPTU, 2019). The role of media in shaping public perception of teachers is important and controversial. Irresponsible reporting can exacerbate the negative effects of child abuse cases, leading to further difficulties for the educational system (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Responsible media reporting of such incidents can promote awareness, prevention, and positive change in the educational system.

2.4.4 Macrosystem Level Application

Macrosystem is the outermost level of his ecological systems theory and refers to the cultural, economic, and political factors that can affect individuals' life experience

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Macro-level factors such as economic factors and cultural values towards the professional identity can impact the broader context in which kindergarten teachers operate.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development reported that teaching is one of the most important professions in ensuring that societies are well-functioning and progressing, and that young people are prepared for the future (OECD, 2019). However, kindergarten teachers in many countries are often undervalued, underpaid and under-resourced. In Hong Kong, the occupational well-being of kindergarten teachers is affected by various economic factors, such as financial pressure, limited resources, and high competition. Hong Kong kindergartens are facing challenging economic factors due to global decline in birth rates, less immigration families and trends of out-bound migration. Lower birth rates mean that there are fewer children to enrol in kindergartens, which can lead to rising operational costs and a decrease in revenue for these institutions, in both private independent kindergarten and those participating in Free Quality Kindergarten Scheme (Roy, 2021; Bricker, 2021; Chan, 2021). According to the Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong (2022), the number of births in Hong Kong has been decreasing since 2018, with a record low of 36,039 births in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges faced by Hong Kong kindergartens, as many parents have chosen to keep their children at home due to health concerns (Mengyan, 2020). Additionally, emigration trends can also impact the number of children enrolling in kindergartens. These factors can lead to financial difficulties for kindergartens, which may struggle to maintain their operations and provide quality education to their students. In Hong Kong, some kindergartens have been forced to close due to declining enrolment and financial difficulties. A survey of 240 kindergartens and nursery schools in Hong Kong revealed that more than 70% of respondents reported that they have either terminated or plan to terminate the employment of teachers during the current



academic year due to financial constraints (Chan, 2021). Dropping student enrolment and revenue for kindergartens may have contributed to the layoffs. According to a survey conducted by the Federation of Education Workers, over 75% of Hong Kong kindergartens and nursery schools have either laid off teachers this school year or plan to do so (HK01, 2023). This can have a ripple effect on the education system as a whole, as fewer kindergartens mean fewer options for parents and children. A significant economic consequence also occurs as a declining workforce means less productivity and fewer taxpayers to support social funded programs. Inadequate funding and resources can contribute to low pay, heavy workloads, and limited professional development opportunities for teachers, which can have a direct impact on teachers' working conditions and job satisfaction (Baker & Farrelly, 2021).

Cultural factor towards professional identity that can affect kindergarten teachers' wellbeing is the status of the teaching profession. The lack of recognition and appreciation from parents and society, coupled with high societal expectations, still exists. Addressing this cultural and societal issue is imperative to ensure that teachers' well-being during their tenure in the profession is consistently positive. The professional identity of kindergarten teachers is influenced by their past experiences, community, personal qualities, relationships, and status (Cheuk & Hatch, 2007). In some cultures, teaching is considered a highly respected profession with good pay and benefits, while in other cultures, it is considered a low-status profession with low pay and little recognition. Teaching in kindergarten may be viewed as a low-status profession with low compensation, leading to feelings of undervaluation and stress (Sharmila & Shanthi, 2018). Kindergarten teachers in Asian contexts, including Hong Kong, are often neglected by the professional community, and their professional identities are defined solely in terms of social status, qualifications and monthly remuneration. Teaching in the early childhood education sector is a demanding and emotionally engaging profession that requires mature

emotional competence to manage the ever-changing and challenging situations that arise daily, maintain relational connections with children and parents, and collaborate with all work-related stakeholders (Pan, et al, 2023). The social status of the early childhood education profession can have a significant impact on educators' job satisfaction and overall wellbeing. Teachers who feel that their profession is respected and valued tend to be satisfied with their job and experience less job stress and burnout (Kanuka, 2019). There are a number of factors that can contribute to the status of the teaching profession, such as teacher salaries, public perception of teachers, and government policies. For example, kindergarten teachers who are paid fairly and feel that their work is valued by the public and the government are more likely to be satisfied with their job and experience less stress and burnout. On the other hand, kindergarten teachers who are underpaid, feel disrespected, or feel that their work is not valued are more likely to be dissatisfied with their job and experience more stress and burnout. This can lead to teacher turnover, which can have a negative impact on students' learning outcomes (Watlington et al., 2010).

Community recognition plays a crucial role in the wellbeing of early childhood education educators. A supportive community can offer essential resources, volunteer assistance, and positive recognition for teachers, leading to an enhanced sense of job satisfaction. However, a lack of community support can lead to feelings of isolation and frustration (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, & Cox, 2000). In Hong Kong kindergarten education, community involvement has been recognized as an important factor in promoting positive relationships between teachers, students, and families, which can ultimately contribute to the enhancement of teacher wellbeing (Eccles & Roeser, 2019). The involvement of communities in the education of kindergarteners is also recognized by the Education Bureau, which introduced a newly developed Curriculum Framework on Parent Education (Kindergarten) to highlight the importance of home-school-community collaborations. (Education Bureau, 2021). When communities are supportive of

early childhood education, teachers can enjoy better resources and opportunities, which can positively impact their wellbeing. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the importance of the work of kindergarten teachers and provide them with the necessary resources and support to help them cope with the challenges they face.

2.4.5 Chronosystem Level Application

The chronosystem in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory refers to the dimension of time and how changes over time, both in the individual's life and in the broader environment, can influence development and well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For early childhood educators in Hong Kong, the chronosystem captures how historical events, societal shifts, and personal life transitions impact their occupational well-being. These changes include significant societal events such as policy reforms, evolving cultural attitudes towards education, and even global disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the key chronosystem factors influencing early childhood educators in Hong Kong is the introduction and evolution of government policies related to early childhood education that changes over time. The Free Quality Kindergarten Education (FQKE) Scheme launched in 2017, for instance, marked a pivotal change in the early childhood education landscape. This policy aimed to improve the quality of education by providing free education to children aged three to six and establishing benchmarks for teacher qualifications and school standards. Over time, the implementation of this policy has had both positive and negative effects on kindergarten teachers' well-being.

On the positive side, the scheme's reduction in class size, with a mandated teacher-to-children ratio of 1:11, has allowed teachers to provide more individualized attention to students, thus improving their teaching experience and reducing work-related stress. Furthermore, the requirement for teachers to pursue higher educational qualifications, such as a bachelor's degree

in Early Childhood Education, has provided them with opportunities for professional development and career advancement. However, this requirement has also increased workload and pressure on educators who must balance full-time teaching with further studies, especially those who have been in the profession for many years. The long-term expectation of continuous professional development can lead to stress and burnout, especially for older educators who may feel less inclined to pursue further academic qualifications (Chan et al., 2021).

The chronosystem also encompasses cultural shifts that affect how early childhood educators are perceived and valued in society, especially before and after the return of political sovereignty to Mainland China in 1997. Over the past few decades, the role of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong has evolved from being seen primarily as caretakers to being recognized as professional educators responsible for the holistic development of young children. This shift in perception has gradually improved the professional identity of kindergarten teachers, contributing positively to their occupational well-being. However, societal expectations towards quality early childhood educators have also increased. Teachers are now expected to play a greater role in children's social, emotional, and academic development, often without a commensurate increase in resources or compensation. The cultural demand for high-quality education and pressure to meet rigorous standards can lead to heightened stress, especially in a context where teachers feel undervalued by the broader community (Cheuk & Hatch, 2007).

The COVID-19 pandemic is a prime example of how external global events can influence the chronosystem of early childhood educators. The pandemic disrupted normal teaching routines, with schools closing or shifting to online learning. Many teachers in Hong Kong faced increased workload during this period as they had to adapt to new modes of teaching, manage remote interactions with parents, and continue providing quality education in an unfamiliar online environment. This period also brought about increased job insecurity, with many

kindergartens facing financial difficulties due to lower enrolment rates, resulting in layoffs and salary cuts for teachers (Chan, 2021). The psychological impact of the pandemic was significant, with many teachers reporting heightened levels of anxiety and burnout due to prolonged working hours, lack of resources for remote teaching, and concerns about their health and safety (Lee et al., 2021). In addition to these immediate effects, the long-term consequences of the pandemic, such as the restructuring of the education system and shifts in parental expectations are likely to continue influencing the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

On an individual level, the chronosystem also includes personal life transitions such as career progression, changes in family structure, and aging. For instance, teachers who have been in the profession for many years may face challenges related to ageing and health, which can affect their energy levels and ability to cope with the physical demands of working with young children. Furthermore, life events such as marriage, parenthood, or caring for aging parents can increase stress levels, particularly for educators who are already managing high work demands. The interaction between these life transitions and occupational stress can exacerbate the work-family conflict, particularly for female teachers who often bear the brunt of caregiving responsibilities in their families (Chan et al., 2018). As these transitions unfold over time, the cumulative effects can significantly impact educators' mental and emotional well-being.

Finally, technological changes also play a role in the chronosystem. The growing emphasis on integrating technology in early childhood education has required teachers to continually update their skills and adapt to new teaching methods. While technology offers new opportunities for engaging students, it also adds to the workload and stress, particularly for educators who may not be as tech-savvy.

In summary, the chronosystem highlights how time-related changes whether through policy reforms, societal shifts, global crises, or personal life transitions can influence the

occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong. Understanding these long-term, evolving factors is crucial for developing strategies that can support educators throughout their careers and enhance their professional satisfaction and well-being.

2.5 The Present Study

The present study will encompass two studies to investigate the occupational wellbeing of early childhood educators in Hong Kong. Each study carries unique goals and they will jointly contribute to the existing literature on teacher wellbeing by addressing the research objectives and answering research question. This chapter comprises 6 sections: 1) The research objectives 2) The research question 3) The research hypothesis 4) The research design, 5) The research sampling method and 6) The procedures and statistical analysis.

2.5.1 The Research Objectives

The present study aims to investigate the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Specifically, the study seeks first to identify and categorize the ecological system factors—namely, those within the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem—that are relevant to the occupation-related experiences of early childhood educators. This objective lays the foundation for understanding the complex, multi-layered contexts in which these educators operate

2.5.2 The Research Question

This study used a mixed-methods research design to answer how are the environmental factors from the 5 levels of the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem) that influence teachers' *occupational wellbeing*. The key research question is:

Which ecological system layers (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, chronosystem) are associated with occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong?

2.5.3 The Research Hypothesis

Specific factor(s) from Bronfenbrenner's ecological system are significant predictors of occupational well-being amongst early childhood educators in Hong Kong:

- 1) Perceived support within the microsystem (such as support from colleagues and leaders, overall job support etc.) is positively associated with occupational well-being.
- 2) Conflict between work and personal life within the mesosystem is negatively associated with occupational well-being.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 The Research Design

Study 1

This section is designed to delve into the current state of occupational wellbeing among early childhood education (ECE) teachers in Hong Kong and investigate how various demographic factors might influence it. Hence, a survey-based approach was chosen, leveraging online questionnaires for data collection. Study 1 is quantitative in nature to survey 144 early childhood education educators from 13 early childhood settings by online questionnaires to understand their different aspects of occupational wellbeing. To enhance the vigorous of research, the online questionnaires were given to the interviewees at a two-time point, with 10 - 12 months in between. Demographic data will also be analysed in comparison to the public data retrieved from statistics collected by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong. Study 1 invited participants to answer the same survey (See [Appendix A](#)) at two time points and the results collected were analysed in a more rigorous manner. By applying the 2-wave panel design, it allows researcher to measure the predictor and outcome variables at different time points, which can help establish the direction of causality and rule out any alternative explanations for the relationship between the variables (Zapf, Dormann & Frese, 1996). Utilizing both partial correlational and hierarchical multiple regression analyses on data from both time points provides deeper insights into the relationships between variables (i.e., each time-point has around 10-12 months in between). By delving into the current state of occupational wellbeing among ECE teachers in Hong Kong and exploring its relationship with demographic factors, Study 1 has the potential to provide valuable insights and inform future initiatives aimed at supporting teachers and enhancing the early childhood education landscape.

Design of the questionnaire in Study 1:

The study aimed to assess occupational well-being among early childhood educators using a comprehensive questionnaire. This instrument encompassed several facets of occupational well-being, including job satisfaction, turnover intention, job support, work engagement, job burnout, job stress, job-related feelings, conflicts between work and private life, and job burnout (Tsui et al., 1992; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Part 1 – Job satisfaction

For measuring participant's level of overall job satisfaction, the Chinese version of the Job Satisfaction Scale used in the study by Li et al. (2021) was adapted to specifically measure job satisfaction in the context of early childhood education (ECE) settings. The original scale, developed by Tsui et al. (1992), was modified to align with the unique work environment and responsibilities of early childhood educators. In the adaptation process, the word "organization" in the original items of the scale was replaced with "kindergarten" to better reflect the specific workplace of the participants. This modification aimed to ensure that the questionnaire items were relevant and applicable to the experiences and perceptions of job satisfaction among early childhood educators in Hong Kong. By tailoring the scale to the early childhood education sector, the researcher sought to capture the nuanced aspects of job satisfaction that are pertinent to educators working in kindergartens. This adaptation acknowledges the distinct nature of the early childhood education profession and the factors that contribute to job satisfaction within this specific context. Six 5-point scale questions from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) were included in this section measuring 1) respondents' satisfaction towards career advancement opportunities within the kindergarten, 2) interpersonal relationships and the working atmosphere among the staff team, 3) satisfaction of working with their direct supervisor which would also

provide insights into the quality of leadership and management within the kindergarten, 4) satisfaction of the work nature they do which would reveal how fulfilling and enjoyable they find from their job role, 5) satisfaction with their compensation, which provide information about whether the staff feels they are fairly compensated for their work, and 6) a general measure of the respondent's overall job satisfaction which encapsulates all aspects of the job, providing a holistic view of the respondent's job satisfaction. These questions together provide a comprehensive view of job satisfaction among early childhood educators, covering various aspects from interpersonal relationships to compensation and overall job fulfilment. They can be very useful for identifying areas of strength and areas that may need improvement in the kindergarten's work environment.

Part 2 – Turnover intention

Study reveals that organizational commitment, job characteristics, and job satisfaction negatively and significantly predicted turnover intention among early childhood educators (Chao, 2010). Specifically, the findings highlighted job satisfaction as the most potent predictor of turnover intention, accounting for a substantial portion of the variance in turnover intention scores. Furthermore, job characteristics emerged as the second most influential predictor of turnover intention, also explaining a significant proportion of the variance in turnover intention scores. Conversely, while organizational commitment did contribute to the variance in turnover intention scores, it was not identified as a strong predictor of turnover intention. These findings underscore the complex interplay of factors influencing turnover intention in the context of early childhood education.

For measuring participant's level of turnover intention, a self-reported questionnaire used in measuring turnover intention amongst kindergarten teachers in Malaysia was adapted in the

current research (Chao, 2010). This section included three questions that asked early childhood educators to indicate their intention to leave their current job on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The three questions asking about the educators' past thoughts about seeking new employment, current job-seeking behaviour and future intentions to leave the kindergarten. They are designed to assess whether the respondent has seriously considered finding a new job in the past few months. This can provide insights into the respondent's level of job satisfaction and their commitment to the kindergarten. It can also reveal whether the respondent is actively looking for other jobs at the moment. This can be a strong indicator of turnover intention, as active job-seeking behaviour often precedes actual turnover. Moreover, the feedback would further provide information about the respondent's plans and their likelihood of leaving their current job in the near future. These questions together provide a comprehensive view of turnover intention among kindergarten staff, covering past, present, and future aspects. They can be very useful for identifying staff who may be at risk of leaving, which can help the kindergarten take proactive measures to retain their staff and maintain a stable workforce.

Part 3 – Job support

Job support from supervisors and positive relationships with colleagues and parents can contribute to teachers' feelings of belonging and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). In academic parlance, it has been observed that an affirmative social environment and the presence of social support have a direct and positive correlation with the satisfaction and motivation of educators, while having an inverse relationship with instances of burnout. The provision of emotional support, along with fostering positive interactions with superiors, peers, and parents, can potentially enhance a sense of inclusion. Therefore, it can be inferred that the connection

between positive social interactions and job satisfaction is, to some extent, influenced by the sense of belonging (Smithers & Robinson, 2003; Weiss, 1999).

This section, structured with a four-item six-point Likert scale, is intended to gauge the degree of job support experienced by participants within early childhood environments. Respondents are encouraged to express their concurrence with statements pertaining to various factors, including 1) perception of peer support in terms of teaching, 2) perception of interpersonal relationships among colleagues, 3) perception of mutual support amongst teachers and 4) support receive from leadership. The questions “I always get good help from colleagues regarding teaching” and “The teachers at this school help and support each other” are assessing whether employees feel they can rely on their colleagues for help or advice when needed. The question “In this school, the relationship between colleagues is friendly and caring” is assessing how employees feel about their work environment and whether they feel cared for and respected by their colleagues. The question “Regarding teaching, I always get help and advice from the school leadership” is assessing whether employees feel that their leadership provides adequate support when help or advice is needed. Overall, these questions are evaluating the work environment of the school and whether employees feel they are receiving adequate support and respect in their work. This is crucial for enhancing employee job satisfaction and maintaining an efficient and supportive work environment.

Part 4 – Work Engagement

Work engagement can be conceptualized as a positive and fulfilling mindset related to work, distinguished by three key dimensions: vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigor embodies high energy levels, mental toughness, and the tenacity to overcome challenges.

Dedication is marked by a feeling of importance, zeal, inspiration, pride, and the willingness to

take on challenges. Absorption represents a state of deep immersion in one's work, where time seems to fly and disengaging from work becomes difficult. These dimensions are deemed fundamental to work engagement. Encouraging such engagement in the workplace could potentially enhance employee well-being and productivity (Schaufeli, et al., 2002).

To evaluate the degree of work engagement among participants, this segment of the survey has been adapted from the instrument originally developed in the study by Schaufeli, et al. (2002). This adaptation ensures that the survey is grounded in established research, enhancing its validity and reliability. This section of the survey comprises 17 questions, each based on a five-point rating scale. These questions are specifically designed to evaluate three fundamental dimensions of work engagement: vigour, dedication, and absorption. Each dimension is crucial in understanding the overall level of engagement an individual experience in their work environment of early childhood settings. The following questions are designed to assess the vigour dimension of work engagement: “1) I feel energetic at work, “4) I feel strong and vibrant when working, “8) I look forward to going to work when I wake up in the morning”, “12) I can work for long periods at a time, “15) Even when I feel mentally tired at work, I recover quickly, “17) Even when work is not going well, I always persevere”. The subsequent questions measure *the dedication dimension of work engagement*: “2) I feel the work I do is clear and meaningful”, “5) I am passionate about my work”, “7) My work inspires me”, “10) I take pride in the work I do”, “13) My work is challenging to me”. The remaining questions assess the *absorption dimension of work engagement*: “3) Time flies when I'm working”, “6) When I'm working, I forget everything else around me”, “9) I feel happy when I'm busy at work, “11) I immerse myself in my work”, “14) I reach a state of forgetting myself when working”, and “16) I feel I can't leave this job. ”

To facilitate a more nuanced understanding and evaluation of the three fundamental dimensions of work engagement - vigour, dedication, and absorption - the questions were translated into Chinese and contextualized with practical applications. This approach enables respondents to assess a variety of aspects. These include the degree of energy, enthusiasm, and passion that employees invest in their work, the extent to which employees perceive their work as meaningful and take pride in their accomplishments, the level of engagement and immersion that employees demonstrate in their work, the resilience and persistence exhibited by employees when confronted with challenges and setbacks, and finally, the degree to which the work inspires employees and elicits anticipation for the workday. This comprehensive assessment aids in understanding the multifaceted nature of work engagement. Questions like “(1) I feel energetic at work”, “(4) I feel strong and vibrant when working”, “(5) I am passionate about my work, and “(9) Even when work is busy, I feel happy” can reveal the level of energy, enthusiasm, and passion employees bring to their work. The questions “(2) I feel the work I do is clear and meaningful” and “(10) I take pride in the work I do” are evaluating whether employees find their work meaningful and take pride in what they do. Questions such as “(3) Time flies when I’m working”, “(11) I immerse myself in my work”, “(12) I can work for long periods at a time”, and “(14) I reach a state of forgetting myself when working” are assessing the level of engagement and immersion employees experience in their work. The questions “(15) Even when I feel mentally tired at work, I recover quickly”, “(16) I feel I can’t leave this job”, and “(17) Even when work is not going well, I always persevere” are evaluating the resilience and persistence of employees in the face of challenges and setbacks. The questions “(7) My work inspires me” and “(8) I look forward to going to work when I wake up in the morning” are assessing whether the work inspires employees and whether they look forward to it. Overall, these questions aim to measure the level of employee’s work engagement at early childhood education settings, which includes their

emotional connection to their work, their sense of purpose, and their level of dedication and commitment. This is crucial for understanding employee's work engagement with motivation and productivity.

Part 5 – Job Burnout

Job burnout could potentially lead to a deterioration in the quality of care or service provided by staff, a correlation with job turnover, absenteeism, and low morale, and a correlation with various self-reported indices of personal distress. These indices encompass physical exhaustion, insomnia, increased use of alcohol and drugs, and issues related to marital and familial relationships. Moreover, burnout has the potential to impair relationships with people in general, affecting interactions both on and off the job. Study revealed that younger individuals are more predisposed to experiencing emotional exhaustion, whereas older individuals tend to exhibit higher scores on personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) developed by Maslach & Jackson (1981) is a pivotal tool in the disciplines of psychology and organizational behavior, extensively utilized to evaluate burnout experienced by a range of human service workers. The MBI is significant as an assessment tool in measuring individual's job burnout, it is recognized for its reliability and validity in measuring burnout. It comprises three subscales that probe into various facets of experienced burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. In terms of research and understanding, the MBI's incorporation in research studies facilitates a more profound comprehension of the personal, social, and institutional variables that either foster or mitigate burnout. This understanding aids in the formulation of theories related to emotion and job stress, and has practical implications for recruitment, training,

and job design aimed at alleviating the severe issue of burnout. From a practical application perspective, the MBI's significance is further underscored by its utility in suggesting alterations in recruitment, training, and job design that may alleviate burnout. This, in turn, enhances the well-being of individuals and the quality of care or service provided by staff. In terms of standardization, the MBI offers a standardized approach for assessing burnout across various professions and settings. This allows for comparisons and generalizations across a diverse array of human service workers.

In order to quantify the participants' degree of job burnout, this survey employed an adapted version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory in Chinese. This particular version has been validated and is recognized for its highly reliable and internally consistent subscales (Yuen et al., 2002). This portion of the survey consists of 22 items, each utilizing a seven-point rating scale. These items are intentionally crafted to assess three core aspects of job burnout, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

The dimension of *Emotional Exhaustion* can be evaluated through the following questions: 1) "My enthusiasm for teaching work has declined", 2) "A day's work makes me feel exhausted", 3) Waking up every morning to face a new day of work makes me feel tired", 6) "Having to interact with people all day is really a burden for me", 8) "Work makes me feel drained", 13) "My profession makes me feel frustrated", 14) "I feel I work too hard", 16) "Working with people really puts too much pressure on me" and 20) "I feel as if I am in a desperate situation". These questions are designed to gauge the level of emotional exhaustion experienced by the respondents in their professional roles, providing valuable insights into their emotional state in relation to their work. The dimension of *Depersonalization* can be assessed through the subsequent inquiries: Q5) "I perceive that my treatment of students is akin to

interacting with dehumanized entities.” Q10) “Subsequent to my initiation into teaching, I have developed a sense of indifference and emotional numbness towards individuals.” Q11) “I harbor concerns that my professional engagement in education is leading to emotional desensitization.” Q15) “I exhibit a lack of concern regarding the occurrences in the lives of certain students.” Q22) “I sense that students attribute their issues to me.” The dimension of *Personal Accomplishment* can be assessed through the subsequent inquiries: Q4) “I can easily understand students’ feelings about things.” Q7) “I handle student problems effectively. Q9) “I feel that I can positively impact others’ lives through my work. Q12) I feel energetic.” Q17) “I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere when interacting with students.” Q18) “I often feel relaxed and happy after closely interacting with students. Q19) “I have many meaningful achievements in my work.” Q21) “I can calmly handle emotional issues at work.” Job burnout is a multidimensional construct, encompassing three interrelated yet distinct components. The Maslach Burnout Inventory, as a widely recognized measure of burnout, provided a guiding framework to invite respondents’ self-assessments via specific contributing factors to job stress and job burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It is anticipated that educational practitioners and administrators can devise targeted interventions.

Part 6 – Job Stress

Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers & Hong Kong Education Workers Union (2021) conducted a survey to measure the job stress of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. The survey was a critical tool for understanding the unique challenges faced by kindergarten teachers in the region. It provides valuable insights into the sources of stress, which can inform the development of strategies and interventions to improve teacher well-being and job satisfaction. The survey’s findings have indicated that many teachers are overworked and sleep-deprived,

with more than 90% of the 1255 kindergarten teachers and principals who participated in the survey considering leaving the education sector due to stress and sleep deprivation¹. This underscores the importance of addressing these issues to ensure the retention of quality educators in the field. To adapt this reference into the current research study, this section is designed to measure the sources of job stress among kindergarten teachers through questions that utilize a 5-point rating scale. Firstly, the respondents were invited to rate their overall job stress level. Then 13 questions are included to invite them to rate their source of job stress in relation to the following aspects: 1) Administrative work at school, 2) Parental demands, 3) Career development, 4) Compensation, 5) Lack of understanding, 6) Low social status, 7) Teaching, 8) Handling students with special learning needs, 9) Parental complaints, 10) Lack of job security, 11) Personnel issues, 12) Various demands from the education bureau and 13) Insufficient rest time. Each of these aspects represents potential sources of stress for kindergarten teachers. By rating their stress levels in relation to each aspect, the survey can help identify the most significant stressors. This information can then be used to develop strategies and interventions to reduce stress and improve job satisfaction among kindergarten teachers.

Part 7 – Copenhagen Psychosocial Aspects

For measuring participant's psychosocial perspectives towards their occupational wellbeing, Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ) is adapted in this section for its significance and reliability has been validated in many languages and cultural contexts. This tool allows for a comprehensive assessment of psychosocial factors in the workplace, providing a thorough understanding of factors impacting the occupational wellbeing of early childhood educators. Developed through factor analyses and tested for reliability, it ensures valid measurements of the constructs it assesses. Its translation and validation in many languages and cultural contexts make it valuable for international research and practice, particularly relevant for

a study in multicultural Hong Kong. In the context of psychosocial aspects of occupational wellbeing, the following questions are formulated in a survey using a 5-point rating scale to evaluate the frequency of occurrence: Q1) Is your work piling up due to uneven distribution? Q2) How often do you not have enough time to complete your work? Q3) Is your work progress lagging? Q4) Do you have sufficient time to complete your work? Q5) Do you have to simultaneously focus on many things in your work? Q6) Does your work require you to remember many things? Q7) Does your work require you to be good at proposing new ideas? Q8) Does your work require you to make difficult decisions? Q9) Does your work cause you emotional distress? Q10) Is dealing with others' personal problems part of your job? Q11) How high are the emotional demands of your work? Q12) Do you have a significant influence on decisions in your work? Q13) Do you have a say in choosing who to collaborate with? Q14) Can you influence the workload assigned to you by your unit? Q15) Do you have a say in your own work content? Q16) Can you determine your own work pace? Q17) Can you decide how to complete your work? Q18) Is your work meaningful? Q19) Do you think your work is important? The following questions are designed to evaluate respondents' perceptions of their direct supervisors: Q20) To what extent does your supervisor ensure that employees have good development opportunities? Q21) How much does your supervisor value employee job satisfaction? Q22) How proficient is your supervisor at organizing work? Q23) How adept is your supervisor at resolving conflicts? Q24) How often is your direct supervisor willing to listen to your work-related difficulties, if needed? Q25) How often do you receive help and support from your direct supervisor, if needed? Q26) How frequently does your direct supervisor discuss your job performance with you? Additionally, the following questions assess the relationship with colleagues: Q27) How often do you receive help and support from colleagues, if needed? Q28) How often are your colleagues willing to listen to your work-related difficulties, if needed?

Q29) How frequently do your colleagues discuss your job performance with you? Q30) How would you rate the atmosphere between you and your colleagues? Q31) How well do colleagues collaborate in the workplace? Furthermore, the following questions evaluate the respondents' sense of belonging and attitudes towards their school: Q32) How often do you feel part of a collective in your work? Q33) Are you willing to introduce your school to others? Q34) How important is your current school to you? Q35) Would you recommend others to seek employment at your school? Q36) How often do you consider changing jobs? Q37) As a member of the school, do you feel proud? By identifying the specific psychosocial factors that are impacting the occupational wellbeing of early childhood educators, it is hoped that interventions can be designed to target these areas by school policy maker. This can lead to more effective strategies for improving occupational wellbeing and reducing work-related stress in the early childhood settings in Hong Kong.

Part 8 – Job-related feelings

For measuring participant's job-related feelings in Hong Kong early childhood settings, this section of the questionnaires was derived from "The Early Childhood Educators' Work-Related Wellbeing Survey" which was originally conducted by the Early Childhood Research Group at Charles Sturt University (Cumming, et al 2021). To ensure linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness, all questions were translated into Chinese using a rigorous back-translation procedure. This method involves translating the text from the source language to the target language, and then translating it back to the source language to verify the accuracy of the translation. This process ensures that the meaning of the questions remains intact across different languages and cultural contexts. "The Early Childhood Educators' Work-Related Wellbeing Survey" unveiled a propensity among educators to report high levels of job satisfaction

stemming from the ‘emotional rewards’ of their profession, even as they consistently place the needs of children and families above their own. The survey indicates that educators often feel obligated to subordinate their needs due to a prevailing discourse that implies that fulfilling the needs of the educators could potentially infringe upon the needs of the children. The authors emphasized the need to broaden our understanding of the factors that lead educators to habitually suppress their needs. This insight could influence future discussions about potential ‘risks’ to the quality of early childhood education and care (Cumming, et al 2021). The following four questions, assessed on a 5-point scale, are designed to gauge respondents’ level of agreement with the subsequent statements: Q1) My work is both stimulating and challenging, Q2) My work gives me a sense of accomplishment, Q3) I have a positive impact on the lives of children and Q4) I feel that my skills and abilities are fully utilized in my work. By incorporating these questions in the current study, it is hoped to reveal the need for improving work environment quality and educators’ wellbeing in the early childhood sector.

Part 9 – Work and Private life conflicts

Work-life conflict can be gauged using a comprehensive scale that scrutinizes the compatibility of work schedules with family and personal commitments. Mellner et. al (2021) suggested a detailed analysis of diverse forms and intensities of work-nonwork boundary congruence and incongruence. This includes congruence in segmentation, where both enactment and preference align towards segmentation, and congruence in integration, where both enactment and preference align towards integration. It also includes situations of intrusion, where integration is enacted but segmentation is preferred, and distance, where segmentation is enacted but integration is preferred. The extent of work-life conflict can be deduced from the degree of

alignment or misalignment between the enacted and preferred states of segmentation or integration.

The subsequent four questions evaluated on a 4-point scale probe the frequency of respondents' encounters related to Q1) Do you often feel a conflict between work and personal life, making it difficult for you to balance both? Q2) Do you feel that work consumes too much of your energy, resulting in a negative impact on your personal life? Q3) Do your friends and family remind you that you are working too much? and Q4) Do you feel that work occupies too much of your time, resulting in a negative impact on your personal life? By incorporating these 4 questions in this section, the important elements like work-personal life conflict, energy consumption, external perception of workload and time allocation can be measured to evaluate the work-life conflicts amongst early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

Part 10 - Demography

In addition to the measures designed in the first 9 sections of the survey, demographic data were collected from the participants in the final section. The demographic data collected in this survey includes the following elements: 1) Length of Service working as a preschool educator. 2) Highest Education Level achieved in the field of Early Childhood Education 3) The average number of hours the respondent works at school in a typical week. 4) The number of overtime hours the respondent works at school in a typical week. 5) The respondent's age, 6) The type of ECE service the respondent's workplace primarily provides ,7) the respondent's job rank at school. 8) Length of Service at Current Workplace: How long the respondent has been working at their current workplace. 9) The number of children the respondent is responsible for at kindergarten. 10) Whether there are students with special needs in the classes the respondent teaches. 11) The teaching arrangement of the respondent's kindergarten (full-day, half-day, or mixed mode) and 12) The respondent's monthly salary. These elements provide a comprehensive



overview of the respondent's demographic and occupational characteristics, which can be used to analyze and understand their occupational wellbeing in general.

In summary, the questionnaire employed in this study was meticulously designed to capture a holistic view of occupational well-being among early childhood educators. It was tailored to align with the specific context of their work, thereby ensuring its relevance and applicability. This comprehensive approach provides a robust framework for understanding and improving occupational well-being in this critical sector.

Study 2

The design of Study Two consists of the following two steps:

Step 1: Interviewees will first be briefed on the definition of occupational well-being to ensure a shared understanding of the concept before the interview begins.

Step 2: The following questions, which will be translated into Cantonese or Mandarin based on the interviewee's native language (see Appendix B), are designed to elicit feedback through a one-on-one interview format. These questions will encourage participants to reflect on their professional experiences and provide insights into the factors that shape their well-being in the workplace.

Table 15

Interview questions used in study two

Microsystem	1. Please share the major factors about your family affecting your occupational wellbeing. Why? 2. Please share the major factors about your workplace affecting your occupational wellbeing. Why?
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Mesosystem	1. Please share your concern over struggles between work and family. 2. What is the main reason influencing your work-life balance? 3. Do you think you received any positive support from your family, colleagues and the community, especially during the time when you are under work stress? Do these supports received from different parties influence one another? Please describe.
Exosystem	1. Did mass media (e.g., any news report, magazine articles or social media etc.) affect your occupational well-being (e.g., job engagement, job satisfaction, burnout, turnover intention etc) as early childhood education practitioner?
Macrosystem	1. Please share your concern over any local policy (not limited to education policy) in Hong Kong that might affect your job as early childhood educator? 2. What do you think about the recent change with the socio-economic climate in your kindergarten / Hong Kong affect you? How? 3. Does Chinese traditional culture (e.g., Confucianism) or any other culture affect your role working as early childhood education practitioners?

While Study 1 paints a broad quantitative picture of teacher wellbeing in Hong Kong, Study 2 invites us to dive deeper, exploring the rich tapestry of experiences through qualitative inquiry. Here, the spotlight shifts from numbers to voices, as 15 early childhood education (ECE) educators from diverse roles and settings, invited from 6 early childhood settings, share their perspectives on the ecological factors that shape their occupational well-being. Unlike the

structured survey of Study 1, Study 2 employs semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. These open-ended conversations provide fertile ground for participants to unravel their unique narratives, weaving together threads of personal experiences, work demands, and environmental influences.

Guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, the interviews delve into the intricate interplay of environmental factors that shape teachers' occupational well-being. These interviews use a series of structured questions to explore how different systems, from the immediate to the broader societal context, impact early childhood educators' professional lives in Hong Kong.

Beginning with the microsystem, which includes the teacher's immediate relationships and surroundings, the interview questions focus on how both family and workplace directly influence well-being. Participants were asked, *"Please share the major factors about your family affecting your occupational well-being. Why?"* This question explores how family dynamics such as emotional support, household responsibilities, or family stress may either enhance or undermine their professional satisfaction and mental health. Additionally, they were asked, *"Please share the major factors about your workplace affecting your occupational well-being. Why?"* This question targets workplace conditions, including relationships with colleagues and students, access to resources, and the physical environment, uncovering how daily classroom interactions contribute to their overall sense of job satisfaction or stress.

Moving to the mesosystem, which focuses on the interactions between different parts of the microsystem, the interview questions probe the balance between work and family life. *"Please share your concern over struggles between work and family"* addresses how these two central aspects of their lives intersect, while *"What is the main reason influencing your work-life balance?"* aims to uncover the primary challenges or enablers in maintaining a healthy balance. Moreover, the question *"Do you think you received any positive support from your family,*

colleagues, and the community, especially during times of work stress? Do these supports received from different parties influence one another? Please describe." investigates how support systems both at home and in the workplace can interact and either alleviate or exacerbate the stress they experience. This section helps reveal whether these supportive networks are interrelated, offering a deeper understanding of the combined effect of various personal and professional relationships on occupational well-being.

At the exosystem level, the interview questions shift focus to external forces that indirectly influence teachers' well-being, such as media and community resources. Participants were asked *"Did mass media (e.g., any news report, magazine articles, or social media, etc.) affect your occupational well-being (e.g., job engagement, job satisfaction, burnout, turnover intention, etc.) as an early childhood education practitioner?"* This question explores the impact of public discourse and media portrayal of early childhood education on their professional identity, job motivation, and stress levels. Although teachers may not engage directly with these systems, the media's influence on public perception of their work can profoundly affect their professional experiences.

In the macrosystem, the interview questions explore broader societal and cultural influences on teachers' professional lives. *"Please share your concern over any local policy (not limited to education policy) in Hong Kong that might affect your job as an early childhood educator?"* This question addresses how local governmental policies, including but not limited to education, impact their job security, work conditions, and professional development opportunities. Additionally, the question, *"What do you think about the recent change with the socio-economic climate in your kindergarten/Hong Kong? How?"* seeks to understand how shifts in the local economy or socio-political environment affect their job. Changes in community demographics, economic pressures, or social attitudes can create stress or new challenges for

teachers. Lastly, the interview addresses cultural factors by asking, "*Does Chinese traditional culture (e.g., Confucianism) or any other culture affect your role working as an early childhood education practitioner?*" This question investigates whether cultural expectations, values, and traditions shape their role and responsibilities, particularly in the context of Hong Kong's unique cultural blend of Chinese traditions and global influences.

Finally, the **chronosystem** is subtly incorporated by considering how changes over time in both their personal and professional lives influence their well-being. For example, evolving government policies or personal life changes, such as starting a family, having a newborn baby or career advancements, may have had long-term impacts on their professional satisfaction and stress levels. The inclusion of follow-up probing questions throughout the interviews allows educators to reflect on how shifts in both the educational system and their personal circumstances have shaped their professional experiences over time.

Through this multi-layered approach, the interview questions provide a comprehensive analysis of how environmental factors, ranging from direct personal interactions in the microsystem to broad societal forces in the macrosystem, interact to influence early childhood educators' occupational well-being in Hong Kong.

Transcribing, coding and analysis on study 2 data

The interview dialogues were systematically coded and analyzed using NVivo software, a powerful qualitative analysis tool designed to handle complex narrative data. NVivo helped organize the transcribed interviews into "tree nodes" and "free nodes" for a more structured and detailed analysis. The tree nodes represented pre-defined categories based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, such as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and

chronosystem. Each of these categories served as a thematic umbrella under which related interview responses were organized. For example, any dialogue related to family dynamics was categorized under the microsystem, while responses addressing workplace policies were coded under the exosystem. On the other hand, free nodes captured any new, unexpected themes that emerged organically from the interviews, beyond the pre-defined categories. This flexible approach allowed the analysis to remain open to novel insights, such as unforeseen factors influencing well-being that had not been initially considered.

This two-pronged coding approach, using both tree and free nodes, ensures that the analysis is both comprehensive and nuanced, enabling a thorough exploration of the complex factors affecting early childhood educators' occupational well-being. While tree nodes maintain the structural integrity of the ecological model, free nodes allow for flexibility in identifying new dimensions of teacher experiences that may otherwise be overlooked.

Additionally, demographic characteristics such as age, academic background, and years of experience were incorporated into the analysis as potential variables influencing well-being. By cross-referencing these variables with the qualitative data, NVivo enables a deeper understanding of how individual attributes interact with interpersonal and societal factors. This holistic approach ensures that both personal and environmental influences are thoroughly examined, offering a nuanced view of how various layers of experience shape the professional lives of early childhood educators.

Ultimately, Study 2 aims to illuminate the intricate tapestry of factors influencing early childhood educators' well-being. By listening to the diverse voices of these educators and systematically analysing their narratives, the study seeks to unravel the complex interplay of ecological factors that impact their professional lives.

In particular, the occupational roles of educators such as class teacher, special childcare worker, head teacher, and principal will be carefully examined to understand how their distinct responsibilities influence well-being. Additionally, the workplace setting will be analysed, with a focus on whether the institution offers a full-day program exclusively or a mixed mode that includes both half-day and full-day programs. These elements provide critical context for understanding how the structure and demands of different roles and settings shape the professional experiences of early childhood educators.

The study also aims to identify hidden threads and unexpected influences that may not be captured by quantitative methods, providing a richer, more nuanced understanding of the factors affecting well-being. By examining how demographic characteristics such as age, academic background, and years of experience interact with these occupational roles and workplace settings, the study will offer deeper insights into how individual, interpersonal, and environmental factors converge to shape the well-being of early childhood educators. Study 2 utilizes metaphorical language and expands on the rationale and potential impact of the research. The complexity of teacher well-being would be explored and that becomes the study's potential to contribute to meaningful change.

3.2 Research sampling method and participants

Study One

A cover letter and online questionnaire (all in Chinese) were emailed to 13 non-profit making kindergarten cum childcare centers in Hong Kong. The questionnaire was designed to assess different aspects of occupational wellbeing amongst early childhood educators in Hong Kong. Purposive sampling method was applied in this research. Participants were 144 in-service early childhood educators (143 females, $M_{age}= 35.1$ years) recruited to participate in Study 1

online survey (1st wave) and 49 early childhood educators (48 females, $M_{age}= 36.6$ years) recruited from the same 13 early childhood institutions to participate in Study 1 online survey (2nd wave). Response retention rate was 34%. Participants reported their well-being status quo by answering multiple-choice questions from the online survey at two-time points, with approximately 10 - 12 months in between.

The 49 samples participating in both waves were used for final data analysis. They are predominantly female in study one (98%). Respondents consist of assistant teachers (2%), class teachers (59.2%), senior / head teachers (14.3%), principals (6.1%), specialist teacher (2%) and the rest did not disclose their occupation (16.3%). Most are serving in the current organization as full-time staff (98%). According to the present study, most of the interviewees serve a group of 10 – 19 children (36.7%), followed by a group of 30 – 39 children (20.4%), a group of more than 50 children (18.4%), a group of less than 10 children (12.2%), and a group of 20 – 29 children (8.2%). 89.8% of respondents expressed the need to work with children with special educational needs (SEN). 69.4% of the respondents work with children on whole-day learning mode, 6.1% work with children on half-day learning mode, while 24.5% work with children on both full-day and half-day learning mode. For remuneration in terms of monthly salary, most respondents are earning HK\$25,001 – 30,000 (28.6%), followed by HK\$20,001 – 25,000 (26.5%), HK\$35,001 – 40,000 (22.4%), HK\$30,001 – 35,000 (12.2%), HK\$40,001 – 45,000 (4.1%), over HK\$50,000 (4.1%) and HK\$15,001 – 20,000 (2%).

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics of the early childhood educators (N = 49) participated in both waves of Study One:

Question	Number / Mean	% SD
Duration of early childhood education work experience (in months)	146.02	114.40
Highest degree in early childhood education (Qualification)		
No non- early childhood education certificate	26	53.10 %
Certificate	10	20.40 %
Diploma	4	8.20 %
Bachelor degree	8	16.30 %
Postgraduate	1	2.00 %
Age	35.73	7.93
Gender		
Male	1	2.00 %
Female	48	98.00 %
Weekly working hours in average	34.02	21.05
Weekly OT (overtime)	6.47	7.22
No. of children in school	138.44	71.55
Job rank in organization		
Principal	3	6.10 %
Headteacher	7	14.30 %
Class teacher	29	59.20 %
Specialist teacher	1	2.00 %
Teacher Assistant	1	2.00 %
Not disclosed	8	16.30%
Tenure in the current institution (in months)	82.04	82.24
Current contract term		
Part-time employment	1	2.00 %
Full-time employment	48	98.00 %

Numbers of children you mainly work with			
less than 10	6	12.20 %	
10 to 19	18	36.70 %	
20 to 29	4	8.20 %	
30 to 39	10	20.40 %	
40 to 49	2	4.10 %	
more than 50	9	18.40 %	
Currently working with SEN children			
No	5	10.20 %	
Yes	44	89.80 %	
Currently teaching whole-day or half-day mode			
Whole-day mode	34	69.40 %	
Half-day mode	3	6.10 %	
Mixed mode	12	24.50 %	
Remuneration (monthly salary)			
15001 - 20000 HKD	1	2.00 %	
20001 - 25000 HKD	13	26.50 %	
25001 - 30000 HKD	14	28.60 %	
30001 - 35000 HKD	6	12.20 %	
35001 - 40000 HKD	11	22.40 %	
40001 - 45000 HKD	2	4.10 %	
more than 50000 HKD	2	4.10 %	

Study Two

Out of the 49 respondents in 2nd wave of Study One, 15 early childhood educators (15 females, *Mage* = 36.1 years) were willing to take part in face-to-face interview in Study 2. Youngest educator is 25 years old verse oldest at 52 years old. They have an average work experience at 13.6 years (162.8 months) with the shortest at 2.6 years and longest at 33.8 years serving in the ECE sector. Out of the 15 participants in study two, 9 are class teachers, 2 special childcare workers serving in the extended learning group for SEN children (兼收組), 2 head teachers and 2 principals. Among the 15 participants in this study, 11 educators (73%) work in institutions that offer exclusively full-day kindergarten combined with childcare programs. The

remaining 4 educators (27%) are employed at institutions providing mixed-mode kindergarten programs, where part of the student population is enrolled in half-day programs and the rest in full-day services. None of the Study 2 participants work in institutions offering solely half-day kindergarten programs. Average age of the nine class teachers is 31.7 years old, they have been working in the early childhood education sector for an average of 7.2 years. Average age of the two special childcare worker is 41 years old; they have been working in the early childhood education sector for an average of 22.4 years. Average age of the two head teachers is 41.5 years old, they have been working in the early childhood education sector for an average of 21.7 years. Both principals are 46 years old, they have been working in the early childhood education sector for an average of 25.3 years. The profile of the 15 participants can be referred from table 17, while the data collected from wave 1 and wave 2 of Study one is also compared to form a new set of data illustrating the change of occupational wellbeing in multiple dimensions amongst the 15 invited respondents for Study 2 (see table 18).

Table 17

Profiles of the early childhood educators (N = 15) participated in Study Two:

Rank	#	KG	Mode	Age	Work experience in ECE field		Average age	Average work experience
					Months	year		
Class teacher	C1	KG1	Mixed	30	72	6.0	31.7	7.2
Class teacher	C2	KG1	Mixed	33	100	8.3		
Class teacher	C3	KG2	FD	31	96	8.0		
Class teacher	C4	KG2	FD	28	50	4.2		
Class teacher	C5	KG3	FD	42	252	21.0		
Class teacher	C6	KG4	FD	34	31	2.6		
Class teacher	C7	KG5	FD	25	36	3.0		
Class teacher	C8	KG5	FD	34	49	4.1		
Class teacher	C9	KG5	FD	28	91	7.6		
Special childcare worker	SC1	KG4	FD	30	132	11.0	41	22.4
Special childcare worker	SC2	KG5	FD	52	405	33.8		
Head teacher	HT1	KG1	Mixed	41	228	19.0	41.5	21.7
Head teacher	HT2	KG3	FD	42	292	24.3		
Principal	P1	KG5	FD	46	332	27.7	46	25.3
Principal	P2	KG6	Mixed	46	276	23.0		
				M= 36.1	M=162.8	M=13.6		
				SD = 8.09	SD = 122.7	SD=10.23		

Remarks: KG means kindergarten. FD means Kindergartens provide solely full-day programmes.

Mixed means kindergartens provide mixed mode with both half-day and full-day programmes.

3.3 Procedures and statistical analysis

Study One

To investigate the key focus in this research study – kindergarten teachers' occupational well-being – Study 1 embarked on a careful process of casting the research net. This involved collaborating with kindergartens willing to participate, meticulously informing potential participants, and ensuring their voluntary engagement in the study. Each kindergarten received an electronic invitation letter, a carefully crafted document outlining the study's purpose, methodology, and potential benefits. This transparency aimed to ensure informed consent from individual teachers, guaranteeing their voluntary participation and respect for their autonomy. The study 1 delved into various aspects of teachers' professional lives, crafting a questionnaire that served as a multifaceted measuring tool.

Questionnaire design covers questions measuring the participants' job satisfaction, turnover intention, job support, work engagement, job burnout, job stress, job-related feelings, conflicts between work and private life, and job burnout (Tsui et al., 1992; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This comprehensive questionnaire served as a window into the diverse experiences of kindergarten teachers, allowing researchers to gather rich data and paint a nuanced picture of their occupational well-being. By enriching the narrative with details about the collaboration with kindergartens, the careful consent process, and the specific instruments used, this version provides a more vivid and engaging description of the initial stages of Study 1.

Study 1's investigation into the interplay between demographic factors and teacher well-being in Hong Kong employed a robust arsenal of statistical tools to glean insights from the collected data. This elaboration focuses on unpacking the intricacies of the analysis, shedding light on the choices made and the potential implications of the findings.

To gain a more nuanced understanding of the intricate relationships between the independent and dependent variables, the researcher employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS software (Kline, 2015). This analytical approach offered the advantage of assessing both direct and indirect effects concurrently, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive interpretation of the factors influencing teacher well-being. Prior to developing the SEM model, careful attention was given to evaluating the properties of the inventories used in the study. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated, alongside Cronbach's alpha coefficients to examine the central tendency and internal consistency of the variables. Furthermore, the factor structures were thoughtfully examined to ensure that the constructs measured aligned appropriately with the theoretical framework guiding the study.

To address the research question and examine the stated hypotheses in a systematic and theoretically grounded manner, both partial correlational analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were employed. These statistical approaches were chosen due to their complementary strengths in exploring complex, multivariate relationships within the ecological systems framework.

Partial Correlational Analysis

Partial correlational analysis is especially useful for isolating the unique relationships between specific variables while controlling for the influence of others. In the context of this study, it allows the researcher to examine how distinct ecological layers—such as the microsystem or mesosystem—relate to occupational well-being while statistically accounting for potential confounding influences from other layers or demographic variables (e.g., age, teaching experience). This analytic strategy is particularly well-suited for answering Research Question as

it helps clarify which ecological layers and factors are independently associated with educators' well-being, beyond the shared variance with other systems.

For instance, by controlling for external or contextual factors (e.g., exosystem influences like institutional policies), partial correlation helps uncover whether perceived support within the microsystem or conflicts within the mesosystem exert a unique and statistically significant influence on occupational well-being. Such insights contribute meaningfully to testing Hypotheses 1 and 2 by highlighting the specific directional relationships between ecological factors and well-being outcomes.

Incremental Predictive Modeling of Teacher Well-Being Outcomes: Integrating Demographic, Contextual, and Psychosocial Factors

By analysing with Incremental Predictive Modeling of Teacher Well-Being Outcomes through integrating demographic, contextual, and psychosocial Factors, it allows researcher to systematically isolate and examine the unique contributions of multiple layers of the ecological system to occupational well-being among early childhood educators.

First, this modeling approach aligns well with the need to identify which ecological system layers influence occupational well-being. By entering variables in blocks—beginning with demographic factors (which can be seen as reflecting stable aspects of the exosystem and macrosystem), then adding contextual factors (that capture situational, mesosystem influences), and finally including psychosocial variables (key elements of the microsystem)—the analysis mirrors Bronfenbrenner's conceptualization of nested environmental influences (Bronfenbrenner,

1979). This stepwise strategy enables the researcher to discern how each layer contributes incrementally to explaining variations in teacher well-being outcomes over time.

Second, incremental predictive modeling is essential for pinpointing specific factors within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems that significantly predict occupational well-being. Each block of variables represents a different dimension of teachers' environments. For instance, when the demographic block is entered first, it allows one to assess baseline influences such as age, tenure, and qualification. By then including contextual demands (like quantitative, emotional, or cognitive demands), the analysis can reveal which situational stressors or supports have predictive utility. Finally, incorporating psychosocial factors (such as job support, meaning of work, quality of leadership, and social support) uncovers the nuanced dynamics of the microsystem that influence well-being. The model's incremental nature clarifies the independent predictive power of these various factors, demonstrating which specific predictors remain significant even after accounting for other layers of influence.

Third, this modeling technique is crucial for examining how interactions between different ecological system levels influence occupational well-being. Incremental predictive modeling reveals how adding variables from one ecological level alters the explanatory power of those already in the model. For example, the change in R^2 (ΔR^2) when contextual factors are added after demographic factors indicates the extent to which work-related demands and environmental variables contribute to well-being beyond what is already explained by personal characteristics. Similarly, further inclusion of psychosocial variables shows how interpersonal and intra-organizational dynamics (microsystem factors) further refine the prediction of outcomes. Observing these incremental changes provides valuable insight into how layered

influences interact—whereby a strong microsystem might buffer the negative impacts of stressful mesosystem or exosystem conditions.

Hence, the incremental predictive modeling framework not only answers which ecological layers (demographic, contextual, psychosocial) affect teacher well-being, but also distinguishes the specific factors that are most influential within each layer, and finally examines the additive and interactive effects of these variables over time. This comprehensive approach is therefore instrumental in addressing the research question regarding the perceived influences, significant predictors, and cross-level interactions within Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems that shape occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis provides a robust framework for understanding how different sets of predictors contribute incrementally to explaining variance in occupational well-being. By entering ecological system variables into the regression model in theoretically informed blocks (e.g., entering microsystem variables first, followed by mesosystem, exosystem, etc.), the researcher can systematically assess the relative and additive predictive power of each system level. This stepwise approach is particularly aligned with the layered structure of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model and directly addresses Research Question.

Moreover, hierarchical regression allows for the investigation of interaction effects between different system levels—thus responding to Research Question, which concerns the interplay among ecological systems. For example, the analysis can reveal whether the negative impact of work-life conflict in the mesosystem is buffered by strong support within the

microsystem, suggesting a possible moderating effect. This method also aids in confirming the stated hypotheses by identifying which specific ecological variables significantly predict occupational well-being, and to what extent.

However, due to the limited sample size in the second wave of the survey and the sizeable number of items in some inventories, a full-fledged factor analysis was not feasible. This highlights the importance of carefully considering sample size limitations when choosing appropriate statistical analyses. To further explore the relationships between key variables, researcher analysed their correlations. This provided valuable information about the strength and direction of associations between, for example, specific demographic factors and different aspects of teacher well-being. Ensuring the reliability of the data was paramount. Cronbach's alpha coefficients was calculated for each group of variables within the study, verifying that the items measuring each construct consistently assessed the intended concept. Internal consistency was performed by checking the Cronbach's coefficient alpha amongst the different variables. The findings of this study can be used to improve the validity and reliability of inventories used in research.

Study Two

Study Two is a qualitative research study that aims to investigate the factors that influence occupational wellbeing (OWB) amongst early childhood educators in Hong Kong. The study will use in-depth interviews to collect data from class teachers (N=8), special childcare worker (N=2), headteachers (N=2) and principals (N=2) working in 6 Hong Kong kindergartens operating either in solely full-day mode (N = 11) and mixed mode with both half-day and full-day mode (N = 4), which will be analysed using NVivo 12 software. The coding process will involve creating tree nodes and free nodes. Tree nodes in qualitative data analysis are used to

represent concepts or themes that are identified in the data. They can be organized in a hierarchical structure to show how different concepts relate to each other. Free nodes, on the other hand, are nodes that are not linked to any other nodes in the hierarchy. This can be useful for representing concepts or themes that are unique or unexpected.

Tree nodes would be constructed according to a hierarchical structure of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system while free nodes are independent nodes with no clear connection with other nodes, as proposed by the interviewees during the open-ended conversation. Using a qualitative data analysis software program such as NVivo can help to improve the accuracy and efficiency of the analysis.

The coding process is an essential part of qualitative data analysis, and it involves identifying and organizing concepts and themes in the data. The coding process can be divided into three stages: initial coding, axial coding, and selective coding to extract the main factors associated with occupational well-being of ECE educators. Initial coding involves identifying the main concepts and themes in the data. This is typically done by reading the data carefully and making notes about the key ideas and patterns that emerge. Axial coding involves organizing the initial codes into categories and exploring the relationships between them. This helps to identify the main factors that are associated with kindergarten teachers' occupational well-being (OWB). Selective coding involves selecting the most important factors and developing a theoretical model to explain how they are related to each other. It be used to understand the factors that contribute to OWB in ECE educators.

The coding process is typically developed from a general to a specific level of analysis. The main path of coding would direct towards detailed analysis for further associating the main factors related to the occupational wellbeing of ECE educators. Once these factors have been identified, then the nodes can be developed for each factor and coding can explain the data in

more detail. When the data has been coded in detail, they would then be merged and grouped under the nodes to form relevant categories for further analysis.

The results of Study 2 were prescribed and analysed using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework, encompassing the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. This approach offers a comprehensive understanding of the diverse factors influencing the occupational well-being (OWB) of early childhood educators in Hong Kong. By employing this multi-level model, the study will explore how personal, relational, institutional, societal, and temporal influences collectively shape educators' experiences.

The findings from this study are expected to guide the development of targeted interventions and policies to enhance the well-being of kindergarten teachers. Utilizing qualitative research methods, such as in-depth, one-on-one interviews, will enable a nuanced exploration of the unique experiences and perspectives of educators working across different roles within kindergarten settings. A thematic coding process will be employed to identify key themes and patterns, providing rich insights into the interconnected factors affecting OWB. This analysis will serve as a foundation for developing a theoretical model of occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong, offering practical implications for educational policy and institutional support strategies.

Table 18

Ecological Systems Model Applied to Occupational Well-being of Early Childhood Educators:

Factors and Analysis Framework

System	Factors	Insights	References
1. Microsystem			
1.1 Family factors	Family support, family duty, family-related emotional demand, roles in the family.	The family environment has a direct influence on educators' emotional and mental health. Family duties and roles can increase stress, while family support is often crucial in managing the demands of work.	Bronfenbrenner (1992); Greenhaus & Beutell (1985); Hobfoll (2001)
1.2 Work factors	Heavy workload, time pressure/long working hours, job-related emotional demand, work resources, job autonomy, demand for professional development.	Work-related factors, such as workload, time constraints, and emotional demands, significantly affect educators' well-being. Access to resources, autonomy, and professional development can alleviate some of these pressures.	Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2018); Day, Sammons, & Stobart (2007); Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet (2005)
2. Mesosystem			
2.1 Factors affecting work-life balance	Interaction of personal and work-related demands.	Maintaining a balance between work and personal life is essential to well-being. Factors like work schedules, family responsibilities, and social relationships can either support or challenge this balance.	Greenhaus & Beutell (1985); Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton (2000)
2.2 Social support from multiple stakeholders	Support from colleagues, job-related stakeholders, friends, and family, as well as their mutual relationships.	Social support from various groups helps educators manage work stress and maintain well-being. The network of support from colleagues, friends, and family offers emotional relief and resources when needed.	House (1981); Hobfoll (2001); Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli (2003)
3. Exosystem			
3.1 Institutional policies in relation to demands	Policies regarding workload, work hours, and professional development that influence educators'	Institutional policies around work demands and expectations from various stakeholders, including parents, administrators, and	Day, Sammons, & Stobart (2007); Johnson et al. (2005)

from stakeholders	work demands and their ability to meet stakeholder expectations.	policymakers, can directly impact educators' work conditions and stress levels.	
3.2 Education Policies in Hong Kong	Local educational reforms and standards, which directly influence work conditions and expectations of early childhood educators.	Policies in Hong Kong related to education shape the working environment for early childhood educators, impacting curriculum expectations, professional development, and workloads.	Bray & Koo (2004); Tse, Yu, & Wong (2014)
3.3 Media	Representation of early childhood educators and their work in media, influencing public perceptions and societal expectations.	The portrayal of educators in media shapes societal attitudes and can either enhance or challenge the respect and support teachers receive from the community.	van Daalen (2004); Smetherham (2006)
4. Macrosystem			
4.1 Societal attitudes and norms	Societal expectations for the roles of early childhood educators, including gendered roles, expectations, and societal valuation of their profession.	Broader societal norms and values influence how educators are viewed, their social status, and the expectations placed on them regarding nurturing and educational duties.	Bronfenbrenner (1992); Croll (2008); Mills & Gale (2004)
4.2 Cultural values	Cultural views on the importance of early childhood education, work ethics, and professional recognition for educators.	Cultural differences in the value placed on education and the status of early childhood educators shape their working conditions and societal recognition, affecting both motivation and well-being.	Hofstede (2001); Ball (2003)
5. Chronosystem			
5.1 Practices, perceptions, relations, and policies that change over time	Changes in societal norms, education policies, and professional practices that affect educators' roles and work environments over time.	Changes in education systems, policies, and public perceptions over time affect the job demands, professional expectations, and the social roles of educators, influencing their occupational well-being and career longevity.	Bronfenbrenner (1992); Day et al. (2007); Fullan (2007)

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results (Study 1)

4.1 Profiles of the selected early childhood education institutions and their educators

The locations of the selected 13 non-profit making kindergartens and childcare centre (all are participating the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme) scattered at most area of Hong Kong including Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, East New Territories and West Territories in order to represent most social-economic status in different districts. Amongst the 13 kindergartens, the founding year ranges from 1959 to 2021, and team size range from 5 to 24 teaching staff in order to cover organizations with different scope of organisation and corresponding operational experience. 6 out of all 13 institutions (i.e., 46 %) are registered as kindergarten cum childcare centers providing services for children under 3 years old, which provide a balanced insight into early childhood settings that are operated on different subsidized modes. This study is characterized by the participation of 13 institutions, all of which operate within the realm of early childhood education and are non-profit in nature. Selecting these institutions from the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme provided a common research background for the study. The Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme's involvement is particularly noteworthy as it underscores the commitment of these institutions to providing quality education without the motive of profit-making. This shared characteristic among the participating institutions enhances the comparability of the research findings, as it minimizes the potential influence of differing operational motives and financial structures on the study outcomes.

Furthermore, participation in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme suggests a shared educational philosophy and approach among the institutions, which could contribute to a more homogeneous research environment. This homogeneity could potentially increase the

reliability of the research findings, as it reduces the likelihood of external variables influencing the results. The non-profit nature of the participating institutions and their involvement in the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme provide a consistent and focused research background for this study. This consistency is likely to enhance the validity and applicability of the research findings within similar educational contexts.

4.2 Reliability and validity of the inventories

Internal consistency is a crucial aspect of survey reliability, referring to the degree to which items within a scale consistently measure the same underlying construct. This is typically assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, where values above 0.90 indicate excellent reliability, values between 0.80 and 0.90 signify good reliability, values between 0.70 and 0.80 are considered acceptable, and values below 0.70 denote poor reliability (Cronbach, 1951). The present analysis evaluates the internal consistency of various scales and subscales within the survey based on their Cronbach's Alpha values and the number of items each comprises.

From the analysis summary in table 19, the survey demonstrates strong internal consistency across most of its scales. Constructs such as Job Satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.883$), Turnover Intention ($\alpha = 0.931$), Job Support ($\alpha = 0.855$), and the different dimensions of Work Engagement—including Vigor ($\alpha = 0.874$), Work Engagement ($\alpha = 0.879$), and Absorption ($\alpha = 0.845$)—all exhibit good to excellent reliability. Similarly, the Emotional Exhaustion scale ($\alpha = 0.912$) and Depersonalization ($\alpha = 0.817$), along with Personal Accomplishment ($\alpha = 0.867$), demonstrate high reliability, indicating that these scales effectively measure their intended constructs. The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (CPQ) subscales also largely reflect good internal consistency. Quantitative Demands (CPQ QD, $\alpha = 0.844$) and Cognitive Demands (CPQ CD, $\alpha = 0.815$) both show good reliability. Influence at Work (CPQ IN, $\alpha = 0.847$), Quality of Leadership (CPQ QL, $\alpha = 0.892$), and Commitment to the Workplace (CPQ CW, $\alpha =$

0.917) further confirm the survey's robust measurement quality. Even scales with fewer items, such as Meaning of Work (CPQ MW, $\alpha = 0.917$) and Sense of Community at Work (CPQ SW, $\alpha = 0.899$), achieve excellent reliability, underscoring the effectiveness of their item composition.

While majority of Chinese translated inventories in this survey exhibited factor structures that were consistent with their original English versions, indicating good construct validity. This consistency in factor structures across different language versions of the inventories strengthens the validity of the study's findings and suggests that these inventories are appropriate tools for measuring occupational well-being in this context.

In conclusion, the study's findings provide significant evidence of the validity and reliability of the inventories used. However, the variability in the reliability of the subscales of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire inventories suggests that further research may be necessary to refine these tools and ensure their reliability in measuring occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on occupational well-being in early childhood education and have important implications for future research and practice in this field.

Table 19*Internal Consistency (T2)*

			Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
Job satisfaction (JSAT)			0.883	6
Turnover Intention (TI)			0.931	3
Job Support (JS)			0.855	4
Work Engagement V (Q 1, 4, 8, 12, 15 & 17)			0.874	6
Work Engagement W (Q 2, 5, 7, 10 & 13)			0.879	5
Work Engagement A (Q 3, 6, 9, 11, 14 & 16)			0.845	6
Emotional Exhaustion (Q1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, 20)			0.912	9
Depersonalization (Q 5, 10, 11, 15, 22)			0.817	5
Personal Accomplishment (Q 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, 21)			0.867	8
Job Stress Sources			NA	13
Job-Related Feelings			.887	4
Work and Private Life Conflicts			.904	4
Subscale			Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire				
Quantitative Demands	CPQ QD	1, 2, 3 ,4r	0.844	4
Cognitive Demands	CPQ CD	5, 6, 7, 8	0.815	4
Emotional Demands	CPQ ED	9, 10, 11	0.234	3
New Emotional Demands	N PQ ED	10,11	0.491	
Influence at Work	CPQ IN	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	0.847	6
Meaning of Work	CPQ MW	18, 19	0.917	2
Quality of Leadership	CPQ QL	20, 21, 22, 23	0.892	4
Social Support from Supervisor	CPQ SS	24, 25, 26	0.815	3
Social Support form Colleagues	CPQ SC	27, 28, 29	0.792	3
Sense of Community at Work	CPQ SW	30, 31, 32	0.899	3
Commitment to the Workplace	CPQ CW	33, 34, 35, 36r, 37	0.917	5

4.3 Partial Correlation Analysis

The following section illustrating through Table 20 presents the results of analyses of means, standard deviations, and partial correlations between baseline (T1) variables and occupational well-being outcomes measured one year later (T2) among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. T1 represents the initial wave of the study, while T2 reflects the follow-up assessment. In the table below, outcomes are annotated with significance markers (* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$), which highlight the statistically significant relationships. These findings offer a detailed snapshot of the occupational well-being landscape and provide insights into how early workplace experiences relate to later outcomes.

T2 Job Satisfaction

The analysis reveals that baseline measures of support and commitment are strongly and positively associated with job satisfaction measured one year later. For instance, T1 Commitment to the Workplace shows a robust positive correlation with T2 Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.750$, $p < .001$), indicating that teachers who initially feel a high level of commitment tend to report significantly higher job satisfaction over time. Other supportive factors, such as T1 Job Support ($r = 0.534$, $p < .05$), Influence at Work ($r = 0.502$, $p < .05$), and a sense of meaningful work (with correlations ranging from $r = 0.637$ to 0.680 , all $p < .05$), also significantly predict enhanced job satisfaction at T2. Conversely, baseline stressors such as T1 Job Stress Source ($r = -0.427$, $p < .05$) and high Quantitative Demands ($r = -0.417$, $p < .05$) are significantly associated with lower T2 Job Satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the fundamental tenet of Bronfenbrenner's microsystem, where the immediate work environment exerts a direct influence on an individual's well-being. When teachers perceive their environment as supportive and feel a

sense of commitment, the quality of their work experience is likely to be more positive, thereby leading to higher job satisfaction in the long term (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

T2 Turnover Intention

In a parallel narrative, the data indicate that an environment characterized by high support and meaningful work inversely relates to teachers' intentions to leave their job. Significant negative correlations are observed for T1 Job Support ($r = -0.345$, $p < .05$) and for supportive factors such as Influence at Work, Meaning of Work, and Quality of Leadership (with correlations ranging approximately from $r = -0.632$ to -0.691 , all $p < .05$). In contrast, stress-related factors such as T1 Job Stress Source ($r = 0.404$, $p < .05$) and Quantitative Demands ($r = 0.304$, $p < .05$) correlate positively with turnover intention. These relationships suggest that when teachers experience a supportive and cohesive work environment, they are less inclined to consider leaving their roles. Conversely, when the work environment is marked by high demands and stress, turnover intention increases. This pattern reinforces the idea that microsystem characteristics have a lasting impact on occupational decisions, echoing Bronfenbrenner's assertion that immediate environmental factors significantly guide one's trajectory over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

T2 Work Engagement and Its Subdimensions

Work engagement, as a construct encompassing vigor, dedication, and absorption, is notably influenced by early workplace conditions. The overall engagement measure is positively related to a range of T1 support variables (with coefficients between 0.474 and 0.749, predominantly significant at $p < .05$ or better). Specifically, vigor and dedication exhibit significant positive associations with supportive factors such as T1 Meaning of Work and Commitment, with some correlations reaching the level of $p < .001$. Conversely, key stressors—namely, T1 Job Stress Source and Cognitive Demands—are significantly associated with lower

levels of engagement. These findings suggest that when teachers experience a nurturing work environment, their energy and dedication are enhanced; they become more vigorous and dedicated over time. Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework posits that such positive microsystem experiences directly nurture the inner psychological resources required for sustained work engagement (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

T2 Job Burnout and Its Dimensions

An inverse pattern emerges when examining T2 Job Burnout, along with its subdimensions of Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation, and Personal Accomplishment. The data indicate that T1 factors reflecting a supportive work environment—such as Job Support, Social Support from Supervisors and Colleagues, and Commitment—correlate significantly and negatively with T2 burnout. For example, the overall burnout measure is significantly and negatively related to T1 Job Support ($r = -0.453, p < .05$) and Social Support from Colleagues ($r = -0.581, p < .05$). Emotional Exhaustion, in particular, shows a strong relationship with stress-related variables, with one correlation reaching $r = 0.921 (p < .001)$, underscoring the severe impact of excessive demands on emotional resources. In contrast, higher personal accomplishment is associated with supportive conditions, although one notable strong inverse relationship ($r = -0.883, p < .001$) suggests that diminished feelings of competence are strongly tied to the absence of a supportive environment. These patterns affirm that a well-functioning microsystem that fosters positive interactions and support mitigates burnout, while persistent high demands from the work environment contribute significantly to the erosion of teachers' emotional reserves over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

T2 Job-Related Feelings and Work–Private Life Conflict

Positive job-related feelings at T2 are significantly bolstered by supportive conditions at T1, as demonstrated by a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.740, p < .001$). This implies that

a positive early work climate not only enhances overall job satisfaction and engagement but also improves the affective experience related to the teaching role. Conversely, work–private life conflict shows significant relationships with baseline stressors; for example, higher T1 Quantitative Demands and Job Stress Source are associated with greater work–life conflict at T2 (with significant correlations such as $r = 0.414$ and $r = 0.329$, respectively, both $p < .05$). These findings illustrate how conflicts between work and personal life—an outcome emerging from the mesosystem—are intertwined with the quality of microsystem experiences. When the demands of work spill over into private life, they undermine overall well-being, highlighting the importance of creating environments that facilitate work–life balance (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Integrative Ecological Interpretation through partial Correlation Analysis

When viewed through the lens of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, the Table 20 data collectively underscore the pivotal role of the microsystem in shaping teacher well-being over time. The immediate work environment as characterized by support, leadership quality, and commitment, directly influences not only immediate job satisfaction and engagement but also longer-term outcomes such as burnout and turnover intention. Meanwhile, high baseline stress and excessive demands, which may mirror broader exosystem pressures, predispose teachers to negative outcomes. The findings suggest that interventions aiming to improve teacher well-being should adopt a multi-layered approach; enhancing support and reducing work demands can mitigate adverse trajectories, fostering a sustainable professional climate. Such relationships also highlight the mesosystem, where the interaction between work and personal life is crucial, indicating that institutional and public policies promoting work–life balance would be beneficial (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

4.4 Correlations between T1 Predictors and T2 Job Satisfaction

Table 21 shows the Pearson correlations between T2 Job Satisfaction and T1 demographic and predictor variables. In this analysis, significance is denoted as * ($p < .05$) and *** ($p < .001$). All correlations refer to Wave 1 (T1) variables predicting Wave 2 (T2) job satisfaction.

Among the T1 demographic variables, 'Age' shows a positive correlation with T2 Job Satisfaction ($r = .217$), although it does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. The 'Duration of ECE work experience' exhibits an extremely strong intercorrelation with Age ($r = .849^{***}$), and both the 'Duration of ECE work experience' and 'Tenure in the current job' show positive correlations with T2 'Job Satisfaction' ($r = .146$ and $r = .135$, respectively). Notably, 'Tenure in the current job' is also positively correlated with the 'Duration of ECE work experience' ($r = .592^{***}$). 'Academic Qualification' and 'Job Rank' display very weak correlations with T2 'Job Satisfaction' ($r = .002$ and $r = .039$, respectively), and 'Having SEN students in class' shows an almost negligible negative correlation ($r = -0.013$). However, 'Mode of ECE Settings' demonstrates a significant negative correlation with T2 Job Satisfaction ($r = -0.312^*$, indicating that variations in this variable may be associated with lower satisfaction). 'Salary' is positively correlated with T2 'Job Satisfaction' ($r = .065$) and also shows significant positive associations with other demographic variables: for example, 'Salary' is strongly correlated with both 'Duration of ECE work experience' ($r = .563^{***}$) and 'Tenure in the current job' ($r = .477^{***}$).

Regarding the T1 predictor variables, several are markedly associated with T2 'Job Satisfaction'. T1 'Job Satisfaction' itself exhibits a strong positive correlation with T2 'Job Satisfaction' ($r = .615^{***}$). T1 'Job Support' is also strongly associated with T2 Job Satisfaction ($r = .552^{***}$). In contrast, T1 'Job Stress Source' shows a significant negative correlation ($r = -$

0.452*), as does 'Quantitative Demands' (QD) with a correlation of $r = -0.373^*$. Additionally, 'Cognitive Demands' (CD) and 'Emotional Demands' (ED) present negative associations with T2 'Job Satisfaction', with 'Emotional Demand' reaching significance ($r = -0.354^*$). 'Influence at Work' (IN) reveals a significant positive correlation with T2 'Job Satisfaction' ($r = .423^*$).

Further, several of the psychosocial predictors exhibit strong associations with T2 Job Satisfaction. Specifically, 'Meaning of Work' (MW) has a very strong positive correlation ($r = .572^{***}$). 'Quality of Leadership' (QL) is similarly strongly correlated ($r = .609^{***}$), as is 'Social Support' (SS) from supervisors ($r = .571^{***}$). Other predictors such as 'Support from Colleagues' (SC), 'Sense of Community at work' (SW), and work-related aspects like 'Commitment to the Workplace' (CW) show positive correlations with T2 'Job Satisfaction' (with CW demonstrating one of the highest associations at $r = .684^{***}$). These positive correlations are typically significant at either the $p < .05$ or $p < .001$ levels, indicating that higher levels of these supportive and resource-related variables at T1 are associated with higher T2 Job Satisfaction.

In summary, the table indicates that several key psychosocial variables measured at T1 including Job Support, Meaning of Work, Quality of Leadership, Social Support from Supervisors, and Commitment to the Workplace, are strongly and significantly positively correlated with T2 Job Satisfaction, whereas certain stress-related factors (such as Job Stress Source, Quantitative Demands, and Emotional Demands) are significantly negatively correlated. Demographic variables, apart from the strong intercorrelations among experience-related measures, display relatively modest associations with T2 Job Satisfaction.

4.5 Incremental Predictive Modeling of Teacher Well-Being Outcomes: Integrating Demographic, Contextual, and Psychosocial Factors

Table 22 displays the incremental predictive power of T1 demographic and work-related variables on various T2 outcomes using three successive model specifications. Model A includes only demographic and basic work-related predictors (i.e., T1_Age, T1_Qualification, T1_Job Rank, T1_SEN in class, T1_Tenure in current job, T1_Salary, and T1_Duration of work experience in ECE field). Model B adds three contextual work demand variables—Quantitative Demands (QD), Influence at Work (IN), and Emotional Demands (ED)—to the predictors used in Model A. Model C further expands the predictor set by including key psychosocial factors such as T1 Job Stress Source (JSS), T1 Job Support (JSUP), Meaning of Work (MW), Social Support from supervisor (SS), Social support from Colleagues (SC), Cognitive Demands (CD), Quality of Leadership (QL), Sense of Community at work (SW), and Commitment to the Workplace (CW).

For T2 Job Satisfaction, Model A accounts for 68.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .684$, $\Delta R^2 = .468$). When contextual factors are added in Model B, the explained variance increases to 77.6% ($R^2 = .776$, $\Delta R^2 = .602$). The most comprehensive Model C, which also includes psychosocial factors, explains 87.8% of the variance ($R^2 = .878$, $\Delta R^2 = .772$). A similar pattern emerges for T2 Turnover Intention. Model A explains 66.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .661$, $\Delta R^2 = .436$), Model B explains 68.3% ($R^2 = .683$, $\Delta R^2 = .467$), and Model C greatly improves the explained variance to 85.6% ($R^2 = .856$, $\Delta R^2 = .732$).

In the case of T2 Work Engagement, Model A explains 79.6% ($R^2 = .796$, $\Delta R^2 = .633$), Model B explains 83.7% ($R^2 = .837$, $\Delta R^2 = .701$), and Model C accounts for 88.2% of the variance ($R^2 = .882$, $\Delta R^2 = .778$). Similar trends are observed for T2 Job Burnout, T2 Job-Related Feelings, and T2 Work–Personal Life Conflict. Specifically, for Job Burnout, Model A

shows an R^2 of .833 ($\Delta R^2 = .694$), Model B an R^2 of .849 ($\Delta R^2 = .721$), and Model C the highest R^2 of .903 ($\Delta R^2 = .815$). For Job-Related Feeling, the respective R^2 values across Models A, B, and C are .722 ($\Delta R^2 = .521$), .780 ($\Delta R^2 = .609$), and .838 ($\Delta R^2 = .702$). Finally, for Work–Personal Life Conflict, Models A, B, and C yield R^2 values of .761 ($\Delta R^2 = .579$), .783 ($\Delta R^2 = .613$), and .872 ($\Delta R^2 = .760$).

In summary, the results from Table 22 indicate that while basic demographic and work-related variables (Model A) explain a considerable portion of the variance in T2 outcomes, the addition of contextual (Model B) and subsequently psychosocial predictors (Model C) substantially enhances the predictive power of the models. These findings highlight that the most comprehensive model—which integrates demographic, contextual, and psychosocial factors—accounts for the highest proportion of variance across all T2 outcomes (Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Job Burnout, Job-Related Feelings, and Work–Personal Life Conflict), with many delta R^2 values approaching or exceeding 0.70 (e.g., $\Delta R^2 = .772$ for T2 Job Satisfaction in Model C and $\Delta R^2 = .815$ for Job Burnout in Model C). The marked improvements in R^2 and ΔR^2 values (denoted by $*p < .05$ and $***p < .001$) across the successive models suggest that the inclusion of contextual and psychosocial variables adds substantial incremental value to the prediction of teacher outcomes one year later.

4.6 Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Table 23 presents the regression coefficients for various T2 job outcomes and well-being indicators as predicted by T1 demographic, early childhood education (ECE) work, and job demand–resource variables. This section of data analysis focuses on significant predictors, with significance denoted as $*$ ($p < .05$) and $***$ ($p < .001$), and emphasizes the direction and magnitude of these relationships.

T2 Job Satisfaction

For the prediction of T2 Job Satisfaction, most demographic variables did not emerge as significant predictors. In particular, Duration of ECE work experience, Job Rank, Qualification, Tenure in the current institution, Salary, and Age all had non-significant effects ($p > .05$).

Among the T1 predictors, however, two variables achieved significance. First, the variable “SEN in class” had a positive coefficient ($B = 0.570$, $SE = 0.257$, $Beta = 0.245$, $p = 0.035^*$), indicating that teachers reporting a higher incidence of having SEN students in class at T1 were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction at T2. Second, Quantitative Demands (QD) yielded a negative coefficient ($B = -0.288$, $SE = 0.108$, $Beta = -0.345$, $p = 0.013^*$), signifying that greater quantitative demands at T1 are linked to lower job satisfaction one year later. The remaining T1 work-related predictors, including measures such as T1 Job Stress Source (JSS), Job Support (JSUP), Influence at Work (IN), Emotional Demands (ED), and several psychosocial resources (e.g., Meaning of Work [MW], Social Support [SS], Cognitive Demands [CD], Quality of Leadership [QL], Sense of Community [SW], and Commitment to the Workplace [CW]), did not reach conventional levels of significance in predicting T2 Job Satisfaction.

T2 Turnover Intention

The regression model for T2 Turnover Intention revealed significant effects for a few predictors. Job Rank emerged as a significant predictor, with a negative association ($B = -0.201$, $SE = 0.088$, $Beta = -0.262$, $p = 0.029^*$), indicating that higher job rank is associated with reduced turnover intention. Additionally, Cognitive Demands (CD) demonstrated a significant negative relationship ($B = -0.547$, $SE = 0.260$, $Beta = -0.356$, $p = 0.045^*$), and Quality of Leadership (QL) also showed a negative significant effect ($B = -0.588$, $SE = 0.257$, $Beta = -0.478$, $p = 0.030^*$). Other demographic and predictor variables included in the model did not reach statistical significance.

T2 Work Engagement

For T2 Work Engagement, the only statistically significant predictor identified was T1 Work Engagement. The coefficient for T1 Work Engagement was positive ($B = 0.468$, $SE = 0.158$, $Beta = 0.506$, $p = 0.006^*$), indicating that higher levels of work engagement reported at T1 are associated with higher work engagement at T2. None of the other T1 demographic, ECE work, or job demand–resource variables were significant in this model.

T2 Job Burnout

In the regression model predicting T2 Job Burnout, most predictors were non-significant except for one indicator of job support. Specifically, T1 Job Support (JSUP) yielded a positive and significant coefficient ($B = 0.451$, $SE = 0.186$, $Beta = 0.391$, $p = 0.022^*$). No other demographic or work-related variables, including Duration of ECE work experience, Job Rank, SEN in class, Qualification, Tenure, Salary, Age, or the various job demands and resources, reached statistical significance.

T2 Job-Related Feeling

The model for T2 Job-related Feeling did not produce any statistically significant predictors. None of the T1 demographic variables, work-related predictors, or job demand–resource variables (including variables such as JSAT, JSS, JSUP, QD, IN, ED, MW, SS, SC, CD, QL, SW, or CW) were significantly associated with T2 Job-related Feeling (all $p > .05$).

T2 Work–Private Life Conflict

The regression analysis for T2 Work–Private Life Conflict identified several significant predictors. Salary showed a positive significant effect ($B = 0.150$, $SE = 0.067$, $Beta = 0.325$, $p = 0.033^*$), indicating that higher salaries at T1 are associated with greater work–private life conflict at T2. Additionally, T1 Work–Private Life Conflict was a strong and significant predictor ($B = 0.647$, $SE = 0.146$, $Beta = 0.688$, $p = 0.0001^{***}$), which underscores a robust

continuity effect. Furthermore, Influence at Work (IN) had a significant negative effect ($B = -0.340$, $SE = 0.146$, $Beta = -0.350$, $p = 0.027^*$), and Social Support from Colleagues (SC) was also positively significant ($B = 0.418$, $SE = 0.175$, $Beta = 0.486$, $p = 0.024^*$). The remaining variables in this model did not reach significance.

Overall, these results demonstrate that among a wide array of T1 demographic and job demand–resource variables, only a select few have a statistically significant incremental impact on T2 job outcomes and well-being indicators. The significant predictors vary across outcomes, with T1 SEN in class and Quantitative Demands predicting T2 Job Satisfaction, Job Rank, Cognitive Demands, and Quality of Leadership predicting T2 Turnover Intention, and T1 Work Engagement significantly forecasting its corresponding outcome at T2. Additionally, T1 Job Support appears as a notable positive predictor of T2 Job Burnout, while T2 Work–Private Life Conflict is notably predicted by Salary, T1 Work–Private Life Conflict, Influence at Work, and Social Support from Colleagues. These findings provide a detailed snapshot of the key early predictors influencing various dimensions of teacher well-being one year later.

Table 20
Mean, Standard Deviation and Partial correlation analyses amongst baseline T1 variables and T2 teachers' occupational wellbeing outcomes

		Mean	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	T1_Job Support	4.602	0.879	49	--																							
2	T1 Job Stress Source	3.190	0.629	49	-0.313*	--																						
3	T1 Quantitative Demands	2.974	0.851	49	-0.148	0.294	--																					
4	T1 Cognitive Demands	3.658	0.694	49	-0.204	0.328*	0.01	--																				
5	T1 Emotional Demands	3.224	0.765	49	-0.255	0.421*	0.127	0.707**	--																			
6	T1 Influence at Work	2.830	0.743	49	0.202	-0.236	-0.360*	-0.157	-0.071	--																		
7	T1 Meaning of Work	3.867	0.865	49	0.405*	-0.522*	-0.332*	-0.261	-0.363	0.439*	--																	
8	T1 Quality of Leadership	3.179	0.865	49	0.527*	-0.437*	-0.12	-0.357*	-0.278	0.495*	0.622*	--																
9	T1 Social Support from Supervisor	3.279	0.768	49	0.514*	-0.323*	-0.327*	-0.153	-0.069	0.592*	0.490*	0.751**	--															
10	T1 Social Support form Colleagues	3.354	0.840	49	0.622*	-0.424*	-0.381*	-0.03	-0.115	0.460*	0.396*	0.318*	0.480*	--														
11	T1 Sense of Community at Work	3.667	0.802	49	0.762***	-0.380*	-0.338*	-0.165	-0.300	0.298	0.505*	0.396*	0.419*	0.810**	--													
12	T1 Commitment to the Workplace	3.347	0.832	49	0.652*	-0.634*	-0.182	-0.349*	-0.422	0.500*	0.645*	0.713**	0.662*	0.622*	0.658*	--												
13	T2_Job Satisfaction	3.639	0.712	49	0.534*	-0.427*	-0.417*	-0.275	-0.431	0.502*	0.637*	0.680*	0.634*	0.374*	0.476*	0.750**	--											
14	T2_Turnover Intention	2.429	1.065	49	-0.345*	0.404*	0.304*	0.052	0.228	-0.361*	-0.691*	-0.632*	-0.506*	-0.257	-0.375*	-0.571*	-0.679*	--										
15	T2_Work Engagement (WE)	3.545	0.592	49	0.474*	-0.409*	-0.344*	-0.365*	-0.318	0.534*	0.654*	0.600*	0.614*	0.460*	0.535*	0.749**	0.744***	-0.516*	--									
16	T2_WE_Vigour	3.361	0.684	49	0.367*	-0.406*	-0.342*	-0.334*	-0.343	0.495*	0.601*	0.526*	0.556*	0.435*	0.458*	0.668*	0.668*	-0.481*	0.940**	--								
17	T2_WE_Dedication	3.776	0.611	49	0.591*	-0.393*	-0.360*	-0.311*	-0.313	0.424*	0.709**	0.615*	0.607*	0.509*	0.644*	0.731**	0.758***	-0.561*	0.883**	0.728***	--							
18	T2_WE_Absorbtion	3.537	0.616	49	0.388*	-0.337*	-0.258	-0.363*	-0.224	0.552*	0.521*	0.538*	0.548*	0.345*	0.408*	0.688*	0.652*	-0.403*	0.945***	0.846***	0.760***	--						
19	T2_Job Burnout (JB)	2.776	1.013	49	-0.453*	0.501*	0.493*	0.23	0.403*	-0.395*	-0.573*	-0.525*	-0.581*	-0.639*	-0.689*	-0.660*	-0.621*	0.496*	-0.726**	-0.682*	-0.789**	-0.561*	--					
20	T2_JB_Emoional Exhaustion	3.562	1.328	49	-0.521*	0.544*	0.562*	0.396*	0.516*	-0.405*	-0.539*	-0.609*	-0.621*	-0.560*	-0.653*	-0.654*	-0.691*	0.477*	-0.725***	-0.691*	-0.756***	-0.578*	0.921***	--				
21	T2_JB_Depersonalisation	2.012	1.038	49	-0.350*	0.323*	0.182	0.068	0.182	-0.17	-0.425*	-0.298	-0.307*	-0.625*	-0.673*	-0.508*	-0.333*	0.284	-0.541*	-0.475*	-0.673*	-0.383*	0.790***	0.596*	--			
22	T2_JB_Personal Accomplishment	5.633	1.018	49	0.258	-0.372*	-0.415*	-0.015	-0.237	0.380*	0.507*	0.359*	0.489*	0.528*	0.499*	0.527*	0.480*	-0.480*	0.582*	0.554*	0.625*	0.447*	-0.883**	-0.683*	-0.645*	--		
23	T2_Job related feeling	3.587	0.751	49	0.381*	-0.459*	-0.326*	-0.193	-0.309	0.579*	0.641*	0.628*	0.701**	0.435*	0.392*	0.688*	0.722***	-0.652*	0.767**	0.736***	0.713***	0.677*	-0.715**	-0.630*	-0.460*	0.740***	--	
24	T2_Work Private Life Conflict	2.980	0.723	49	0.128	0.329*	0.414*	-0.062	0.144	-0.321*	-0.24	-0.18	-0.177	-0.072	-0.085	-0.16	-0.355*	0.475*	-0.171	-0.199	-0.126	-0.14	0.336*	0.367*	0.091	-0.327*	-0.323*	--

*p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001

T1 = Study 1 (wave 1); T2 = Study 1 (wave 2).

Table 21*Pearson Correlation Matrix Between T2 Job Satisfaction Outcome and T1 Demographical & Predictor Variables*

Pearson Correlation		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
T2 Outcome Variable	1. Job Satisfaction	--																					
T1 Demographic variables	2. Age	0.217	--																				
	3. Duration of ECE work experience	0.146	0.849***	--																			
	4. Tenure in current job	0.135	0.444*	0.592***	--																		
	5. Academic Qualification	0.002	0.07	0.101	0.107	--																	
	6. Job rank	0.039	-0.204	-0.149	0.026	-0.066	--																
	7. Having SEN students in class	-0.013	-0.244	-0.171	-0.057	-0.114	0.183	--															
	8. Mode of ECE settings	-0.312*	-0.104	-0.072	0.04	0.127	-0.223	-0.098	--														
	9. Salary	0.065	0.558***	0.563***	0.477***	0.280*	-0.213	-0.306*	-0.03	--													
T1 Predictors	10. Job Satisfaction	0.615***	0.22	0.137	0.157	0.343*	-0.106	-0.239	0.011	0.212	--												
	11. Job Support	0.552***	0.127	0.039	0.1	0.251	-0.021	0.001	-0.144	0.114	0.625***	--											
	12. Job stress source	-0.452*	0.014	0.073	-0.026	-0.011	-0.137	0.103	0.183	0.051	-0.473***	-0.331*	--										
	13. QD	-0.373*	0.103	0.157	-0.028	0.056	0.012	0.17	-0.009	0.117	-0.211	-0.136	0.330*	--									
	14. CD	-0.218	0.252	0.217	-0.106	-0.022	-0.306*	-0.192	-0.018	0.257	-0.239	-0.181	0.332*	0.069	--								
	15. ED	-0.354*	0.101	-0.051	-0.181	-0.072	-0.215	-0.108	-0.023	0.124	-0.315*	-0.203	0.379*	0.11	0.707***	--							
	16. IN	0.423*	0.248	0.218	0.1	0.195	-0.074	-0.215	0.111	0.309*	0.319*	0.213	-0.185	-0.274	-0.021	-0.013	--						
	17. MW	0.572***	0.158	0.046	-0.005	-0.122	-0.019	-0.131	0.044	0.098	0.426*	0.347*	0.480***	-0.313*	-0.155	-0.238	0.437*	--					
	18. QL	0.609***	0.072	-0.029	-0.05	0.298*	-0.148	-0.245	-0.134	0.209	0.608***	0.556***	-0.423*	-0.132	-0.191	-0.133	0.491***	0.531***	--				
	19. SS	0.571***	-0.006	-0.147	-0.121	0.175	-0.038	-0.054	-0.017	0.016	0.453*	0.536***	-0.328*	-0.316*	-0.12	0.009	0.545***	0.460***	0.742***	--			
	20. SC	0.353*	-0.13	-0.153	-0.057	0.089	0.039	0.008	-0.14	0.022	0.426*	0.606***	-0.432*	-0.366*	-0.053	-0.087	0.389*	0.338*	0.351*	0.486***	--		
	21. SW	0.446*	-0.028	-0.158	0.012	0.103	-0.075	0	0	-0.011	0.561***	0.751***	-0.383*	-0.358*	-0.178	-0.215	0.252	0.466***	0.413*	0.462***	0.780***	--	
	22. CW	0.684***	0.209	0.09	0.114	0.212	-0.091	-0.234	0.001	0.274	0.766***	0.656***	0.590***	-0.183	-0.214	-0.280*	0.542***	0.618***	0.728***	0.658***	0.576***	0.641***	--

*p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001

T1 = Study 1 (wave 1); T2 = Study 1 (wave 2); CPQ_CW = Copenhagen – Commitment to the workplace; WE_V = Work Engagement (Vigor); WE_D = Work Engagement (Dedication); WE_A = Work Engagement (Absorption); JB_EE = Job Burnout (Emotional Exhaustion); JB_ID = Job Burnout (Depersonalization); JB_PA = Job Burnout (Personal Accomplishment); TI = Turnover Intention; JSAT = Job satisfaction ; JSUP = Job support; CPQ_QD = Copenhagen – Quantitative Demands ; CPQ_CD = Copenhagen – Cognitive Demands ; CPQ_ED = Copenhagen – Emotional Demands; CPQ_IN = Copenhagen – Influence at Work ; CPQ_MW = Copenhagen – Meaning of Work ; CPQ_QL = Copenhagen – Quality of leadership; CPQ_SS = Copenhagen – Social Support from supervisor ; CPQ_SC = Copenhagen – Social support from Colleagues; CPQ_SW = Copenhagen – Sense of Community at work.

Table 22
Incremental Predictive Power of T1 Demographical and Work-Related Predictors on T2 Outcomes Across Three Model Specifications

T2 Job Satisfaction			T2 Turnover Intention			T2 Work Engagement		
	R2	ΔR2		R2	ΔR2		R2	ΔR2
A	.684 ^a	0.468		.661 ^a	0.436		.796 ^a	0.633
B	.776 ^b	0.602		.683 ^b	0.467		.837 ^b	0.701
C	.878 ^c	0.772		.856 ^c	0.732		.882 ^c	0.778

Job Burnout			Job-related Feeling			Work-personal life conflict		
	R2	ΔR2		R2	ΔR2		R2	ΔR2
A	.833 ^a	0.694		.722 ^a	0.521		.761 ^a	0.579
B	.849 ^b	0.721		.780 ^b	0.609		.783 ^b	0.613
C	.903 ^c	0.815		.838 ^c	0.702		.872 ^c	0.760

A. Predictors: (Constant), T1_Age, T1_DM2_HK Quali, T1_ rank, T1_SEN, T1_Tenure current, T1_Salary, T1_DM1_Tenure ECE

B. Predictors: (Constant), T1_Age, T1_DM2_HK Quali, T1_ rank, T1_SEN, T1_Tenure current, T1_Salary, T1_DM1_Tenure ECE, QD, IN, ED

C. Predictors: (Constant), T1_Age, T1_DM2_HK Quali, T1_ rank, T1_SEN, T1_Tenure current, T1_Salary, T1_DM1_Tenure ECE, QD, IN, ED, T1 JSS, T1_JSUP, MW, SS, SC, CD, QL, SW, CW

T1 = Study 1 (wave 1); T2 = Study 1 (wave 2); JSAT = Job satisfaction ; CW = Commitment to the workplace; TI = Turnover Intention; JSS= Source of Job Stress; JSUP = Job support; QD = Quantitative Demands ; CD = Cognitive Demands ; ED = Emotional Demands; IN = Influence at Work ; MW = Meaning of Work ; QL = Quality of leadership; SS = Social Support from supervisor ; SC = Social support from Colleagues; SW = Sense of Community at work.

Table 23
Regression Coefficients for T2 Job Outcomes and Well-Being Indicators as Predicted by T1 Demographic, ECE Work, and Job Demand–Resource Variables

	T2 Job Satisfaction			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
Duration of ECE work experience	-0.0000445	0.002	-0.007	0.978
Job rank	0.063	0.054	0.123	0.253
SEN in class	0.570	0.257	0.245	0.035*
Qualification	-0.153	0.079	-0.217	0.063
Tenure in current institution	0.000	0.001	0.049	0.723
Salary	-0.071	0.064	-0.156	0.280
Age	0.014	0.019	0.166	0.457
T1_Job Satisfaction	0.191	0.166	0.191	0.261
T1_Turnover Intention				
T1_Work Engagement				
JSS	0.130	0.164	0.115	0.435
JSUP	0.184	0.145	0.227	0.216
QD	-0.288	0.108	-0.345	0.013*
IN	0.058	0.142	0.060	0.688
ED	-0.243	0.151	-0.261	0.120
MW	0.013	0.118	0.015	0.915
SS	-0.037	0.173	-0.040	0.834
SC	-0.097	0.167	-0.115	0.565
CD	0.242	0.161	0.236	0.144
QL	0.304	0.160	0.369	0.067
SW	-0.200	0.199	-0.225	0.325
CW	0.354	0.221	0.414	0.121
	T2 Job Burnout			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
Duration of ECE work experience	-0.003	0.002	-0.298	0.200
Job rank	-0.055	0.071	-0.075	0.444
SEN in class	-0.002	0.355	0.000	0.996
Qualification	0.152	0.100	0.152	0.140
Tenure in current institution	0.000	0.002	0.024	0.848
Salary	0.126	0.085	0.195	0.149
Age	-0.032	0.024	-0.263	0.196
T1_Job Burnout	0.433	0.218	0.403	0.057
T1_Job-related Feeling				
T1_Work-private life conflict				
JSS	-0.076	0.214	-0.047	0.725
JSUP	0.451	0.186	0.391	0.022*
QD	0.086	0.152	0.072	0.576
IN	0.136	0.185	0.099	0.470
ED	0.177	0.214	0.134	0.414
MW	-0.002	0.151	-0.002	0.989
	T2 Turnover Intention			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
	-0.002	0.003	-0.217	0.425
	-0.201	0.088	-0.262	0.029*
	-0.461	0.423	-0.132	0.285
	0.246	0.124	0.233	0.057
	0.001	0.002	0.079	0.596
	0.033	0.104	0.048	0.755
	-0.016	0.030	-0.130	0.592
	0.266	0.187	0.211	0.164
	0.015	0.266	0.009	0.955
	0.112	0.236	0.092	0.639
	0.148	0.176	0.118	0.407
	0.060	0.227	0.042	0.793
	0.111	0.249	0.079	0.660
	-0.349	0.196	-0.283	0.085
	0.037	0.277	0.027	0.895
	0.248	0.272	0.196	0.370
	-0.547	0.260	-0.356	0.045*
	-0.588	0.257	-0.478	0.030*
	-0.113	0.323	-0.085	0.728
	-0.175	0.332	-0.137	0.602
	T2 Job-related Feeling			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
	-0.002	0.002	-0.235	0.420
	0.003	0.068	0.006	0.959
	0.207	0.310	0.084	0.511
	-0.123	0.093	-0.165	0.195
	0.001	0.001	0.057	0.716
	-0.033	0.079	-0.068	0.682
	0.020	0.023	0.229	0.372
	0.223	0.215	0.221	0.309
	-0.088	0.201	-0.074	0.665
	-0.021	0.174	-0.024	0.907
	-0.023	0.128	-0.026	0.860
	0.136	0.170	0.134	0.432
	-0.263	0.183	-0.268	0.162
	0.153	0.145	0.176	0.301
	T2 Work Engagement			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
	0.001	0.001	0.147	0.579
	0.054	0.048	0.125	0.274
	0.091	0.213	0.047	0.672
	-0.024	0.063	-0.041	0.701
	-0.001	0.001	-0.201	0.150
	0.019	0.052	0.051	0.716
	0.009	0.016	0.133	0.556
	0.468	0.158	0.506	0.006*
	0.112	0.135	0.119	0.411
	0.007	0.119	0.010	0.955
	-0.143	0.087	-0.205	0.111
	0.014	0.115	0.017	0.906
	0.104	0.124	0.134	0.411
	0.100	0.097	0.146	0.312
	0.128	0.145	0.166	0.384
	-0.087	0.139	-0.123	0.537
	-0.163	0.133	-0.190	0.230
	0.000	0.130	-0.001	0.998
	0.027	0.163	0.036	0.870
	0.158	0.189	0.221	0.411
	T2 Work-private life conflict			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>
	-0.001	0.002	-0.142	0.582
	-0.038	0.058	-0.073	0.518
	-0.241	0.267	-0.102	0.375
	-0.006	0.083	-0.008	0.943
	0.001	0.001	0.165	0.273
	0.150	0.067	0.325	0.033*
	-0.017	0.019	-0.193	0.398
	0.647	0.146	0.688	0.0001***
	0.233	0.173	0.202	0.190
	0.188	0.154	0.228	0.233
	-0.143	0.134	-0.169	0.295
	-0.340	0.146	-0.350	0.027*
	0.087	0.162	0.092	0.596
	0.011	0.124	0.013	0.929

SS	-0.323	0.223	-0.245	0.159
SC	-0.187	0.215	-0.155	0.393
CD	-0.060	0.210	-0.041	0.777
QL	-0.294	0.206	-0.251	0.164
SW	-0.428	0.268	-0.339	0.122
CW	0.016	0.265	0.013	0.952

0.341	0.209	0.349	0.114
0.082	0.204	0.092	0.691
0.204	0.197	0.189	0.310
0.050	0.192	0.057	0.797
-0.191	0.241	-0.204	0.434
0.075	0.265	0.083	0.780

-0.044	0.178	-0.047	0.805
0.418	0.175	0.486	0.024*
-0.275	0.171	-0.264	0.117
-0.177	0.164	-0.211	0.291
-0.324	0.208	-0.360	0.129
0.199	0.209	0.229	0.350

*p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001 ; T1 = Study 1 (wave 1); T2 = Study 1 (wave 2); JSAT = Job satisfaction ; CW = Commitment to the workplace; TI = Turnover Intention; JSS= Source of Job Stress; JSUP = Job support; QD = Quantitative Demands ; CD = Cognitive Demands ; ED = Emotional Demands; IN = Influence at Work ; MW = Meaning of Work ; QL = Quality of leadership; SS = Social Support from supervisor ; SC = Social support from Colleagues; SW = Sense of Community at work.



Table 24*Conceptual framework of Occupational Wellbeing – Predictors and Outcomes*

Conceptual Role	Variable(s)
Predictors	- Job Support - Job Stress Source - Copenhagen Psychosocial Factors
Outcomes	- Job Satisfaction - Turnover Intention - Work Engagement - Job Burnout - Work and Private Life Conflicts

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Results (Study 2)

5.1 Participants

The second study in this research was a qualitative investigation aimed at exploring the impact of environmental factors on the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

The study sample comprised 15 early childhood educators, all of whom were female, with an average age of 36.1 years. The participants held various roles within their respective institutions, including class teachers ($n = 9$), special childcare workers ($n = 2$), head teachers ($n = 2$), and principals ($n = 2$). These educators were employed across six different early childhood settings. Of the 15 participants, four educators ($n = 4$) are employed in early childhood education (ECE) settings that offer mixed mode with both half-day and full-day kindergarten programs. In contrast, the remaining eleven educators ($n = 11$) work in settings that exclusively provide full-day kindergarten and childcare programs. No participant in Study 2 works in ECE setting that offers exclusively the half-day kindergarten programme.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured, face-to-face, in-depth interviews (IDIs). These interviews were designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the educators' experiences and perceptions. All IDI sessions were audio-recorded using a mobile device to ensure accuracy in data collection.

Following the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions were then analyzed using NVivo version 12, a software tool designed for qualitative data analysis. The analysis involved the use of tree nodes and free nodes coding methods, which facilitated the organization and interpretation of the data.

Prior to the commencement of the study, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant review board. Additionally, informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants.

5.2 Procedure and barriers

The second study of this research invited all 15 participants who had completed Study 1 at two timepoints. These participants were well-versed with the concepts of occupational wellbeing and the Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, as these were integral to the design of the interview questions (refer to Appendix B for more details). The interviews were conducted in a quiet room, free from distractions related to their work responsibilities. This was achieved by either arranging for colleagues to cover their duties during the interview time or scheduling the interviews outside normal working hours.

In this study, several constraints were encountered that warrant careful consideration. One major challenge pertained to the time limitations imposed on early childhood educators, who are frequently burdened with a wide range of responsibilities including classroom instruction, meetings, and the maintenance of appropriate teacher-to-student ratios throughout the school day. To alleviate this constraint, interviews were strategically scheduled during less intensive periods—specifically, children's nap times, after-school hours, and school holidays—thus affording educators the necessary space to provide thoughtful and focused insights into their experiences.

Another significant limitation arose from the difficulties associated with identifying and retaining respondents. As more than a year had elapsed since the initial phase of Study 1, several educators had either transitioned to different institutions or expressed unwillingness to engage in follow-up interviews and surveys. This attrition inevitably led to a diminished sample size for the

qualitative component of the study, thereby potentially affecting the overall robustness and generalizability of the findings.

Furthermore, the composition of the sample presented an imbalance in role representation. Classroom teachers were disproportionately more prevalent compared to their counterparts—namely, special childcare workers, head teachers, and principals. In response to this disparity, a stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure that each professional role was adequately represented in the study. However, it is important to note that the study did not include any participants exclusively employed in early childhood education (ECE) settings that offer a half-day kindergarten programme, which limits the scope of the findings with regard to this specific subgroup.

Despite these constraints, the interviews were conducted within a reasonable timeframe. Although the initial plan was for each interview to last 30 minutes, actual durations varied between 20 and 40 minutes. Some interviews were shorter than anticipated, whereas others—particularly those involving educators with longer years of service—yielded more detailed feedback and extended beyond the planned duration. In spite of the challenges encountered, the study successfully gathered valuable insights into the occupational wellbeing of early childhood educators.

Taken together, these methodological challenges highlight the complexities inherent in research within the dynamic context of early childhood education. They also underscore the need for future studies to adopt strategies that further mitigate such constraints, thereby enhancing both the representativeness of the sample and the applicability of the research outcomes.

5.3 Study 1 rating analysis

The analysis encompasses all the 15 respondents who participated both wave 1 and wave 2 of study 1 via online survey. The rating changes are identified and consolidated in table 10 for further data interpretation.

Class teachers

Amongst 9 class teachers surveyed, 5 teachers reported a mild drop of job satisfaction ranging from 6% to 27% decrement. 2 out of 9 teachers even reported a dramatically increase in turnover intention at 83% and 100% respectively. 6 out of 9 teachers reported a drop-in workplace support. Their work engagement at all dimensions recorded a mild drop ranging from minus 4% to minus 27%. However, most of them reported a reduced job burnout ranging from minus 4% to minus 50%, with only one class teacher reported a 1.5 times higher job burnout in terms of depersonalisation and another teacher reported 2.38 times higher of job burnout in terms of personal achievement domain. 4 out of 9 class teachers suggested an increase in quality demands from workplace ranging from 50% to 82%. 3 teachers reported a drop in cognitive demands from workplace ranging from minus 6% to minus 33%. 4 teachers reported a drop in emotional demands from workplace ranging from minus 9% to minus 21%. 5 teachers reported a drop in terms of their influence at work ranging from minus 6% to minus 21%. Meaning of work also reduce from minus 13% to minus 43%. 3 teachers reported a drop in quality in leadership ranging from minus 29% to minus 50%. Mild drop in terms of support from supervisor and support from colleagues were recorded ranging from minus 10-18% and minus 10-25% respectively. The teachers' sense of community at work dropped from 10-22% while their commitment to work indicated a mild drop from 15 – 30%. 8 out of 9 teachers reported no

change or increment in terms of work-life conflict with only one teacher agreed that there is a slight improvement of 8 % from time 1 to time 2.

Special childcare workers

Amongst the 2 special childcare workers, one indicated a significant improvement in terms of job satisfaction by 1.9 times. Her sense of support received from colleagues, community at work and commitment to work also improved by 1.5 times, 1.5 times and a 1.8% increment. By contrast, another special childcare worker interviewed reported slight decrease in her ratings for job satisfaction, work engagement (dedication), job burnout (emotional exhaustion), job burnout (personal achievement), job stress in general, cognitive demands, emotional demands, influence at work, meanings at work, job-related feeling and work-life conflicts ranging from 4-45% decrement. Interestingly, both special childcare worker reported their turnover intention at a drop by 67% and 43% respectively, which is the best scenario amongst all job roles interviewed in study two.

Head teachers

Amongst the 2 head teachers, the rating change between 2 waves of study 1 are not so significant, by comparison to their counterparts in the same organisation. Head teacher 1 only reported a decrease in 9 items out of 23 items of occupational wellbeing variables, ranging from minus 2% - minus 33%. Head teacher 2 reported a decrease in 8 items out of 23 items of occupational wellbeing variables, ranging from minus 2% - minus 40%. HT 1 showed no change in terms of the turnover intention while HT 2 indicated a 40% drop in her turnover intention.

Principals

Amongst the 2 principals, both indicated a drop in their turnover intention at 8% and 17% respectively. Principal 1 reported a decrease in 12 items out of 23 items of occupational

wellbeing variables, ranging from minus 8% - minus 43%. Principal 2 also reported a decrease in 12 items out of 23 items of occupational wellbeing variables, ranging from minus 3% - minus 29%.

In conclusion, this comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into the occupational well-being of early childhood educators (ECEs) across different roles, including class teachers, special childcare workers, head teachers, and principals. Further data collected from study 2 would provide more detailed information towards the trends observed in this section, and the underpinned insights guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory will be discussed, revealing a complex interplay of factors at the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem levels that influence ECEs' job satisfaction, work engagement, job burnout, job stress, and turnover intention.

5.4 Tree nodes and free nodes coding process

Study 2 aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the environmental factors influencing participants' occupational well-being, framed within Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. Accordingly, feedback was systematically categorized into four hierarchical levels: 1) Microsystem, 2) Mesosystem, 3) Exosystem, and 4) Macrosystem.

A framework analysis approach was employed to analyze the data, consisting of the following steps:

1. The researcher thoroughly familiarized themselves with the data during transcription.
2. Themes were identified and consolidated to establish coding schemes for both tree nodes and free nodes, grounded in the concept of occupational well-being.
3. Relevant quotes were initially sorted under free nodes.

4. These quotes were then organized within thematic categories corresponding to different tree nodes.
5. Finally, the coded data was interpreted and discussed.

5.5 Analysis of Common Nodes Influencing Occupational Wellbeing of ECE Educators in Hong Kong

In this section, the analysis of tree nodes is discussed in detail to illustrate the distribution and categorization of the data across different ecological levels as outlined by Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. The systematic approach involved coding feedback into various hierarchical categories, enabling a comprehensive examination of the environmental factors affecting occupational well-being. Below is a detailed analysis of the distribution of nodes within each ecological level, based on the figures shown in table 25.

The microsystem focuses on the immediate environment that influences participants' occupational well-being. This section includes meticulous coding that captures the direct and personal interactions within that environment. A total of 8 tree nodes were established, which included 35 free nodes representing various factors related to work and family life.

In terms of work-related factors, specific elements related to students were identified, such as student performance, challenges associated with Special Educational Needs (SEN) students, and experiences with Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) children. The themes involving parents, colleagues, and supervisors highlighted significant support structures, including parental involvement, collaboration among colleagues, and guidance from supervisors. Additionally, critical issues under the categories of job support and demand included resources provided by government entities, support from key stakeholders in the kindergarten environment, and the workload challenges faced by participants. Suggestions for improvement also emerged,

emphasizing factors that could enhance occupational well-being, such as the workplace atmosphere and the assessment of teacher well-being. Family-related factors were also examined, with essential free nodes identified, including support from spouses and family members, family responsibilities, and the quality time spent with children. Overall, the comprehensive coding within the microsystem illuminates the intricate interplay between work-related and family-related factors that affect the participants' occupational well-being.

In the mesosystem level, which examines the interactions between different microsystems, there were fewer but highly significant nodes that reflected the participants' broader work-life balance. This system included three tree nodes with a total of thirteen free nodes coded. Among these, key factors affecting work-life balance were identified, such as the necessity for working from home, effective time management, and considerations of physical health. Additionally, social support from multiple stakeholders was integral to this level, capturing the interplay between community resources, colleagues, and support from various parties involved in the participants' lives.

Moving to the exosystem, which represents external environmental factors that indirectly affect participants, this level encompassed nodes related to the media and societal perceptions. Here, there was one tree node with four free nodes coded, focusing on themes such as the representation of early childhood education educators in the media, prevalent misconceptions, and promotional activities aimed at raising awareness about the profession.

The macrosystem, on the other hand, encompasses the broader cultural and societal context, which includes a wide array of factors ranging from governmental support to cultural values. Within this system, 4 tree nodes were established, with a total of 27 free nodes coded. Noteworthy was the focus on suggestions for improvement, which encompassed government

support, socio-economic factors such as the teacher wastage rate, and the prevailing political atmosphere. Additionally, education policy was highlighted with significant nodes related to the voucher scheme, salary scales, and the kindergarten curriculum. Cultural values also emerged as key themes, with references to Christian, Confucian, and Buddhist beliefs, as well as the cultural fusion of Eastern and Western influences.

In summary, this systematic approach to coding and categorizing data across Bronfenbrenner's ecological levels allowed for a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing occupational well-being. The detailed distribution of tree nodes and free nodes within each system facilitated a comprehensive analysis, contributing to a richer interpretation of the participants' experiences. For a complete breakdown of these nodes, please refer to Table 25. This in-depth coding process underscores the complexity and interrelated nature of the factors affecting occupational well-being, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent discussion and interpretation of the findings.

Table 25

Analysis from interviews by NVivo 12

Hierarchy in Ecological System	Tree Nodes	Free Nodes	Files (N)	References
1_Microsystem	1. Work factors - Students	NCS children	1	23
1_Microsystem		Students' performance	1	1
1_Microsystem		SEN students	3	5
1_Microsystem	2. Work factors - Parents	Parental support	4	32
1_Microsystem	3. Work factors - Colleagues	Teamwork	11	24
1_Microsystem		Staff turnover	2	2
1_Microsystem		Communication	1	3
1_Microsystem		Colleagues resign intention	1	1
1_Microsystem	4. Work factors - Supervisor	Support from Supervisors	5	13
1_Microsystem	5. Work factors - Job support	Resources from the government	1	8
1_Microsystem		Support from KG stakeholders	5	24

1_Microsystem		Years of experience	4	10
1_Microsystem		Work support	10	16
1_Microsystem	6. Work factors - Job demand	Workload	13	37
1_Microsystem		Teaching	1	3
1_Microsystem		Quality Review	1	1
1_Microsystem		Professional development	14	54
1_Microsystem		Job autonomy	8	15
1_Microsystem	7. Suggestions for improvement	Workplace atmosphere	1	1
1_Microsystem		Assessment on teacher's wellbeing	1	2
1_Microsystem		Children's experiential learning	1	5
1_Microsystem		Work attitude of new teachers	1	2
1_Microsystem		Teacher-students ratio	3	5
1_Microsystem		School hours of kids	1	1
1_Microsystem		Salary scale	3	4
1_Microsystem		Management should listen more	1	3
1_Microsystem		5-day work	1	1
1_Microsystem		Self-adjustment	5	11
1_Microsystem	8. Family factors	Support from spouse	7	7
1_Microsystem		Support from family members	11	29
1_Microsystem		Quality time with kids	5	8
1_Microsystem		Family Duties	8	11
1_Microsystem		Child's academic factor	2	2
1_Microsystem		Care for family members	3	4
1_Microsystem		birth planning	1	1
Hierarchy in Ecological System	Tree Nodes	Free Nodes	Files	References
2_Mesosystem	1. Factors affecting work- life balance	The need for working from home	8	12
2_Mesosystem		Tiredness	3	4
2_Mesosystem		Time management	7	13
2_Mesosystem		Physical health	2	4
2_Mesosystem		development of other interest	3	4
2_Mesosystem		Long working time	3	3
2_Mesosystem		Long travelling time	2	2
2_Mesosystem		Hard to take leave	4	4
2_Mesosystem		Child's physical problems	1	1
2_Mesosystem	2. Suggestions for improvement	Work-life balance	1	1
2_Mesosystem		Stress Relief Method	6	19
2_Mesosystem	3. Social support from multiple stakeholders	Support from more than 2 parties	6	28
2_Mesosystem		Community resource and colleagues	5	33

Hierarchy in Ecological System	Tree Nodes	Free Nodes	Files	References
3_Exosystem	1. Media	Voice out for ECE Educators	1	2
3_Exosystem		Misconception on ECE educators	3	10
3_Exosystem		For school promotion	1	10
3_Exosystem		Negative content related to ECE sectors	14	35
Hierarchy in Ecological System	Tree Nodes	Free Nodes	Files	References
4_Macrosystem	1. Suggestions for improvement	Support from Government	2	5
4_Macrosystem		Political atmosphere	1	1
4_Macrosystem	2. Socio-economic factors	Teacher wastage rate increased	1	1
4_Macrosystem		Social recognition	1	5
4_Macrosystem		Salary adjustment	5	12
4_Macrosystem		Laying off teachers	4	5
4_Macrosystem		Dropping student enrolment	9	18
4_Macrosystem		Migration trend	7	21
4_Macrosystem		Impact on social movement	3	8
4_Macrosystem		Voucher scheme	1	1
4_Macrosystem	3. Education Policy	Teacher-students ratio	2	2
4_Macrosystem		Salary Scale	9	29
4_Macrosystem		National Security Education	5	15
4_Macrosystem		Learning mode after pandemic	3	5
4_Macrosystem		Kindergarten Curriculum	6	15
4_Macrosystem		KG-PS transition	1	1
4_Macrosystem		Free quality KG scheme	2	8
4_Macrosystem		Free Play in KG curriculum	2	3
4_Macrosystem		Degree qualification for teachers	1	1
4_Macrosystem		Child Abuse cases	6	14
4_Macrosystem		Lacking support in whole-day KG	1	5
4_Macrosystem	4. Culture	Christian value	2	4
4_Macrosystem		Positive value	2	3
4_Macrosystem		Helping children to adapt to the Hong Kong society	2	2
4_Macrosystem		Fusion east & west	2	9
4_Macrosystem		Chinese Confucius value	12	47
4_Macrosystem		Buddhism value	1	2

Table 26

First 5 highest ranked common nodes related to teachers' occupational wellbeing

Hierarchy in Ecological System	Tree Nodes	Free Nodes	Files	References
1_Microsystem	Work factors - Job demand	Professional development	14	54
3_Exosystem	Media	Media	14	35
1_Microsystem	Work factors - Job demand	Workload	13	37
4_Macrosystem	Culture	Chinese Confusions value	12	47
1_Microsystem	Work factors - Colleagues	Teamwork	11	24

Common Ecological Factors Affecting ECE Educators' Occupational Wellbeing in Study 2

Amongst all the 15 respondents, there were some common environmental factors affecting most of the interviewees, regardless of their job positions. Factors recorded in Table 26 are ranked based on their prevalence and impact, providing a comprehensive overview of the challenges and supports within various ecological layers.

The analysis of common nodes reveals that the most significant factor affecting the occupational wellbeing of early childhood education (ECE) educators in Hong Kong is professional development within their direct work environment (microsystem). This factor was highlighted by 14 out of 15 participants and supported by 54 coded references. Professional development stands out as the foremost determinant of teachers' wellbeing, as continuous training and skill enhancement are essential for educators to stay updated with the latest educational practices and policies.

The second highest-ranked factor pertains to media influence within the exosystem, also identified by 14 out of 15 participants and backed by 35 coded references. Negative media coverage is a primary concern, as it can lead to increased scrutiny, heightened stress levels, and a

sense of undervaluation among teachers. This underscores the importance of managing public perceptions and fostering a positive image of the teaching profession.

Workload emerges as the third most significant factor, recognized by 13 out of 15 participants and supported by 37 coded references. High workloads remain a substantial stressor for ECE educators, stemming from large class sizes, extensive administrative duties, and the necessity to prepare engaging lesson plans. Addressing workload issues through efficient resource allocation and administrative support is crucial for enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and reducing burnout.

The fourth highest-ranked factor involves Chinese Confucian values within the cultural domain of the macrosystem, noted by 12 out of 15 participants and reinforced by 47 coded references. Confucian values emphasize respect for authority, hierarchical relationships, and collective harmony. These cultural norms significantly influence teachers' interactions with colleagues, administrators, and parents. As these cultural expectations evolve, they can impact the occupational wellbeing of educators by shaping workplace dynamics and interpersonal relationships.

Lastly, teamwork with colleagues ranks as the fifth most important factor, identified by 11 out of 15 participants and supported by 24 coded references. Positive relationships and effective teamwork are essential for sustaining occupational wellbeing. Collaborative environments foster support, shared resources, and collective problem-solving, which enhance teachers' overall job satisfaction and mitigate feelings of isolation.

5.6 Qualitative analysis of occupational wellbeing based on occupational roles

Class teachers

Analysing the occupational wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong through Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory offers a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing their professional and personal lives. Feedback collected in Study 2 from eight interviewed kindergarten teachers reveals how elements within the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem interact to shape their experiences and overall wellbeing.

At the core, the microsystem encompasses immediate environments such as family, colleagues, and the workplace. Family support plays a crucial role in mitigating work-related stress and fostering a balanced life. For instance, Teacher 2 highlighted how family understanding and assistance with household chores or childcare allow her to focus on her tasks: *“When my family understands that I need to work after hours, they help with household chores or childcare, allowing me to focus on my tasks.”* Similarly, positive colleague relationships enhance job satisfaction and create a supportive work environment. Teacher 4 emphasized the joy of collaborative work: *“I really enjoy the sense of working together towards a common goal.”* Additionally, work autonomy empowers teachers to innovate and tailor their teaching methods, leading to greater job satisfaction. However, managing workload and stress levels remains a significant challenge, as Teacher 5 noted the exhaustion from balancing work and personal responsibilities: *“I have to handle my son’s studies and my own work simultaneously, which leaves me feeling exhausted, especially during exam periods.”*

Moving to the mesosystem, the interactions between different microsystems, such as work and family life, significantly impact teachers' wellbeing. Balancing professional responsibilities with family life is a major concern, as evidenced by Teacher 1's struggle with managing work and studies: *“Since I started my four-year bachelor's program, the workload has*

been overwhelming, and it makes me question my commitment to this profession.” Organizational and community-level influences also play a pivotal role. High staff turnover and peak work periods intensify pressures, affecting teachers' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Teacher 4 described the rush during practicum periods: *“During practicum periods or semester ends at university, work from my study and workplace become intensely busy for two to three weeks, making home time feel rushed.”* Teacher 5 emphasized the importance of family time in maintaining motivation: *“Spending time with my son, such as dining out or fulfilling his wishes, gives me the motivation to work hard and balance family life.”*

The exosystem includes external environments such as educational policies and compensation structures that indirectly affect teachers. Educational policies related to professional qualifications and ongoing education can increase stress levels. Teacher 2 discussed the pressure of pursuing higher qualifications: *“The push for higher qualifications means I need to continuously pursue further education, which can be stressful and sometimes contentious.”* Additionally, inconsistent salary structures create financial instability, as Teacher 5 pointed out: *“The lack of standardized salary scales means that switching schools often results in starting from scratch financially.”* Teacher 7 emphasized the uncertainty related to salary implementations: *“Not all schools adhere to the salary scales, affecting our financial security and long-term career decisions.”* Organizational support and flexible policies are essential in mitigating these challenges, yet discrepancies in leave policies, as mentioned by Teacher 6, can lead to underlying anxieties: *“It's challenging to take leave when children are unwell because you can't abandon your students.”* Teacher 3 highlighted challenges with the education policy related to student-teacher ratios: *“Although the current EDB policy for teacher to student ratio in kindergarten is 1:11, the current practice in my setting remains a 1:15 ratio. With the rise in SEN*

(*Special Educational Needs*) students, the workload becomes overwhelming, diminishing our willingness to remain in the profession.” These policies exacerbate workload issues, leading to increased stress and reduced job satisfaction. Socio-economic trends and policies, including the National Security Law and educational regulations, have profound impacts on teachers' professional lives. Teacher 1 expressed anxiety over new regulations: “*The new National Security Law requires us to take exams if we consider resigning, which adds another layer of stress and uncertainty.*” Teacher 3 voiced fears of potential repercussions: “*There is a constant worry about being reported for misconduct, which creates an environment of fear and hesitation in our teaching practices.*” These regulatory pressures create an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear, adversely affecting teachers' sense of security and professional conduct.

In the macrosystem, broader cultural, societal, and policy contexts significantly influence teachers' occupational wellbeing. Traditional Chinese culture and Confucian values shape teaching philosophies and interactions, fostering a respectful and harmonious environment. For example, Teacher 1 emphasized the focus on moral education rooted in traditional values: “*We focus on basic manners and communication, such as teaching children to greet teachers and communicate politely, which reflects traditional values of respect and etiquette.*” However, mass media portrayals can have both negative and positive effects. Negative reporting on abuse cases leads to stigmatization and increased pressure, as Teacher 2 feared being unfairly judged: “*After seeing reports of child abuse, people might think all kindergarten teachers are negligent.*” Teacher 7 shared similar concerns: “*Seeing abuse cases in the news makes me worry that everyone will think teachers are abusive, which isn't true.*” Conversely, positive media coverage can enhance morale, with Teacher 6 noting uplifting stories: “*Some news stories highlight new activities and positive changes in kindergartens, which can boost morale and showcase our*

efforts.” Teacher 8 mentioned the benefits of positive interactions being highlighted: *“Positive interactions and successful programs are sometimes covered, which helps in building a good image of our profession.”* These contrasting media influences shape teachers' emotional responses and perceptions of their professional roles. Societal Trends and Demographic Changes such as declining birth rates and migration trends impact job security and operational stability. Teacher 5 mentioned the threat of school closures due to declining birth rates: *“With the birth rate declining, many schools are facing closures, which threatens job security for teachers and increases competition for remaining positions.”* Teacher 4 shared concerns over migration: *“Many of my colleagues and family members are emigrating, which creates a sense of loss and instability within our community.”* These societal changes create an unstable employment environment, contributing to job insecurity and stress among teachers.

The chronosystem involves dimension of time, encompassing life transitions and historical events that influence educators' development and experiences. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, necessitated rapid technological adaptations and altered traditional teaching methods, adding new stressors. Teacher 3 described the shift to online tools: *“We had to learn how to use Zoom and other digital tools to communicate with parents and continue teaching, which was a significant adjustment.”* Teacher 2 mentioned the increased workload due to remote teaching: *“During the pandemic, we had to adapt to remote teaching, which required new skills and added to our workload.”* Ongoing policy shifts, including the implementation of the National Security Law, have created a dynamic and often uncertain professional environment. Teacher 1 expressed frustration with curriculum restrictions: *“Our principal discourages teaching certain political topics, which conflicts with our responsibility to provide*

factual education to children.” These temporal policy changes continually reshape the teaching landscape, requiring teachers to adapt and navigate new expectations and regulations.

Special childcare workers

The feedback from the two special childcare workers provides insightful perspectives on their occupational wellbeing, which can be analysed through Bronfenbrenner's ecological system model. At the microsystem level, which encompasses the most immediate environment—family and close relationships—both workers acknowledge the significant role that family support plays in their wellbeing and work satisfaction. Special Childcare Worker 1 highlights the importance of a happy family life as a key contributor to her personal and professional wellbeing: *“If my family is happy, it makes me happy. It affects me, and I feel good going to work in such an environment.”* She underscores that personal happiness stemming from family support directly influences her mood and performance at work. However, she also acknowledges that family conflicts could lead to distraction and worry during work: *“If there’s an argument in the family, it’s hard to stop thinking about it at work, and that can lead to some concern.”*

Similarly, Special Childcare Worker 2 discusses the significant impact of her family, particularly the support from her husband and other family members, on her ability to manage her work and household duties: *“My husband and I live with my grandmother, and they are both very willing to take on family responsibilities, so when I come home, even if I have paperwork to finish, they tell me to focus on my work. Their support is very important.”* In contrast to Worker 1, Worker 2 describes a more structured family environment, with clear spousal and household support that allows her to focus on her professional responsibilities without concern for domestic tasks. Both workers underscore the pivotal role of family support in their personal wellbeing, but

the nature of their family structures varies: Worker 1, being single, relies on her extended family, while Worker 2 benefits from a traditional nuclear family dynamic.

The mesosystem, which represents the interactions between different microsystems, such as work relationships, highlights notable differences in how each worker perceives workplace dynamics. Special Childcare Worker 1 places significant emphasis on interpersonal relationships at work, particularly the influence of colleagues and supervisors on her job satisfaction: *“It’s really the relationships with people, especially supervisors and colleagues, that affect you. If your boss doesn’t like you, or your partner has issues with you, the pressure becomes immense.”* She further elaborates on her past experience in a toxic work environment where conflicts with a new principal led to a tense atmosphere among the staff: *“When the principal arrived, it felt like we were being targeted. Colleagues received warning letters, and the entire kindergarten’s mood was highly negative.”* This example illustrates how workplace relationships directly influenced her emotional wellbeing and even contributed to her decision to leave that position.

In contrast, Special Childcare Worker 2 does not focus as much on workplace dynamics but rather on individual responsibility and professionalism. She emphasizes the need for teachers to fulfil their roles and responsibilities diligently: *“Each teacher has their own duties, as long as you finish what you’re supposed to do, there is a certain level of satisfaction.”* Her approach is more self-reliant, prioritizing task completion over workplace relationships. While she acknowledges the support of her colleagues, especially in areas where she lacks expertise, such as technology, she seems less influenced by social dynamics at work compared to Worker 1.

The exosystem, which includes the broader organizational context, such as school policies and administrative support, reveals another distinction between the two workers. Special Childcare Worker 1 speaks highly of her school’s administrative flexibility and the support

provided by her principal. She highlights the school's willingness to listen to teacher suggestions and adapt schedules accordingly: *"The principal listens to our suggestions, and that's a huge encouragement for us."* She also appreciates the autonomy she is given in her role and the resources provided by the school to implement her ideas: *"There is freedom in the job, and the school is willing to invest resources into the things I want to do."* This sense of autonomy and support from the administration contributes significantly to her occupational wellbeing.

Conversely, Special Childcare Worker 2 acknowledges the adequacy of the resources provided by her school but places less emphasis on institutional support. Instead, she focuses on the importance of personal responsibility within the institution: *"The school's resources are sufficient, and every teacher has their own responsibilities to fulfil."* While she recognizes the willingness of colleagues to assist her when needed, her perspective on institutional support is more practical and task-oriented than that of Worker 1, who places greater value on flexibility and administrative recognition.

At the macrosystem level, which encompasses cultural and societal influences, the two workers again differ in their perspectives. Special Childcare Worker 1 reflects on the impact of governmental and cultural policies on her workload, noting the increased emphasis on Chinese cultural education in recent years: *"Our school has received additional funding, and as a result, we now have more work, particularly in promoting Chinese culture and integrating it into the curriculum."* She attributes the increase in workload to government policies aimed at promoting cultural values and expresses mixed feelings about the added responsibilities, even though additional resources have been allocated.

In contrast, Special Childcare Worker 2 does not discuss governmental policies directly but instead focuses on the growing professional recognition of early childhood educators over

time. She highlights a positive shift in societal perceptions of kindergarten teachers: *“When I first entered the profession, people used to say we were just babysitters, but now, people recognize our professionalism.”* This shift in societal recognition enhances her sense of professional pride and contributes to her overall job satisfaction. While Worker 1 sees cultural and political changes as increasing her workload, Worker 2 views societal changes as positively enhancing the status of her profession.

The chronosystem involves examining how key life events or shifts in society impact personal and professional trajectories. For the two childcare workers, their current perspectives on occupational wellbeing are the result of cumulative experiences and changes they have navigated over the course of their careers and personal lives. For Special Childcare Worker 1, life transitions and historical changes play a significant role in shaping her occupational wellbeing, especially regarding cultural and family dynamics. One relevant aspect of her chronosystem involves the evolving family structure in modern society. As a single individual who relies on extended family support, Worker 1 navigates a changing landscape where traditional family expectations have shifted. In previous generations, more extended families lived together or offered substantial support; however, as societal expectations of women’s independence and career advancement have evolved, she appears to adapt her work-life balance accordingly. Over time, as her family dynamics have changed, Worker 1 may have had to develop greater autonomy, relying less on a spouse and more on herself or extended family members.

Furthermore, her workload has been influenced by shifts in cultural policy over time, particularly with the government's increasing focus on promoting Chinese culture. As she notes, the school has received more resources to implement cultural programs, but this has come at the

cost of additional responsibilities. The changes in her workload reflect broader governmental initiatives that have evolved over the years, impacting her career. Thus, Worker 1's chronosystem reflects both personal life transitions and cultural changes that have reshaped her experience of occupational wellbeing.

Special Childcare Worker 2 highlights the historical evolution of professional recognition as a key element of her experience in early childhood education. She notes that, early in her career, kindergarten teachers were often perceived as mere caretakers: *“When I first entered the profession, people used to say we were just babysitters, but now, people recognize our professionalism.”* This statement illustrates how societal views of early childhood education have evolved over time. The growing recognition of teachers as professionals has positively influenced Worker 2's sense of identity and pride in her work. Her personal and professional satisfaction is enhanced by this shift, which has occurred during the course of her career.

Additionally, Worker 2's family life course has likely contributed to her professional trajectory. As she mentioned, her family—especially her husband and grandmother—provides substantial support, enabling her to focus on her career. Over time, as her family has settled into a routine of shared responsibilities, Worker 2's ability to concentrate on her work has increased. This long-term familial stability has allowed her to maintain a strong focus on professional development, adapting to changing societal expectations for early childhood educators.

In conclusion, the occupational wellbeing of the two special childcare workers is shaped by similar factors, such as the importance of family support and the joy of working with children. However, their perspectives diverge in how they perceive workplace dynamics, institutional support, and societal changes. These differences align with Bronfenbrenner's ecological system

model, illustrating how each worker's wellbeing is influenced by the various environmental layers that interact with their personal and professional lives.

Head teachers

In analysing the occupational well-being of two kindergarten head teachers (Head Teacher 1 and Head Teacher 2) using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, both similarities and differences are identified from their experiences across the five layers of the theory: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem to generate better understanding on how their middle leadership styles and responses to external pressures affect their well-being.

At the microsystem level, which focuses on the head teachers' immediate work environment, both teachers acknowledge the challenges of their demanding roles. However, their perspectives on the nature of these demands diverge significantly. Head Teacher 1 describes their environment as fast-paced and performance-oriented, stating, *"My day is packed with meetings, ensuring that everything is in order, and constantly monitoring progress. There's hardly any time to sit back."* This statement reflects a task-driven approach, where their focus is on operational success, often at the expense of personal connections. In contrast, Head Teacher 2 emphasizes the importance of relationships within the school, noting, *"The relationships I have with my staff and children are what keep me going. We work together as a team, and that helps to make the workload feel lighter."* While both teachers recognize the heavy workload, Head Teacher 2 derives emotional support and well-being from their interpersonal relationships, which provides a buffer against stress.

At the mesosystem level, which examines the interactions between different environments, Head Teacher 1 feels overwhelmed by external pressures from stakeholders such

as parents and the school board. They state, *“Parents have high expectations, and the school board constantly checks on us. It feels like I have to juggle everyone’s demands.”* This highlights how external demands interfere with their ability to focus on internal school dynamics, contributing to feelings of stress. Conversely, Head Teacher 2 expresses a more balanced approach to managing their professional and personal lives. She emphasized the importance of self-care, sharing, *“I make time for my personal life. If I don’t, I won’t have the energy to be there for my team and the children.”* This proactive approach allows Head Teacher 2 to maintain better occupational well-being by integrating work-life balance into their routine. While both teachers acknowledge external influences, Head Teacher 2’s ability to balance these pressures with personal care contributes to a healthier work environment.

In the exosystem, which includes indirect environmental influences such as policies and societal expectations, both head teachers recognize the impact of these external factors on their roles. Head Teacher 1 expresses frustration with the constant changes and demands imposed by educational policies, noting, *“There’s always a new policy or requirement that we need to adapt to. It feels like we are constantly being evaluated.”* This external focus creates additional stress, as Head Teacher 1 feels pressured to continuously meet shifting standards. Head Teacher 2, however, adopts a more internal focus, stating, *“Of course, there are policies and changes, but I try to focus on what’s happening within my school. If we’re doing our best for the children, that’s what matters to me.”* This response indicates that while Head Teacher 2 is aware of external influences, they choose to focus on the immediate well-being of their staff and students, which helps them to mitigate the stress from broader policy changes.

At the macrosystem level, which refers to the broader societal and cultural context, both head teachers are affected by societal expectations around academic achievement and leadership

success. Head Teacher 1 feels these societal pressures acutely, explaining, *“It feels like we’re constantly being measured against other schools. There’s a lot of pressure to perform, and it’s exhausting.”* This statement underscores how deeply ingrained societal values around school performance shape their leadership style, with a focus on external validation contributing to high levels of stress. In contrast, Head Teacher 2 takes a more holistic view of success, remarking, *“Yes, we have to meet certain standards, but I measure success by the happiness and growth of the children in my school.”* By prioritizing the emotional and developmental aspects of education over performance metrics, Head Teacher 2 is able to foster a more sustainable sense of well-being, resisting the pressures of societal expectations.

Finally for the chronosystem, which refers to changes over time, provides insight into how the head teachers' experiences have evolved. Head Teacher 1 reflects on the increasing demands of their role, stating, *“I’ve been in this role for years, and it feels like the expectations only get higher. There’s no slowing down.”* This indicates that the cumulative stress of the role is intensifying over time, potentially leading to burnout. In contrast, Head Teacher 2 views the changes in their role more positively, explaining, *“Over time, I’ve learned to manage the demands better. I’ve found ways to balance work and take care of myself.”* This suggests that Head Teacher 2 has adapted to the evolving demands of their role by incorporating self-care practices, allowing them to maintain long-term occupational well-being.

In conclusion, while both Head Teacher 1 and Head Teacher 2 face similar external pressures and challenges, their approaches to managing these influences and maintaining occupational well-being differ significantly. Head Teacher 1 is more focused on meeting external demands and performance metrics, which leads to higher stress and a sense of overwhelming pressure. In contrast, Head Teacher 2 emphasizes relationships, teamwork, and self-care, which

buffer the effects of external pressures and promote a more sustainable sense of well-being. These differences, viewed through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, demonstrate how individual leadership styles interact with environmental factors to shape occupational well-being in different ways.

Principals

In comparing the occupational well-being of Principal 1 and Principal 2 using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, it is clear that their experiences and leadership approaches differ significantly across the five ecological systems. This has profound implications for their stress levels, relationships, and overall sense of fulfilment in their roles as kindergarten principals.

At the microsystem level, which involves their immediate work environment, Principal 1 experiences a high-pressure, results-driven atmosphere, primarily shaped by external stakeholders such as parents and educational authorities. Principal 1 mentioned that *“The expectations from parents are relentless. They always want more, and it feels like we’re never doing enough.”* This illustrates how the demands from parents dominate their day-to-day activities, leading to stress and a focus on operational success rather than emotional support or collaboration. Their relationships with staff are largely transactional, as indicated by their statement, *“At the end of the day, my job is to ensure that everything runs smoothly and that we’re hitting our targets. It’s about getting things done.”*

Conversely, Principal 2's microsystem is characterized by a supportive and collaborative work environment. They emphasize strong relationships with staff and students, referring to their work environment as more of a community. Principal 2 explained, *“My staff and I work closely together, and I feel like we're a family. That sense of community helps me stay grounded even*

when things get tough.” This supportive, relational approach contrasts with Principal 1’s transactional leadership style, enabling Principal 2 to derive well-being from positive daily interactions and emotional connections within the school.

At the mesosystem level, which looks at the interactions between different settings, Principal 1’s well-being is significantly impacted by the constant tension between meeting external expectations and managing internal school operations. The pressure to meet performance targets often overshadows relationships within the school. As Principal 1 shared, *“There’s always something that needs attention—whether it’s staff issues, parent concerns, or just keeping everything running smoothly.”* The demands from external stakeholders permeate every aspect of their professional life, leaving little room for personal connections or emotional support within the school setting.

In contrast, Principal 2 seems to achieve a healthier balance between the various components of their professional and personal lives. They prioritize work-life balance and self-care, which creates a more harmonious mesosystem. Principal 2 stated, *“I make sure to carve out time for myself—whether it’s going for a walk or just meditating. That’s how I recharge.”* This proactive approach to managing stress allows them to maintain better well-being, as they integrate personal care with their professional responsibilities more effectively than Principal 1.

Looking at the exosystem, which includes external factors that indirectly influence their work, both principals are affected by societal expectations around academic achievement and operational success. However, these external pressures influence their well-being in different ways. For Principal 1, these pressures contribute to a high-stress environment where operational targets and performance metrics dominate their professional life. As they noted, *“I feel accomplished when the school meets its targets or when parents are satisfied. It’s a lot of*

pressure, but I thrive on that sense of success.” This focus on external validation not only drives their leadership approach but also amplifies stress when those expectations are difficult to meet.

In contrast, Principal 2 is less affected by these external pressures, as their relational and supportive leadership style acts as a buffer against stress. Principal 2 focuses more on building a nurturing work environment and supporting their staff, stating, *“For me, it’s about fostering a nurturing environment where the staff and kids feel supported. That’s what gives me the most satisfaction.”* This ability to find professional fulfilment in internal relationships rather than external validation allows Principal 2 to manage stress more effectively.

At the macrosystem level, which refers to the cultural and societal context, both principals are operating within a broader educational system that values academic success, operational efficiency, and measurable outcomes. However, Principal 1’s leadership style is heavily influenced by these societal norms. They align themselves closely with the cultural focus on performance and results, allowing these societal expectations to dictate their professional satisfaction. Principal 1 shared, *“I thrive on that sense of success,”* indicating that their well-being is largely tied to external performance metrics, which can create a constant state of stress.

In contrast, Principal 2 challenges these broader societal expectations by adopting a more holistic approach to leadership. Although aware of the importance of academic success, Principal 2 prioritizes emotional well-being and personal growth within their leadership role. They explained, *“I see myself as a mentor to my staff. If I can help them grow and feel supported, then I’ve done my job well.”* This divergence from the performance-driven norms of the broader educational system allows Principal 2 to foster a work environment that supports both their own and their staff’s emotional well-being.

Finally, considering the chronosystem, which includes changes over time, the ongoing pressures faced by both principals highlight how leadership roles in education evolve. For Principal 1, the accumulation of stress due to external expectations and operational pressures seems to increase over time. Their focus on achieving results could lead to burnout if these pressures continue to intensify. Principal 1 remarked, “*There’s always something that needs attention,*” reflecting the continuous demands that shape their professional experience.

On the other hand, Principal 2’s long-term well-being appears to be more sustainable. Over time, they have cultivated a leadership style that prioritizes emotional support and self-care, which allows them to adapt to the evolving demands of the role. By maintaining this balance, Principal 2 is better equipped to manage stress and maintain occupational well-being in the long run.

In conclusion, while both Principal 1 and Principal 2 face similar external pressures and challenges within the educational landscape, their occupational well-being is shaped by markedly different leadership approaches. Principal 1’s focus on operational success and external validation creates a high-stress environment, which threatens their long-term well-being. In contrast, Principal 2’s emphasis on relational leadership, emotional support, and self-care fosters a more nurturing and balanced work environment, contributing to greater overall well-being. These differences highlight the importance of considering both environmental factors and individual leadership styles when assessing occupational well-being in educational leadership roles.

5.7 Integrating data from study 1 and study 2

The Microsystem

The results of Study One indicate that the participants had a medium-to-high degree of job satisfaction ($M = 3.65$ out of 5). The study also found a high correlation between job satisfaction and commitment to the workplace ($r = .788$, $p < 0.001$) and dedication-driven work engagement ($r = .795$, $p < 0.001$). Conversely, the participants' reported job burnout states showed a high negative correlation with their job satisfaction ($r = -.717$, $p < 0.001$). These high correlations require further exploration through in-depth discussion with the participants in Study Two.

Study Two has summarized the factors in the participants' Microsystem to further explain the correlations identified in Study One. The Microsystem is divided into two major domains: work factors and family factors. The work factors include the stakeholders' impact, including the educators' interaction with their students, parents, colleagues, and supervisors (including school board members).

1. Work factors - Students

As CT3 mentioned that the learning capacity and learning progress of her students would affect her job satisfaction. CT2, CT8 and ST1 highlighted there are growing demands for working with children with special educational needs (SEN). ST1 emphasized that her role is greatly relevant to all the follow-up work for working with SEN children including collaborating with onsite social worker and assisting children to transit to either mainstream or special primary schools. P2 stressed on the needs to collaborate with many children from non-Chinese speaking (NCS) background including those from refugee background, the minority ethnic countries and the expat families. Nationalities of her students consist of American, British, Japanese, Russian,

Indian and Indonesian etc. Many of them would only stay at her kindergartens until K2 and then move on to international schools or back to their home countries. This trend would pose a challenge to student enrolment rate while her team would have to plan strategically to develop multi-cultural and multi-lingual curriculum in the kindergarten in order to meet the children's diverse learning needs.

2. Work factors - Parents

Maintain supportive interaction with parents would have impact on occupational wellbeing of ECE educators, as shared by CT3, CT4, CT9 and P2. They all agreed that parents are one of the major stakeholders to work with. ECE educators' occupational wellbeing can be influenced by level of parent's trust, respect and acknowledgement, as expressed by CT3, CT4, CT9 and P2. P2 expressed the growing parents' demand for quality education for their children, while they would appreciate some engagement mainly during the weekend, which adds additional working hours for the ECE educators. Parents have different expectations towards children's homework, as in her kindergarten the NCS families tend to have less expectation on homework completion in comparison to other local Hong Kong families. Teachers need to find ways to cater for parents' different views on these learning tasks.

3. Work factors – Colleagues

Majority of respondents in this study (N = 11) agreed that teamwork is a crucial work factor affecting their occupational wellbeing. Teamwork was defined by the respondents as a relationship between colleagues (mentioned by CT1, CT2, CT5, CT9 and ST1), working harmony in the team (mentioned by CT6, HT1 & P1), constructive atmosphere at workplace to achieve common goals (mentioned by CT2 and CT4), work distribution and collaboration in the team (mentioned by CT2, CT3, CT4, CT9, HT1, HT2 and P1) as well as the mutual caring and

acceptance to face challenges at work (mentioned by CT2, CT6, HT1 and P1). Some teachers expressed that the rising turnover situation has brought about negative impact towards their occupational wellbeing. CT1 mentioned that there was over 50% of the staff team resigned that caused a serious disruption towards the workload and resign intention amongst others remained in the team. CT3 shared the challenges she faced when her classroom partner resigned in the middle of the academic year. Quality of communication is also vital for maintaining positive occupational wellbeing at workplace. CT 1 mentioned the workplace conflicts appeared when colleagues did not agree with each other.

4. Work factors – Supervisors

Support from supervisors can enhance occupational wellbeing according to the feedbacks received from respondents (N = 5) in Study 2. The respondents expressed different degrees of support received from their supervisors. CT1, CT2 and CT4 agreed that their principals showed supportive gesture to them either through verbal expressions of understanding and empathy, such as “I understand your challenges”, “I know you are tired” etc., while others received actual support from senior such as approval on procurement to improve on the teaching resources. H1 expressed that her principal always supported her on independent decision making and allowed her to try on new administrative procedures. ST1 reported her high appreciation over her principal working for the assistance with special education cases. As the principal had rich experience working with SEN children, so her support for ST1 was practical and constructive. Given that all ECE educators in different roles need to handle job duties with different levels of job autonomy, their occupational wellbeing would also be influenced by these workplace stakeholders. Some (P2, ST1, CT8 & CT6) agreed that their principals and school board members would empower them on decision-making. CT4 mentioned that her senior was supportive and

flexible in terms of job rearrangement when she had the needs to apply for personal leave to deal with family matters. But CT1 expressed the stress would come from their senior colleagues for time-consuming document approval mechanisms.

5. Work factors – Job demands

Job demands can bring about negative impacts towards occupational wellbeing for a number of reasons. Firstly, most respondents (N = 14) stressed on the needs for ongoing *professional development* at workplace. Only a few of them (CT1 and CT4) are currently enrolled as a part-time students upgrading their academic qualification as Bachelor degree. Others (CT2, CT3, CT8, HT1, P2, ST1 & ST2) have either completed their Bachelor degree or Master degree, and some are considering taking up some short-term professional-related training such as course that focus on how to work with children with SEN, Principalship certificate course, or some Education Bureau sponsored courses. To comply with the professional needs and life-long learning requirements, some respondents complained that the study consumed much of their after-work hours and interfering their private life. Although some of the respondents (ST2, ST1, P1 & P2) were self-initiated in seeking opportunity of professional development, some (CT2, CT3 & HT1) expressed stress about the needs to fulfil EDB-required professional development hours and being pushed to the need for continuous professional upgrade. The negative impact towards the occupational wellbeing is also related to the clash of study demand and job duties when both imposed heavy workload to the educators (CT1 and CT4).

Increased workload and pressure can also lead to negative occupational wellbeing amongst ECE educators. Respondents (N = 13) expressed that they were overloaded with work and feel like they are constantly under work pressure. When it comes to some peak seasons for heavy

workload such as preparation for school events in large scale or for participating ‘Quality Review’ by inspectors coming from the Education Bureau, these are the hard time for prolonged working hours. Respondents (ST2 & HT2) complaint that they were drained of working on tones of paper work with less staff in the team to share the workload. Prinpcal (P1) also expressed about the heavy demand from their job duties working with the community. Some respondents expressed that their duties include managing some uniform group and communicating with parents in addition to their teaching duty and that would happen during after-school hours. All these factors would lower their occupational well-being as ECE educators.

6. Work factors – Job support

The impact of job support towards occupational wellbeing in terms of resources from the government, years of experience, and support from the kindergarten stakeholders. ***Government resources*** can play a significant role in supporting the occupational wellbeing of kindergarten teachers. P2 mentioned that the government funding can be used to provide teachers with access to professional development opportunities, which can help them to improve their skills and knowledge. Additionally, government funding can be used to improve the school environment and purchase of teaching resources, especially to match their needs to develop Chinese culture educaiton and improve the technology on teaching. ***Years of experience*** can also play a role in the relationship between job support and occupational wellbeing. More experienced teachers (CT1, CT3, P2 and ST2) expressed that they are more able to cope with the demands of their job and may feel more confident in their abilities. Additionally, more experienced teachers may have stronger relationships with their colleagues and supervisors, which can provide them with additional support. ***Support from kindergarten stakeholders***, such as parents, social workers, and other ECE-related specialists, can also have a positive impact on the occupational wellbeing

of kindergarten teachers. For example, CT9, P1, P2 and ST1 agreed that parents who can provide teachers with emotional support and appreciation would help to reduce stress and improve job satisfaction. P2 and ST1 mentioned that social workers can provide teachers with the resources and support needed in hand some special cases at work, and that can create a positive work environment. Other specialist such as clinical psychologist from Social Welfare Department (SWD) therapists and other community members can provide collaboration and support, and that can help to create a sense of community within the kindergarten.

7. Family factors

Family factors can have a significant impact on occupational wellbeing. Both positive and negative family factors can play a role, and the impact can vary depending on the individual and their specific circumstances. *Support from a spouse* can be a major buffer against the stressors of work. Respondents (CT2, CT3, CT4, CT6, CT8, HT1 and ST2) expressed that their supportive spouse can provide emotional support, practical help, and a sense of belonging. This can help to reduce stress, improve job satisfaction, and promote overall wellbeing. *Support from other family members*, such as parents and siblings, can also have a positive impact on occupational wellbeing. Respondents (CT1, CT4, CT5, CT7, CT8, HT1, HT2, P1, P2, ST1 & ST2) shared that they received positive emotional support, practical help, and childcare assistance from their family members like their own parents and parents-in-law. This can help to reduce stress and give employees more time and energy to focus on their work. *Quality time with one's own children* can also be beneficial for occupational wellbeing. Participants (CT2, CT5, CT6, HT1 and HT2) mentioned that spending time with children can provide a sense of purpose, joy, and relaxation. This can help to reduce work stress and improve overall emotions and work motivation. *Children's academic performance* can also have an impact on occupational

wellbeing. Teachers like CT 5 & CT 6 mentioned their concern about their children's academic performance which may cause increased stress and anxiety alongside their tiring work. This can eventually lead to decreased productivity and job satisfaction. *Family duties*, such as childcare, housework and eldercare, can be a source of stress for many ECE educators. However, it is important to note that when the family duties can also be shared and supported by other family members, that form a source of satisfaction amongst CT1, CT3, CT7 & P2). ECE educators who are able to balance their work and family commitments effectively are more likely to experience high levels of occupational wellbeing. Birth planning can also be a factor in occupational wellbeing. Early Childhood educators who are planning for a baby like CT3 or who are already parents may experience increased stress and anxiety. This is due to the challenges of balancing work and family life, as well as the financial and emotional demands of parenthood.

8. Suggestions for improvement in Microsystem

The microsystem is the most immediate environment in which an individual lives and works, and it includes factors such as relationships with colleagues, supervisors, and students; the physical work environment; and the demands and resources of the job. When the microsystem is supportive and nurturing, it can help to reduce stress, improve job satisfaction, and promote overall occupational wellbeing. Respondents in Study 2 have suggested some points for improving the factors in the microsystem. Firstly, CT4 suggested the need for creating a positive and supportive workplace atmosphere where educators feel respected, valued, and supported by their colleagues and supervisors. This can be done by fostering a culture of collaboration, communication, and trust. Secondly, HT2 suggested the ECE sector to consider setting aside some funding for annual check-up for teachers' psychological wellbeing as there are growing demands for unhealthy emotions at many ECE institutions. She suggested that

regular assessment on the wellbeing of teachers can identify areas where support is needed. ST 2 suggested that the new teachers should be provided better support and mentorship in order to help them adjust to their new role and develop a positive and responsible work attitude. This can be done through training programs, coaching, and peer support groups. CT1, CT3 and CT5 suggested reducing the teacher-student ratio in order to give teachers more time and support to meet the needs of their students. This can lead to reduced stress and improved job satisfaction for teachers. CT3, P2 and ST1 recommended the ECE sector should align the salary scale with the primary schools and secondary schools, especially when most ECE educators are now reaching relatively high academic qualification at Bachelor and Master level. Provide teachers with a competitive salary and benefits package can help to reduce financial stress, enhance job security and improve overall occupational wellbeing. CT3 suggested Early Childhood Education institutions to consider offering teachers a 5-day workweek to give them more time to rest and recharge, which can lead to reduced stress and improved overall work-life balance. Last but not least, many respondents (CT4, CT8, CT9, HT1 & HT2) highlighted the needs for self-adjustment and prioritisation of time in order to meet the diverse needs from the workplace. They encourage ECE educators to take care of their own wellbeing by engaging in self-care activities such as exercise, relaxation, and spending time to solve some quick tasks first. When one's attitude and expectation is adjusted, the overall occupational wellbeing can be enhanced.

The Mesosystem

1. Factors affecting work-life balance

Work-life balance is the ability to manage one's work and personal life in a way that is both satisfying and sustainable. It is important to note that the impact of these factors on work-life balance can vary depending on the individual and their specific circumstances. As shared by

respondents in Study Two, a number of factors can impact work-life balance, including the need for working from home, tiredness, time management, physical health, long working hours, long travel time, difficulty taking leave, and physical problems of one's own children at home and all these factors eventually impact on their own occupational wellbeing.

People who need to *work from home* may find it challenging to separate their work and personal lives. Respondents including CT1, CT2, CT3, CT4, HT2, P1m ST1 & ST 2 reported their needs to bring the work-related tasks home which smometime require them to spend night time or weekend to complete the tasks. *Tiredness* can make it difficult to focus and be productive at work. CT6, HT2 and P2 shared the tire feeling and they felt physically burnout. *Effective time management skills* are essential for achieving a good work-life balance. Educators who can prioritize their tasks and set realistic deadlines would have less opportunity to feel overloaded. Respondents including CT1, CT2, CT4, CT7, CT8, HT1 and P2 mentioned their different strategies to 'buy time' to achieve better work-life balance, such as sacrificing sleep time, paying for more expensive but faster transportation like taxi and uber to shorten the time needed to go home, reducing the 'me-time' proportion and to boost own efficiency at work. *Physical health* problems can make it difficult to work effectively and to enjoy personal life. CT3 and CT7 suggested that ECE educators should take care of their physical health by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and getting enough rest. CT7 emphasized her habit of working out 3 days per week can keep her more sustainable to be an effective ECE eduactor. *Long working hours* can lead to stress, burnout, and a poor work-life balance, as complained by CT4 and CT6. ECE eduactor is one special profession that is not so flexible in *leave taking*. Respondents including CT3, CT4, CT6 & HT2 emphasized on their job responsibility of taking care of young children and their dissatisfaction of not being able to take leave when needed, such as participating in

own children's school activities, taking care of family members or dealing with other household or personal duties. Attending to own children's physical problems can be a major challenge for ECE educators too. They tend to feel lack of support in terms of taking care of family needs when there is a request, which eventually caused struggle to achieve a good work-life balance.

2. Social support from multiple stakeholders

Social support from multiple stakeholders including community members, colleagues and family members can always form a buffer effect to reduce job stress amongst ECE educators. As reported by respondents including CT2, CT4, CT8, HT1, HT2 and P1, they appreciate social support received from existing colleagues, old colleagues who departed from the kindergartens, previous college friends, church members and family members. In many situations these social support would inter-related or interacted. Respondents including CT3, P1, P2, ST1 and ST2 also highlighted the benefits of building partnership with multiple stakeholders such as therapists, social workers, community partners and colleagues. The mutual relationship between educators and community members is essential for creating a strong educational system. When they work together, they can create a more supportive environment for students and families. These would increase opportunities for resources collaboration, effectiveness in bringing positive effects to work duties and hence improve their occupational wellbeing.

Exosystem - Media

Media effects are major factors in the exosystem of Early Childhood educators. Respondents (N = 14) tend to associate negative impression on how media exaggerated on Early Childhood Education-related matters. News related to child abuse cases are the main example used by the interviewees as they experienced lots of questions and stress when working with young children. They worried that the public would develop a misconception and negative

portrayals of Early Childhood educators and worsened their professional reputaiton. Some also mentioned that the school policy became tightened after the child abuse cases being reported by media.

By contrast, some respondents (P2, HT1 & CT6) shared their positive feedback on media in terms of giving them more opportunity to learn from their counterparts by reading some good practices, special curriculum highlight and even innovative primary school education etc. ST 2 mentioned that some media would advocate for the needs of Early Childhood educatos and that attracted appreciation from the field. P2 also mentioned that she would work collaboratively with different media platform to promote their kindergarten or to support the team in getting to know more about the local market, which would in turn benefit their school development and improve the overall well being in the staff team.

The Macrosystem

1. Education Policy

Education policy in Hong Kong can have a significant impact on early childhood educators' occupational wellbeing. Some policies, such as a high teacher-student ratio and no offical salary scale for Early Childhood educators, can lead to increased workload, stress, and financial hardship for teachers working in this sector. Other policies, such as the introduction of national security education and the revision of the kindergarten curriculum, have the potential to create uncertainty and anxiety for Early Childhood educators. However, there are also some policies, such as the new requirement for Early Childhood educators to upgrade their academic qualifications, that have the potential to improve Early Childhood educators' wellbeing in the long term, however it would add stress to the teachers who need to pay extra effort in achieve that, as reported by the respondents. The impact of education policy on Early Childhood

educators' occupational wellbeing can vary depending on the individual Early Childhood educator and their circumstances. For example, some Early Childhood educators may be more resilient to the negative effects of stress and workload than others. Additionally, the impact of education policy may be different for Early Childhood educators who work in different types of early childhood settings, such as kindergartens participating in the FQKE system, private independent kindergartens, and childcare centers providing long day care service. It is important for the Hong Kong government to consider the impact of education policy on Early Childhood educators' occupational wellbeing when developing and implementing new policies. The government should also provide ECE educators with the resources and support they need to thrive in their profession.

2. Socio-economic factors

Socio-economic factors can have a significant impact on the macrosystem of early childhood educators. Some key socio-economic factors highlighted by respondents included the rising wastage rate in the Early Childhood Education field, lack of social recognition in compared to other professions while Early Childhood educators are always viewed as childcare workers. Most Early Childhood educators are not satisfied with the current salary arrangement or adjustment mechanism, some Early Childhood settings would even start to lay off teachers to tackle the challenges of dropping birthrates and student enrollment in kindergartens. The migration trend in Hong Kong is also affecting the Early Childhood workforce. Many Early Childhood educators and kindergarten-age children are leaving Hong Kong to migrate to other countries. This is highly relevant to the changing political climate in Hong Kong after the 2019 social movement and the worsened Hong Kong economy after COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Culture factors

Culture factors can have a significant impact on the macrosystem of Early Childhood educators. The macrosystem refers to the broader social and cultural influences that affect a child's development. As mentioned by most respondents (N = 12), nowadays they need to emphasise on the Chinese values and Confucian concepts such as manner (以禮待人), love (仁愛, 博愛), respecting parents (孝順父母) and teachers (尊師重道), respecting rules at school and the community (守法守規), team collaboration (團結) etc. ECE educators are expected to uphold these values in their teaching and interactions with children. Some early childhood settings in Hong Kong are faith-based and promote Christian values in their teaching. Early Childhood educators in these settings would be expected to be familiar with Christian values and to incorporate them into their teaching. On the other hand, some early childhood settings in Hong Kong promote Buddhist values in their teaching. Some Early Childhood educators also expressed that they have the responsibility to teach children and promote positive values, such as kindness, compassion, and respect for others. These culture factors can affect Early Childhood educators' work in a number of ways. Cultural factors can provide Early Childhood educators with a sense of purpose and meaning in their work. Early Childhood educators who are passionate about their culture and values may find it rewarding to promote these values in their teaching and to help children to connect with their cultural heritage. On the other hand, cultural factors can also create challenges for ECE educators. For example, Early Childhood educators may feel pressure to conform to the cultural expectations of the children they teach or the early childhood setting in which they work. Early Childhood educators may also experience stress and anxiety if they feel that they are not able to meet the cultural expectations of others.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions

6.1 Discussion of findings to address Research Question

Which ecological system layers (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, chronosystem) are perceived to influence occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong?

Occupational well-being (OWB) among early childhood educators is a multifaceted construct that reflects not only teachers' job satisfaction and engagement but also their levels of stress, burnout, and work–life balance (Li, Yang et al., 2021; Quick & Tetrick, 2011). In the Hong Kong context, both quantitative and qualitative analyses reveal that teachers' OWB is shaped by influences spanning multiple ecological system layers – from immediate workplace conditions (microsystem) and the interactions between different settings (mesosystem), to broader institutional, policy, and cultural forces (exosystem and macrosystem), as well as temporal dynamics (chronosystem) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Microsystem Influences

The quantitative findings underscore the pivotal role of the microsystem in predicting later job outcomes. For example, T1 indicators of job support, commitment, and a sense of meaningful work are strongly and positively correlated with T2 job satisfaction, engagement, and lower burnout (e.g., T1 Commitment to the Workplace correlates with T2 Job Satisfaction at $r = .750$, $p < .001$). These findings are consistent with the theoretical assertion that immediate work environments – characterized by supportive leadership, collegiality, and ample resources – directly contribute to teachers' motivational and affective states (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Halbesleben, 2010). Moreover, qualitative data further illustrate that educators value supportive

relationships within their schools, noting that collegial support and autonomy help alleviate daily work stress. Such support, when experienced consistently, contributes significantly to a teacher's resilience and overall occupational well-being (Tsui et al., 1992).

Mesosystem Influences

The mesosystem, encompassing the interactions between work and family environments, is another key factor shaping occupational well-being. Quantitative data reveal that work–private life conflict—stemming partly from high job demands—is significantly associated with lower job satisfaction and increased stress. Qualitative interviews also highlight that many educators struggle to balance long working hours with familial obligations, resulting in heightened stress and, eventually, burnout (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Educators frequently describe difficulties in segregating work from personal life, which reinforces the notion that a strong mesosystem—marked by supportive family dynamics and effective management of work-life boundaries—is crucial for sustaining OWB (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Exosystem and Macrosystem Influences

Broader external factors, which fall under the exosystem and macrosystem levels, also exert substantial influence. The quantitative analyses, while primarily focusing on microsystem variables, indicate that contextual factors—such as administrative demands and certain organizational policies (e.g., mode of ECE settings, job stress sources)—have indirect effects on OWB. For instance, high quantitative and emotional demands at T1 are associated with lower job satisfaction at T2 (e.g., Quantitative Demands, $r = -0.417$, $p < .05$). Such stressors, often reflecting exosystem pressures like government policies or insufficient funding, have long been documented as drivers of burnout and poor mental health (Leiter & Maslach, 2004).

Qualitative data provide rich insights into these exosystem and macrosystem impacts. Many educators discussed how changing policies—including the transition from the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) to the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES)—altered the operational demands and available resources in their workplaces (Chan, 2019; Wong, 2021). Although FQKES has improved teacher remuneration and enhanced educational quality, it has also increased administrative workloads and imposed stringent reporting requirements, thereby increasing stress. Furthermore, broader cultural influences, such as traditional Chinese values and Confucian norms, emerge as significant macrosystem factors. Educators often highlight how these cultural expectations shape workplace dynamics, professional hierarchies, and even perceptions of fairness and support in the school environment (Wong, 2021).

Chronosystem Considerations

Temporal dynamics, encompassed by the chronosystem, are evident in both the quantitative and qualitative findings. Data indicate that stressors and supportive factors have cumulative effects on occupational well-being over time. For example, consistent high demands coupled with insufficient support lead to increased burnout and higher turnover intentions, as observed in longitudinal surveys where turnover rates reached record levels in recent years (Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers, 2019). Moreover, the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic further illustrates the chronosystem's role. The pandemic not only heightened existing job demands—such as increased administrative burdens and the need to adapt to digital teaching modes—but also exacerbated work–family conflict and job insecurity (Betancourt-Sánchez et al., 2020). These temporal shocks highlight the necessity for both adaptive and preventative measures to protect teacher well-being over time.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings also provided a multi-layered view, consistent with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, of the specific factors that predict occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong.

Microsystem-Level Predictors

At the most immediate level of influence, the microsystem, both the quantitative analysis and qualitative interviews underscore the vital role of direct workplace experiences. Quantitatively, significant positive correlations were observed between T2 occupational well-being indicators—particularly job satisfaction—and several T1 variables that represent core microsystem factors. For instance, T1 Commitment to the Workplace ($r = .750, p < .001$), T1 Job Support ($r = .552, p < .001$), and T1 Meaning of Work ($r = .572, p < .001$) were strong predictors of later job satisfaction. Likewise, measures such as Quality of Leadership ($r = .609, p < .001$) and Influence at Work ($r = .423, p < .05$) emerged as significant contributors, indicating that a supportive and empowering immediate work environment is critical for sustaining teachers' well-being. Qualitative data further bolster these findings; teachers frequently highlighted the importance of collegial support, open communication, and the availability of professional development opportunities in mitigating stress and enhancing engagement. The consistent emphasis on supportive relationships and a positive work climate reinforces that microsystem characteristics—comprising direct interpersonal interactions, job autonomy, and immediate leadership quality—are central to maintaining occupational well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Halbesleben, 2010).

Mesosystem-Level Predictors

The mesosystem encompasses the interactions between the immediate work environment and the broader home and personal domains. Both the survey and interview responses indicated that work-life balance factors play a significant role. Quantitative results show that high job demands, notably Quantitative Demands ($r = -0.417$, $p < .05$) and Job Stress Source ($r = -0.452$, $p < .05$), contribute negatively to well-being, partly by exacerbating work–family conflict. Qualitatively, many educators described challenges in segregating work from family responsibilities. They reported that long working hours, excessive administrative tasks, and the blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life have led to a persistent sense of imbalance. This work–life conflict diminishes overall well-being by eroding personal time and increasing chronic stress (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Thus, the mesosystem factors—specifically, the degree of work-life integration and the ability to maintain a healthy separation between professional and personal roles—are significant predictors of occupational well-being.

Exosystem-Level Predictors

At the exosystem level, factors external to the daily classroom experience but influential on the school environment also emerge as predictors of teacher well-being. The quantitative data hint at the influence of contextual variables such as the administrative burden and job stressors that are not directly part of day-to-day interactions but set the broader operational tone. For example, the significant negative impact of Quantitative Demands on job satisfaction suggests that high systemic workloads—likely stemming from policy requirements and administrative tasks—can reduce well-being (Leiter & Maslach, 2004). Qualitative evidence supports this view; teachers mentioned that the increased administrative load, often tied to policies like the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES), introduces additional stress that indirectly affects their classroom performance and mental health. Moreover, media portrayals and societal

expectations, which reside within the exosystem, were noted as elements that shape teachers' perceptions of their profession and contribute to stress and job insecurity (Wong, 2021).

Macrosystem-Level Predictors

The macrosystem encapsulates broader cultural, societal, and policy contexts that shape the values and operational norms within which schools function. In Hong Kong, shifting cultural values and evolving education policies are prominent predictors of occupational well-being. On the positive side, policies like FQKES have improved access to resources and enhanced teacher remuneration, offering an important boost to occupational well-being through better material support and recognition (Education Bureau, 2017b). However, these policies also bring about increased scrutiny, stringent quality reviews, and standardized protocols that some educators perceive as undermining their autonomy. Qualitative narratives indicate that while improvements in salary and professional recognition have been welcomed, the accompanying rise in bureaucratic demands creates stress and reduces job satisfaction. Such tension between support and control at the macro-level can disrupt the balance necessary for optimal well-being (Wong, 2021).

Chronosystem Considerations

Finally, the chronosystem or temporal dimension highlights how changes over time influence occupational well-being. The longitudinal quantitative data illustrate that teacher well-being is not static; rather, it evolves as the cumulative effects of enduring job demands and the persistence (or erosion) of resources take hold. Notably, significant turnover rates and burnout patterns among ECE teachers in recent years indicate that sustained high job demands without adequate resource replenishment lead to deteriorating well-being over time (Hong Kong

Federation of Education Workers, 2019). The qualitative data also vividly capture the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as a temporal shock that intensified job demands and disrupted work-life balance, further complicating the occupational well-being landscape. Educators highlighted that the rapid transition to remote teaching and the ongoing uncertainties have long-term implications for their mental health and job retention (Betancourt-Sánchez et al., 2020).

In addressing Research Question, the integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrates that several specific factors within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems significantly predict occupational well-being among early childhood educators in Hong Kong. At the microsystem level, high levels of job support, leadership quality, influence, meaning, and commitment at T1 are strongly and positively associated with better well-being outcomes at T2. In contrast, high job demands—especially those related to quantitative and emotional workloads—exert a negative influence, impacting both microsystem and mesosystem dynamics through increased work-life conflict. The exosystem and macrosystem introduce further stressors, such as administrative burdens and cultural-political pressures, which compound the effects of these immediate factors. Over time, these layered influences captured by the chronosystem accumulate to shape the longitudinal patterns of teacher well-being. Together, these findings not only provide empirical evidence of the direct and interactive effects across ecological levels but also underscore the need for multifaceted interventions aimed at enhancing job resources and mitigating excessive demands to safeguard occupational well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Li, Yang et al., 2021; Quick & Tetrick, 2011).

The interplay among multiple ecological levels: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem provided a comprehensive lens for understanding the occupational well-being (OWB) of early childhood educators in Hong Kong. Both the

quantitative results and qualitative narratives underline that well-being is not determined solely by isolated factors but by the dynamic interactions among these various levels.

Interactions Within the Microsystem and Mesosystem

At the microsystem level, factors such as job support, commitment, quality of leadership, and the intrinsic meaning of work are found to be strong predictors of OWB. Quantitative data reveal that measures like T1 Commitment to the Workplace ($r = .750, p < .001$), T1 Job Support ($r = .552, p < .001$), and T1 Meaning of Work ($r = .572, p < .001$) have robust positive associations with later job satisfaction (T2). These factors reflect the direct and immediate work environment where teachers interact with colleagues, supervisors, and the children they teach. Qualitative interviews further emphasize that within this microsystem, supportive interpersonal relationships and autonomy bolster educators' resilience and engagement. However, the microsystem does not operate in isolation; its influence is moderated by mesosystem interactions—specifically, how the demands of work intersect with family and personal life. Many teachers reported that long working hours and heavy workloads not only generate stress at school but also precipitate work–family conflict. This interaction diminishes well-being, as prolonged work demands encroach on personal life, leading to emotional exhaustion and reduced satisfaction (Quick & Tetrick, 2011). Thus, educators' capacity to remain engaged and satisfied is a product of both the immediate support they receive in the workplace and the degree to which they can achieve work-life balance—a clear demonstration of how microsystem and mesosystem factors coalesce to shape occupational outcomes.

Interactions Between Exosystem and Microsystem Factors

The exosystem includes broader organizational and contextual elements—such as administrative demands and policy-related pressures—that indirectly affect the teacher's

immediate work experience. Quantitative findings suggest that high Quantitative Demands ($r = -0.417, p < .05$) and negative sources of job stress ($r = -0.452, p < .05$) adversely influence T2 job satisfaction, highlighting that elevated systemic pressures contribute to diminished well-being. These exosystem pressures can undermine the positive effects of strong microsystem resources. For instance, even when supportive leadership and effective job support are present, excessive bureaucratic demands and administrative tasks linked to initiatives like the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES) may add stress that erodes some of the beneficial effects of a supportive work environment (Leiter & Maslach, 2004). Qualitative interviews reveal that teachers often experience tension when quality improvement initiatives increase paperwork and time-consuming compliance requirements, thereby reducing the time they can spend on direct teaching or with students, which in turn compromises the quality of microsystem interactions.

Interactions Between Macrosystem Influences and Immediate Work Environments

At the macrosystem level, broader cultural, societal, and policy contexts shape teachers' experiences indirectly by influencing workplace norms and expectations. In Hong Kong, cultural values and evolving education policies are significant macrosystem factors. Policies like FQKES have improved salary conditions and professional recognition, which serve to enhance job resources at the microsystem level. However, these same policies also impose strict monitoring and accountability standards that increase administrative workload and stress. This dual-edged impact illustrates how macrosystem factors interact with the immediate work environment: while improved compensation and enhanced status can strengthen teacher commitment and satisfaction, the concomitant rise in bureaucratic demands may counterbalance these benefits by adding stress and contributing to burnout (Wong, 2021).

Qualitative data provide rich examples of these interactions. Some educators noted that while increased governmental support improved pay and recognition, it also meant longer hours spent on compliance and reporting, thus interfering with their ability to engage meaningfully with children. This highlights the intricate balance between desirable macro-level changes and their unintended side effects on the microsystem.

The Chronosystem and Its Influence

Finally, the chronosystem—the dimension of time—plays an essential role in moderating interactions among all the aforementioned systems. Longitudinal data indicate that high job demands and insufficient work-life balance accumulate over time, manifesting in increased turnover rates and burnout among early childhood educators (Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic, a significant chronosystem event, exacerbated existing pressures by dramatically altering teaching modalities and heightening stress levels. Teachers were required to rapidly adapt to remote teaching while managing the uncertainties of a global health crisis. Qualitative accounts reveal that the pandemic not only intensified exosystem pressures (e.g., new administrative requirements and health protocols) but also disrupted the microsystem (loss of daily interpersonal support) and the mesosystem (blurring of work–family boundaries). These temporal dynamics illustrate that the cumulative effect of stressors—and the resources available to counteract them—can either erode or enhance occupational well-being over time.

The interactions between different ecological system levels significantly shape the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong. The positive impacts of a supportive microsystem (e.g., robust job support, effective leadership, and strong professional commitment) can be mitigated or amplified depending on the extent of mesosystem conflicts

(e.g., work–family imbalance) and exosystem pressures (e.g., administrative burdens). Furthermore, macrosystem influences, through government policies and prevailing cultural norms, set the stage for what resources or stressors are available, while the chronosystem captures the long-term accumulation of these effects. Together, these interwoven layers reveal that enhancing teacher well-being requires a holistic approach that not only improves immediate working conditions but also addresses broader systemic issues. Future interventions should consider this integrative framework to design support systems that effectively balance job demands with adequate resources over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Li, Yang et al., 2021; Quick & Tetrick, 2011).

6.2 Limitations of current study

While this study provides valuable insights into the occupational well-being (OWB) of early childhood educators (ECEs) in Hong Kong, several limitations must be acknowledged. Recognizing these constraints is essential for guiding future research, thereby enabling more comprehensive and generalizable studies that further illuminate the multifaceted factors influencing ECE well-being and support the development of targeted interventions.

One primary limitation arises from the study's focus on the specific cultural and educational context of Hong Kong. The quantitative and qualitative data collected reflect unique environmental pressures—including high societal expectations, stringent education policies, and distinctive pedagogical demands—that may not be fully generalizable to other contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Li, Yang et al., 2021). For instance, educators in Western countries might experience greater autonomy and access to resources, which could moderate the impact of job demands and stressors differently. Consequently, future research would benefit from a comparative approach that includes diverse educational settings, such as international schools or

different cultural contexts, to discern which predictors of occupational well-being are universal and which are context-specific.

Another notable limitation concerns the sample size, particularly in the second wave of data collection. Although the findings yield important insights, the relatively small sample size reduces the external validity of the results. A larger and more representative sample could enhance the generalizability of the findings and better capture the variability among different sub-groups of educators. Furthermore, the uneven representation of various occupational roles (e.g., class teachers, special childcare workers, head teachers, and principals) restricts the nuanced understanding of OWB across the full spectrum of early childhood education. Future studies should endeavor to ensure more balanced sampling across roles and educational settings, which would allow for more refined analyses of how different positions interact with environmental factors to shape well-being (Quick & Tetrick, 2011).

The extensive use of large inventories with numerous items also presents a limitation, particularly regarding the factor analysis, reliability, and validity of the instruments. Although comprehensive surveys provide detailed insights, their length and complexity may lead to participant fatigue, potentially resulting in response biases. This fatigue could compromise data accuracy and obscure meaningful relationships between variables. Future research should consider developing more streamlined, targeted measures that reduce respondent burden while maintaining robust psychometric properties, thereby improving both the clarity and reliability of the data collected (Cronbach, 1951).

Additionally, while this study investigates the impact of environmental factors within the immediate educational settings (microsystem and mesosystem) on occupational well-being, it insufficiently explores several other critical influences. Factors such as organizational culture,

leadership practices, and social support networks—which are pivotal within Bronfenbrenner’s exosystem and macrosystem—were not examined in depth. Previous research has consistently shown that a supportive organizational culture and effective leadership practices, including mentoring and participative decision-making, can significantly enhance teacher well-being and mitigate the impact of job stress (Leiter & Maslach, 2004; Tsui et al., 1992). Moreover, robust social support, both within and outside the workplace, serves as a buffer against occupational stress and burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). A more thorough exploration of these broader environmental influences would yield a more nuanced understanding of the interactive effects between immediate and systemic factors on ECE well-being. Factors like personal virtues (e.g., social-emotional competence) have also not been examined in this study. Study has found that teachers’ social-emotional competence is related to a range of outcomes at work, including occupational well-being (Xu et al. 2025). Future research may incorporate this factor.

In summary, while the current study contributes important insights into the occupational well-being of early childhood educators in Hong Kong, future research should expand its scope by addressing these limitations. Broadening the cultural context, increasing sample size and role diversity, refining measurement tools, and deepening the investigation into organizational and societal influences will further enhance our understanding of the complex ecological interactions that shape teacher well-being. Such efforts will, in turn, inform the development of targeted interventions and policy adjustments to create healthier and more sustainable educational environments.

6.3 Directions for Future Research

To build on the current research and further strengthen the direction of future studies in early childhood education (ECE) in Hong Kong, several critical areas of inquiry must be explored in greater depth.

Expanding Research Scope and Participant Diversity

Future research should first broaden its scope by including a more diverse range of educators in terms of both geography and professional roles within the ECE sector. This includes not only full-day and mixed-mode educators but also those across varying socioeconomic regions and types of educational settings (private vs. public kindergartens, for instance). By diversifying the sample, researchers will enhance the generalizability of findings and uncover nuanced insights that may be overlooked in more homogenous groups. Comparing occupational well-being across different cultural and educational contexts will provide a more global perspective on which factors are universal and which are culturally specific. Additionally, a longitudinal approach to studying occupational well-being over time can yield crucial data on how shifts in demographics (such as declining birth rates or emigration) and policy changes influence educator well-being.

Comparative and Cross-Cultural Research

Investigating the preferences of parents for full-day programmes versus mixed-mode settings from a comparative perspective could reveal how cultural and societal expectations shape the demand for different educational models. By comparing Hong Kong's full-day programme model with similar programmes in other regions or countries, researchers can identify best practices and unique challenges that might inform future policy. This cross-cultural

lens could also examine how cultural values influence teacher-student relationships, educators' sense of job satisfaction, and parents' engagement with the ECE sector.

Exploring Specific Support Mechanisms

Further, exploring the differential impacts of support mechanisms across various roles in the ECE sector is essential. This includes how leadership practices, mentorship, and training opportunities affect educators differently depending on their roles—whether they are teachers, teaching assistants, or administrative staff. Investigating targeted interventions, such as resilience training or professional development programs, could provide valuable insights into evidence-based strategies to enhance educators' occupational well-being. In addition, the effectiveness of mentorship programs and other professional support initiatives should be explored in-depth. Research in these areas will highlight the significance of investing in support systems that are tailored to the needs of early childhood educators. This is especially important as the sector continues to evolve in response to external pressures such as declining enrolments and shifting economic conditions.

Linking Educator Well-Being with Student Outcomes

Another critical research avenue involves examining the relationship between teacher well-being and student outcomes. Research shows that educators' emotional and psychological well-being directly impacts student learning and development. By investigating how teacher stress, burnout, and access to resources correlate with student motivation, academic achievement, and holistic performance, future studies can provide more robust evidence of the long-term benefits of investing in educators' well-being. This line of research will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how the emotional health of teachers affects the classroom environment and student outcomes.



Methodological Enhancements

Future research should also focus on methodological improvements to enhance data collection and analysis. Developing more concise and targeted measurement tools will improve the reliability of findings. By streamlining surveys and focusing on fewer, well-targeted items, researchers can avoid the common pitfalls of lengthy and overly complex questionnaires. Additionally, adopting mixed-method approaches—combining qualitative insights with quantitative data—will provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of the various factors impacting educator well-being.

Holistic Consideration of Environmental Factors

Lastly, future studies should broaden their focus to include a more comprehensive range of environmental factors. Organizational culture, leadership practices, social support networks, and workplace resources all play significant roles in shaping educators' experiences. Research examining how these factors interact with one another to influence well-being could provide invaluable insights. For example, understanding the interplay between an educator's relationship with leadership, their social support network, and the resources available in their workplace could lead to more effective interventions that address well-being from multiple angles.

Longitudinal and Comparative Studies

Undertaking longitudinal studies will help researchers to track the evolution of educator well-being over time, particularly in response to ongoing challenges like declining student populations. These studies would provide deeper insights into how educators' well-being is impacted by temporal changes and evolving educational environments. Similarly, comparative studies that evaluate different educational systems and support structures could offer valuable lessons from other regions facing similar challenges.

Ultimately, addressing the limitations of existing research and expanding the focus in future studies will lead to a deeper, more holistic understanding of early childhood educators' occupational well-being. By prioritizing these areas, future research can significantly contribute to shaping effective policies and practices that promote the well-being of educators and the overall quality of early childhood education in Hong Kong. A more comprehensive approach, informed by robust data and diverse perspectives, will ensure that the educational landscape evolves to better support both educators and children, fostering a thriving environment for learning and development. This focus on continuous exploration and improvement will be critical in paving the way for a brighter, more sustainable future in the ECE sector.

6.4 Implications of current study and conclusion

The findings of this two-wave mixed-methods study underscore that early childhood educators' occupational well-being is shaped by multi-layered ecological influences, from individual classroom dynamics to broad societal forces. Framed by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the results confirm that no single factor can fully explain the high stress, burnout, and turnover plaguing Hong Kong's early childhood education (ECE) sector. Instead, interactions across the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem collectively determine educator well-being. In this final section, the implications of findings will be discussed at each ecological level and propose evidence-based recommendations. The goal is to advocate for systemic, institutional, and practical changes that can enhance teacher well-being, improve retention, and ensure the long-term sustainability and quality of ECE services in Hong Kong.

Microsystem-Level Implications

At the microsystem level – the educator’s immediate environment and daily interactions – the study reveals significant strain on ECE teachers’ personal well-being and classroom functioning. Educators reported heavy workloads, long working hours, and intense emotional demands directly in their classrooms. Many teachers described being emotionally exhausted and “drained” by the end of the workday, a core component of burnout (Zhang, et al. 2022). This is consistent with prior research showing that kindergarten teachers often experience higher levels of burnout and emotional exhaustion than teachers of older students. In the quantitative data, emotional exhaustion scores were alarmingly high, and nearly half the teachers indicated frequent stress-related symptoms. Qualitative interviews echoed these concerns, with educators recounting how constant multitasking – from managing children’s needs to handling paperwork – left them feeling depleted and unable to “recharge” before the next day.

In this study, early childhood educators suffering from stress and burnout struggled to maintain the patience and enthusiasm needed for high-quality, nurturing interactions. Some admitted that on days of extreme fatigue, they found it challenging to provide the level of emotional support and engagement that young children require. This finding is worrying because early educators are the key ingredient in high-quality ECE experiences – their interactions scaffold children’s development and can have lasting impacts (Markowitz & Bassok, 2022). Diminished well-being, therefore, not only affects the teachers themselves but also compromises the learning and care of children in their classrooms.

Another notable finding at the microsystem level is that Hong Kong’s ECE workforce is highly qualified. The vast majority of our participants hold at least the Certificate in Early Childhood Education, and a large proportion have bachelor’s degrees or higher in ECE. This reflects successful policies in past decades to professionalize the sector (i.e. as of 2023/24, about

97% of ECE teachers had attained the certified teacher qualification and 72% attained Bachelor degree qualification). However, our results suggest that high qualifications alone do not buffer against stress and burnout. Even well-trained educators felt overwhelmed by the intensity of daily demands. This points to a misalignment: ECE teachers have strong personal resources and training, yet their work conditions prevent them from fully leveraging those skills. In other words, professional competence is not enough if the job environment is unsustainable. The implication is that interventions must go beyond individual professional development; they must improve the day-to-day context in which teaching and caring occur.

To strengthen microsystem conditions and support individual well-being, several key changes are recommended. First, improving teacher–child ratios and staffing is essential. Ensuring sufficient staff allows educators to manage class sizes without chronic overload. For instance, providing teaching assistants or reducing the teacher-to-child ratio (currently capped at 1:11 in Hong Kong) can alleviate daily pressures and enable more individualized attention for students. Second, supporting educators' mental health and coping strategies at the center level is critical. Wellness programs such as stress management workshops, counseling services, or designated break times can help teachers develop effective coping mechanisms. Regular mindfulness sessions or peer support groups integrated into the work week can also assist teachers in processing emotional challenges.

Additionally, enhancing classroom resources is vital to reducing immediate strain. Providing adequate teaching materials and non-contact time for lesson preparation and documentation can improve educators' sense of control and efficacy. Simple measures, such as allocating a few hours per week for planning with substitute coverage, can significantly enhance teacher well-being. Recognizing and rewarding teachers' efforts is another important strategy.

School administrators should frequently acknowledge educators' contributions through positive feedback, small rewards, or recognition of accomplishments to boost morale and resilience.

By addressing these factors within the microsystem, educators can experience improved daily well-being. This not only fosters more positive interactions with children but also enhances the overall quality of teaching.

Mesosystem-Level Implications

The mesosystem encompasses the interactions between an educator's different microsystems, such as the linkage between their work and home life, or between teachers and families of students. Our study identified work–family conflict as a critical mesosystem issue: many early childhood teachers reported that the demands of their job were frequently spilling over into their personal and family time. They spoke of taking work home, such as lesson planning or paperwork in the evenings, and feeling guilty about neglecting family duties. Conversely, stress from home (e.g. caring for young children of their own or elderly parents) sometimes affected their energy at work. This bidirectional tension – work–family conflict – showed a significant negative correlation with occupational well-being in the current data, mirroring findings in mainland China that work–family conflict directly undermines teacher well-being (Wang et al. 2025). Importantly, several teachers in the current study indicated that difficulty balancing work and family was a major reason they were considering leaving the profession, highlighting it as a driver of turnover intentions. Another mesosystem dynamic involves teacher-parent relationships and communication. Early childhood educators in Hong Kong operate in an environment where parents have high expectations and anxieties about their children's early education. The qualitative findings revealed that teachers often felt pressure to satisfy parents' preferences – for instance, to provide more academic drills or frequent progress

reports – even when these ran counter to the play-based, child-centered approaches that teachers know are developmentally sound. One educator noted the challenge of “keeping parents happy with visible results” while also adhering to the curriculum guidelines emphasizing holistic development. This tension aligns with reports that Hong Kong kindergarten teachers struggle to meet parents’ demands for more formal learning while upholding quality standards, causing considerable stress (Wong & Rao, 2015). Such friction can strain the crucial collaborative relationship between teachers and families, which is a key mesosystem link influencing child outcomes.

Interpersonal support networks form another aspect of the mesosystem. The study found that collegial support and family/friend support can act as protective factors. Teachers who felt supported by their colleagues, or who had understanding family members, reported better coping despite the stresses. Unfortunately, not all educators enjoyed such support; new or younger teachers in particular noted feelings of isolation. In some cases, center leadership did not foster a collaborative culture, leaving teachers to struggle alone. This indicates that the mesosystem interactions (or lack thereof) between the teacher’s workplace and their social/family sphere significantly affect well-being. Workplaces that respect teachers’ non-work lives, and families that understand work challenges, both contribute to healthier balance. When these links are weak – for example, if a school expects excessive overtime, or if a teacher’s family is unsympathetic to their stress – the teacher is caught in a bind, heightening burnout risk.

To address these mesosystem challenges, a comprehensive approach should be recommended to promote healthier work–family integration and enhances relationships among educators. ECE centers should implement work–family balance policies by adopting family-friendly practices such as setting reasonable limits on after-hours communication, offering

flexible scheduling or personal leave, and avoiding meetings during typical family times. These initiatives acknowledge and respect teachers' family lives, thereby alleviating work–family conflict. In addition, providing on-site or subsidized child care can significantly reduce stress for teacher-parents by easing the pressure of securing reliable care. Policymakers and large ECE organizations might consider offering on-site facilities, subsidies, or priority placements for educators in local child care centers to directly ease the tension between home and work responsibilities. Engaging parents as partners rather than adversaries through regular workshops or communications can further promote understanding by educating them about developmentally appropriate practices and the benefits of play-based learning. This partnership can help to align expectations and relieve some of the pressure teachers face from parental demands. Moreover, building robust support networks within the educational community is crucial. This can be achieved by fostering mentorship and teamwork, pairing novice teachers with experienced mentors, and organizing regular team-building and support group activities. Such collegial networks ensure that teachers have peers to rely on during challenging times, reinforcing a positive work environment. Finally, offering counselling services that involve family members, along with initiating family outreach programs, can mediate discussions around work–family stress and enhance mutual understanding within teachers' personal lives. By strengthening these interconnections between their professional and personal domains, these measures can significantly reduce work–family conflict, ultimately leading to improved job satisfaction and a stronger sense of loyalty among educators.

Exosystem-Level Implications

The exosystem refers to institutional and community contexts that indirectly affect teachers, including school policies, leadership decisions, and community resources, even if the

teacher is not directly involved in those decisions. This study indicates that exosystem factors – particularly related to the organization and management of ECE centers – play a pivotal role in occupational well-being. Many early childhood educators attributed their stress to institutional issues such as heavy administrative workloads, insufficient support staff, and rigid organizational practices. For instance, teachers reported spending extensive hours on documentation to satisfy government or management requirements (e.g. compiling portfolios, writing detailed reports for Quality Review inspections). One teacher lamented that she had “more paperwork than actual teaching,” reflecting how organizational demands can overwhelm classroom work. Excessive administrative load without corresponding support is a classic exosystem stressor – teachers themselves did not create these requirements, but they suffer the consequences.

School leadership and organizational culture emerged as a decisive factor in how supported (or unsupported) teachers felt. The qualitative interviews revealed a stark contrast between centers with positive, supportive leadership and those with poor management. In some kindergartens, principals practice inclusive leadership – they involve teachers in decision-making, provide mentoring, and ensure workloads are fairly distributed. Teachers in such environments reported significantly better well-being and lower intent to leave. In other centers, however, teachers described feeling ignored or even blamed by management when problems arose. A lack of administrative support – for example, not hiring substitute teachers when someone is sick, or denying requests for additional help with children with special needs – left educators feeling powerless and undervalued. This finding reinforces the idea that organizational resources (or lack thereof) critically shape job satisfaction. In the language of the Job Demands-Resources model, many Hong Kong ECE centers impose high job demands on teachers (long hours, multitasking, emotional labor) without commensurate job resources (support, recognition,

autonomy). The result is an imbalance that fuels burnout. Indeed, heavy workload coupled with high turnover at the school level has made kindergarten teachers a particularly vulnerable group (Zhang et al., 2022). Some educators in this study noted that when colleagues quit (as is happening frequently), those who remain must pick up extra duties, further straining the institution's capacity – a vicious cycle of stress and attrition.

The exosystem also includes community and societal supports that indirectly influence teachers. For example, community organizations or NGOs that provide auxiliary services (like special education support, parental education programs, or mental health resources) can ease teachers' burden. Likewise, local community respect and understanding for the ECE profession affects how teachers perceive their status. A few participants mentioned that when the community recognizes the importance of their work (for instance, local businesses offering discounts to teachers or community centers hosting appreciation events), it boosts their morale. Unfortunately, several teachers felt that the community largely underestimates the professionalism of ECE teachers, seeing them as “babysitters” rather than educators. This societal attitude (exosystem/macrosystem overlap) can trickle down to how teachers are treated within their institutions.

It is therefore vital to strengthen organizational support and enhance community valuation of early childhood education (ECE) can substantially improve teacher well-being and retention. To achieve these outcomes, it is imperative that ECE administrators and community stakeholders implement a series of exosystem-level interventions. First, leadership and management practices must be strengthened by ensuring that kindergarten administrators are not only trained in teacher-friendly management but are also held accountable for maintaining open communication channels, treating teachers as professionals, and ensuring fair workload

distribution. Principals and center directors must be vigilant in identifying signs of teacher burnout and proactive in providing support—for example, by hiring temporary relief staff during periods of peak stress. Leadership training programs, potentially funded or organized by governmental or professional bodies, could be instrumental in cultivating empathetic and effective management styles within the sector. Furthermore, reducing the administrative burden on teachers is critical; school management should rigorously evaluate existing reporting requirements to identify those that are essential for quality assurance and reduce or automate those that are not. Investment in straightforward digital tools or additional administrative support can enable teachers to concentrate on teaching and child interactions, while any new initiatives must include sufficient administrative support to prevent teachers from becoming solely responsible for implementation logistics. Enhancing job resources is another vital intervention; employing additional support staff such as teaching aides, counsellors, or clerical personnel, establishing formal peer support and mentoring programs, and offering opportunities for professional development with appropriate workload coverage can collectively ensure that no teacher feels isolated and that each educator is adequately equipped to meet their professional challenges. In addition, institutional recognition and rewards play an important role; mechanisms such as monthly awards, official letters of appreciation, and other incentives can foster a culture of recognition, while involving teachers in decision-making processes through committees can reinforce their autonomy and commitment to the institution. The strategic leveraging of community resources further complements these organizational efforts; partnerships with local health centers, universities, counselling interns, and non-profit organizations can provide essential support services such as wellness workshops and parent education programs, thereby not only providing direct resources but also conveying societal care for teacher well-being.

Finally, public recognition campaigns that highlight success stories of exemplary early childhood educators can reinforce a positive organizational climate by promoting the profession in local media and community events. Collectively, these interventions create a more supportive work environment that acknowledges both the professional demands and the personal challenges faced by teachers, ultimately fostering a culture where both educators and the larger community thrive.

Macrosystem-Level Implications

At the macrosystem level, this study's findings point to systemic and policy-related factors that critically influence educator well-being in Hong Kong. The macrosystem includes government policies, economic conditions, cultural values, and societal attitudes. Perhaps the most striking macro-level issue evidenced by this research is the mismatch between the crucial role of ECE teachers and the support they receive at the societal level. Early childhood educators fulfill a role that is foundational for society – they not only educate and care for young children, but also enable parents to participate in the workforce by providing reliable care (Markowitz & Bassok, 2022). Despite this, policies and societal investment have not adequately safeguarded their well-being.

One urgent macrosystem concern is the high turnover and attrition of ECE teachers, which the longitudinal data of current study has highlighted. These individual exits accumulate into a systemic problem: a “brain drain” from the ECE sector. Recent statistics underscore the severity – the annual turnover rate for Hong Kong kindergarten teachers hit a record ~19.1% last year, meaning nearly one in five teachers left their job in a 12-month period. Contributing to this is a sharp decline in student enrolments due to Hong Kong's falling birth rate, which led to the closure of 17 kindergartens in one year (SCMP, 2025). Facing shrinking classes, some schools have downsized or closed, and teachers fear job instability. Principals report that many quality

teachers are quitting to take more secure or better-paid positions in primary schools or outside education. Participants in the current study echoed this insecurity – even passionate educators confessed they might leave ECE if the situation does not improve, simply to achieve stable livelihoods. This trend is alarming for the long-term sustainability of the ECE system, as it creates a shortage of experienced teachers and deters new talent from entering the field. High turnover also disrupts the continuity of care and education for children, undermining program quality (Wang et al 2025).

Funding allocation and resource provision at the policy level were identified as key issues. The participants of current study observed that while the Free Kindergarten Scheme subsidizes student tuition, there are still gaps in funding for improving teacher working conditions – for example, funding for hiring additional support staff or counsellors in kindergartens is limited. Additionally, some teachers pointed out that resources are strained under new policy mandates. The push for quality assurance, child assessment, and bilingual education are laudable, but without extra funding to implement these, the burden falls on teachers. This exemplifies how a well-intended macrosystem policy (expanding free education) had unintended negative consequences on teacher well-being because it was not accompanied by sufficient systemic support.

Cultural attitudes (another macrosystem element) also emerged as influential. In Hong Kong (as in many societies), there has been a historical undervaluing of early childhood education compared to primary and secondary education (Wong & Rao, 2015). Although this is gradually changing, remnants of the old mindset persist, where teaching young children is not seen as a prestigious career. This cultural view can influence policy priorities and public support. Several educators in the study voiced a desire for greater public respect and understanding of

their profession. They believe that if society at large recognized the expertise required to nurture and educate preschoolers, there would be stronger political will to address issues like workload and pay. Notably, policy reviews in Hong Kong have also highlighted stakeholders calling for the government to elevate the status of ECE and even move towards universal government-funded kindergarten education. The rationale is that making ECE truly part of the public education system (with proper funding and planning) would institutionalize better support for teachers and quality standards.

Considering these macrosystem insights, urgent systemic interventions are needed, as incremental tweaks will no longer suffice given the magnitude of the challenges faced by the early childhood education (ECE) sector. The government and policymakers must take a decisive leadership role in bolstering the foundation of ECE. One key recommendation is to increase and target funding specifically for improving ECE workforce conditions. Higher government investment could support a standardized salary scale applicable to all kindergartens—both public and private—ensuring equitable and competitive pay across the board. In addition, such funding should also be allocated to hiring auxiliary staff, including teaching assistants, social workers, and special educators, to mitigate teacher workload and enhance the attractiveness and security of ECE positions.

Another important intervention is the implementation of clear salary progression and incentives to establish transparent career pathways for ECE teachers. This could involve structured salary increments, promotion opportunities (such as senior teacher or curriculum leader roles), and retention bonuses for milestones such as three or five years of service. These measures would address the economic factors contributing to high turnover rates and underline the value of experienced educators, thereby encouraging retention. Moreover, a comprehensive

policy review of workload and requirements is essential. The Education Bureau should, in collaboration with teacher representatives, critically evaluate and streamline administrative and curricular requirements imposed on kindergartens. This process might involve simplifying quality review documentation and eliminating non-essential tasks, with any future policy initiatives incorporating teacher workload impact assessments alongside necessary support, such as funded training and additional manpower when new curricula are introduced.

Flexibility in policy implementation is also paramount. Allowing kindergartens some leeway in meeting guidelines—so long as they can demonstrate alternative methods of ensuring quality—would alleviate the stress imposed by strict, one-size-fits-all mandates. Decentralizing decision-making power to empower school leaders and teachers to adapt policies in ways that are more conducive to their specific contexts could further reduce administrative pressures. Enhancing professional development and institutional recognition represents another critical area of focus. Government bodies and professional organizations should provide ongoing professional development opportunities that go beyond pedagogy to encompass skills such as time management, emotional resilience, and cultural competency for working with diverse families. Participation in these programs should be incentivized, whether by counting towards promotion criteria or offering paid study leave. Alongside professional development, public recognition programs—such as “Outstanding Early Childhood Teacher” awards and media campaigns—can serve to elevate the status of ECE educators and reinforce their value within the institution.

The creation of stakeholder collaboration platforms is recommended to ensure that teachers, principals, parents, and policymakers regularly engage in dialogue to address challenges and co-create effective solutions. The establishment of a standing ECE Workforce Well-being Task Force, for instance, could facilitate ongoing monitoring of indicators such as

turnover and stress levels while providing informed policy recommendations. Finally, a broader cultural shift and heightened public awareness are essential. A societal campaign to elevate the importance of early childhood education would involve public service announcements, the integration of ECE topics into general education curricula, and community events that highlight the critical nature of early childhood development. When society and government leaders explicitly recognize and celebrate the contributions of ECE educators, both teacher well-being and the overall quality of early childhood services are enhanced. High teacher well-being is associated with superior teaching performance and improved child developmental outcomes, while low well-being often correlates with increased teacher shortages and a declining appeal of the profession. Therefore, investing in teachers is ultimately an investment in children and society at large.

The chronosystem perspective reminds us that these issues and interactions are not static; they evolve over time and are influenced by temporal changes and critical events. The longitudinal two-wave design allowed us to observe how certain factors and well-being indicators changed (or persisted) over the study period. Notably, we found that without meaningful interventions between the two waves, teachers' levels of stress and burnout remained high, and in some cases worsened over time. For example, by the time of the second wave, a small but concerning number of educators who were coping in the first wave had transitioned into the high burnout category. This suggests that the passage of time alone, in an unchanged environment, can lead to cumulative wear-and-tear on educator well-being – a phenomenon akin to “accelerated burnout” when systemic issues are not addressed. It underscores the urgency that delays in intervention can have compounding negative effects. If high job demands and low

supports persist year after year, more teachers reach a breaking point, and the pipeline of experienced educators diminishes.

The chronosystem also includes historical and contextual events that impacted the participants of current study. During the period of study, Hong Kong's ECE sector was affected by macro-level events such as the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of new education policies (e.g. the continued roll-out of the free kindergarten scheme). These events had temporal dimensions: for instance, COVID-19 caused intermittent kindergarten closures, a rapid shift to home-based learning, and then a transition back to classroom with new health protocols. Teachers in this study noted that the pandemic period was extremely stressful – they had to adapt overnight to online engagement with very young children and then manage health anxieties upon returning to in-person classes. This global crisis likely exacerbated existing stressors and introduced new ones, illustrating how an external event in the chronosystem can ripple through all ecological levels (macro policies on school closure, exo-level changes in school operations, meso-level new demands on parent-teacher coordination for home learning, micro-level personal health concerns) (Markowitz & Bassok, 2022). By the second wave of data (which occurred after the peak of COVID disruptions), some teachers reported a slight relief in certain stress (e.g. no more remote teaching), but others reported new issues (children had more behavioral difficulties after long absences, requiring extra teacher effort). The lesson from the chronosystem influence is that resilience and contingency planning are key – the system must be prepared to support teacher well-being amid changing conditions, be it public health crises, economic downturns, or demographic shifts.

To ensure that the early childhood education (ECE) system thrives over time, a forward-looking, proactive approach is necessary. Continuous monitoring and research should treat

teacher occupational well-being as a key indicator to be assessed annually, much like student performance is routinely tracked. In this regard, government agencies and academia ought to collaborate on regular surveys or longitudinal studies to monitor teacher well-being, turnover intentions, and overall job satisfaction. Such proactive efforts would enable the early identification of concerning trends and timely policy adjustments, rather than waiting for a crisis to occur.

Moreover, it is essential to phase in reforms with a long-term commitment. Any interventions—such as salary increases or the hiring of support staff—should be institutionalized and supported by sustained funding and political will, rather than relying on one-off grants. A multi-year strategic plan for the ECE workforce could be established, with clear targets (e.g., reducing turnover to below 10% within five years and increasing the average years of teacher tenure) and the alignment of resources to achieve these goals. Stakeholders have raised concerns about the government’s previous lack of long-term vision in early childhood education (Wong & Rao, 2015).

In addition, building resilience to external shocks is critical. Developing contingency supports for teachers—such as creating robust digital infrastructure, offering targeted training for rapid transitions to remote learning, and establishing emergency funds and mental health crisis services—will help ensure that educators are not left to shoulder the full burden of future disruptions alone. Learning from the COVID-19 experience, such measures can better prepare the system to handle unexpected challenges while safeguarding teacher well-being.

Lastly, cross-sector collaboration is vital for long-term sustainability. Addressing issues such as low birth rates, which affect enrolment, requires coordinated efforts across multiple sectors including housing, healthcare, and economic policy. If birth rates continue to decline,

education authorities may need to consider consolidating resources—such as merging classes or schools—while simultaneously managing the teacher workforce through strategies like retraining or redeploying surplus teachers, rather than downsizing. This integrated approach ensures that both child welfare and teacher well-being are supported amid significant demographic shifts.

Conclusion

In summary, the current study's ecological approach highlights that improving ECE teacher well-being requires systemic solutions at every level: nurturing supportive classrooms and peer networks (microsystem and mesosystem), strengthening school leadership and community ties (exosystem), instituting robust policies and cultural recognition (macrosystem), and planning for future challenges and longevity (chronosystem). By acting on these implications, policymakers and education leaders can help break the cycle of stress and attrition, foster a more resilient and satisfied workforce, and ultimately secure the long-term quality of early childhood education in Hong Kong. This multi-level, multi-stakeholder commitment will ensure that ECE teachers not only survive in their roles, but truly thrive – to the benefit of the children in their care and society as a whole.



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Study 1 – Structure of Online survey

Part 1 - Job Satisfaction

Part 2 - Turnover Intention

Part3 - Job Support

Part 4 - Work Engagement

Part 5- Job Burnout

Part 6- Job Stress

- Overall Job Stress
- Job Stress Sources

Part 7 – Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire

Part 8 – Job-Related Feelings

Part 9 – Work and Private Life Conflicts

Part 10 – Demographics

Questions for guiding the one-to-one interview 訪問題目

1. 請分享影響您職業幸福感的主要家庭因素。為什麼？(進一步提示：1) 從家庭關係中獲得的支持，2) 核心家庭中的角色和職責，以及3) 與家庭有關的情感需求。)
2. 請分享影響您職業幸福感的主要工作因素。為什麼？(進一步提示：1) 工作需求，2) 工作資源和支持，3) 工作自主權和4) 對專業發展的需求。)
3. 請分享您對工作和家庭之間的平衡所感到的擔憂。
4. 什麼是影響您工作與生活平衡的主要因素？(生活可包括：私人社交、進修、休閒娛樂、個人休息等)
5. 您是否認為在工作壓力下，家人、同事和社區能否對您提供積極的支持？這些來自不同方面的支持是否互相影響？請描述。
6. 請問香港有沒有某些本地政策(不一定局限於教育政策)會否影響您作為幼兒教育的工作？
請嘗試分享你的想法。
7. 大眾媒體 (例如新聞報導、雜誌文章或社交媒體等) 會否影響您作為幼兒教育工作者
的職業幸福感 (例如工作投入情況、工作滿意度、倦怠、離職意向等) ？

8. 您認為最近香港社會經濟環境的變化對您的幼稚園工作產生了什麼影響？如何影響？
9. 請問中國傳統文化或儒家思想是否影響您作為幼兒教育工作者的角色？(進一步提示：
除了中國文化以外，你認為有冇其他文化影響？)
10. 整體而言，如果要提升你的工作幸福感，你認為有什麼地方需要改變/改善？

~ 感謝您的寶貴意見及時間！~



Appendix C

Study 2 – Sample of transcribed interview verbatim

Remarks:

CT= Class Teacher

ST = Supporting Teacher

HT = Head Teacher

P = Principal

Please refer to Appendix B for the 10 interview questions Q1 – Q10

Interviewee: CT1	
Questions No.	Responses
Q1	其實就是主要是家人可能吵架 或者有時候可能有一點問題 已經回到家裡很累了 然後已經可能有一點問題問你 覺得很煩躁之類的 或者他們有時候跟他解釋完 誤會了你的意思 有時候可能溝通不夠 其實都是想跟家人 為了家人好 但是誤會了意思 就會有一些吵架 然後大家又不出聲 在家裡就這樣受氣 回到公司 就會覺得有一些情緒帶著回來

但是自己又不會跟同事分享那麼多
 會分開一些家裡工作的工作
 可能那天就會
 對著同事就會比較安靜一點
 但是對小朋友就會
 見到他們會開心一點
 就是小朋友都能給你一個很大的動力
 讓你在家裡可能有些不開心的時候
 就可以釋放
 職業的幸福就是
 可能是溝通的質素
 其實他們沒有說是否支持
 就是一一直都是你自己選擇
 也給你很大的自由
 他們沒有過問
 就是沒有反對
 沒有聲音
 你自己找到認識
 生存到就可以了
 就是不會說對於你的公司長短而有一些聲音
 已經很好
 因為不是每個家庭都一樣的
 對於不同的職業的看法
 因為家裡也有很多姐妹
 我們有五個
 我弟弟三個
 我兩個妹妹
 可能有一個長期比較懶散
 另一個也會回到剛剛讀完書
 習慣在家裡

剛剛開始出來工作
 做一些文職的工作
 大家結了婚
 自己有家庭
 也很少過問家裡
 現在也是有些原因
 自己在外面租住
 不是在家裡一起住
 在家裡住都是我爸媽
 我和兩個妹妹
 經常聽我爸媽說
 你自己搞定自己就可以了
 因為也有很多家庭成員
 可能在家務上分工比較輕鬆
 家務上
 我媽媽比較傳統
 你自己留給她自己洗
 我媽媽自己其實會做,就是沒有太
 大的家務壓力
 在家裡的角色比較輕鬆

Q2

工作的幸福感

首先和同事之間的關係

有時候可能因為一些小問題

但是有時候大家的意見不同

大家會不會有一些火爆

就是大家說完意見你又不接受

之後大家就僵在這裡

你不接受我的意見

我也不接受你的意見的時候

就是大家不認同大家

然後就令到氣氛很僵

這樣就會覺得有點難受

其實大家都是想做好一件事為小朋友

但是有時候就會覺得

其他的老師

或者其他職級的人

就會為了自己想快點處理好一件事

解決了問題

但是你實際做出來的事情就覺得不是

就會有些矛盾

有時候這樣就會有些心灰意冷

除了跟同事之間

那個可能是一些話題上

或者一些意見上的不一致

而影響到溝通的幸福感和和諧度

其實最初我還沒有進修

我現在是在讀一個四年的幼兒教學士學位課程

讀完之後就覺得

壓力大了很多

還沒有完成

因為一直在讀書

又在工作

剛剛完成了一半

今年第二年

接下來就是第三年

還有一年

要去四年

還沒開始之前

我覺得很輕鬆的

回家很多時間

做什麼都可以
休息一下
自己在這裡
不可以關機
做什麼都可以
但是讀了書
進了修之後就覺得
反而是令我很不想做這一行
覺得放了工之後
要浪費很多時間
一直踩
從早上六點鐘起床
一直踩到晚上十點鐘才回到家
然後回到家
已經是自己洗澡睡覺了
也攪不了其他東西
要用自己平時的空閒時間
也要做自己學校的功課
也要做自己的文件
然後回到學校當中
有很多突發事情要處理
比較一下投訴
或者說一些評估
其實自己做得到的
可以隨時做得到
但是壓力很大
就是自己會給自己壓力很大
有時候會想
怕做不完
校長自己有一定要求的
自己覺得
我也想繼續在這裡做
不如也繼續讀書

讀書也是自己的資產
可能是公事
工作壓力
進修的壓力
其實我覺得這間幼稚園
對於進修
其實也是方便的
因為有時候跟同學聊天
有些同學說
你學校可以讓你這麼早下班嗎?
你考試可以早下班嗎?
他們不行, 也說要做到
有時候 OT 到六、七點學校才讓你走
或者可以去考試
我有時候對比這方面
覺得也很好
也很支持
你說要考試
可以早離開嗎?
當然還未可以的
或者你說要上學
也不需要留下來
自己可以準時離開
不過你的工作做不完
就自己去決定
自己處理
還有有時候覺得
在這裡工作了七年
有時候很多工作也熟悉的
有時候自己要一些支持
可能自己思考一下
可能找一下馬上可以找到支持

也不想像剛剛新人一樣
不知道頭不知腦
不知道怎麼找
誰來幫忙, 怎麼找
就是跟同事的關係
已經很密切地知道
大家的崗位政策在哪裡
第二位支持的時候也知道
就是我們說的自主權
就是自由度
譬如平時的日程
或者時間
這個時間一定要做什麼
其實是規定了的
我今年是教幼兒班
其實幼兒班的時間表
的確是很鬆動的
教學的內容會比較少一點
所以全力的
不用扯得太緊
低高班的時候
真的要用盡每一分每一秒
可以超時
如果不是的話
所有今天可能要分組的
要寫功課的
要做的音體美全部做不到
所以我覺得也是自己安排的
如果時間明年改了的話
會安排得更好
我們一直在學校都覺得
三級裡面是幼兒班最輕鬆的
沒有那麼多課程要趕

沒有那麼多學術上的東西要做
主要是練習肌肉
時間休閒一點
就是感覺效能會大一點
可以更加有時間
譬如有時候分組運動的時候
我的小朋友弱一點
我可以更加針對性教導他
如果你平時低高班好 Chur
快點做完就走就會比較趕工
幼兒班我就覺得
自己用一點心思的時候做多一點
是可以做到
做多一點
教多一點小朋友
學生人數多不多呢?
就是在班裡面
我今年是校方安排其實是可以有 30 個位
就是一半 AM 一半 PM
他們只收了 15 個全日
我自己教 1 班
就是因為人手
或者是人工上會更加好安排
因為收了 15 個
就是你不用上午下午分開來處理
一次過處理
因為是人工問題
人工就是每個月收到的
就是 1 至 15 個一個老師
1 至 16 就要請多一個老師
就是行政上
他們就這麼安排

所以一開始是很辛苦的
姐姐也會來幫不太知道要怎麼幫
因為疫情之後
感覺到這群小朋友真的很弱
因為之前可能沒什麼機會
什麼都沒有
很多都不懂得上廁所
然後很多都不懂得說話
然後又不懂得說話
我排隊的時候覺得很恐怖
我叫她排隊
其實已經捉過了我捉完一些
然後又四散一些
那一刻會比較無奈
因為沒有人手可以幫我維持
姐姐也沒有時間可以做這麼長時間的支援
可能隔壁班的小朋友比較多
隔壁有廿幾個但是有兩位老師
那一班也很需要幫忙
所以一開始也跟校長反映過很辛苦
一對十沒有問題的
是訓練了之後
一對十是很流暢的
但是一開始要訓練
要支援那裡
就想說要多一點
還有也有跟校長去反映
校長的情緒上就是全年都是一句: 知道你辛苦了
我看到的
我知道你看到的

其實很多時候課程都是校方去安排
今年可能是這兩個老師負責非華語的
他們會安排這兩個老師
去不斷找坊間的教育部的課程
或者其他機構的課程給他們讀
其實有時候我覺得反而是我讀沒問題
我也覺得可以學到東西
但是真的要看那個坊間
或者提供的課程
那些內容究竟有沒有用
有時候覺得每一年參加這些都是這樣的內容
會覺得很流很重複
沒有什麼質素保證
好像很浪費我的時間
讓我花一下自己的教育水平更好
有時候覺得反而是為了參與的計劃
然後就安排老師去讀一些很重複性的內容
就是很基本的
一些可能概念上的
讓老師知道
我覺得對我進修專業上的發展沒有這麼大的幫助
就是因為有一筆撥款
所以非華語那裡就要參加
Q3 就是金錢
因為我在這裡工作連續七年
這個工資已經到達三萬多

我覺得也算高了
但是有時候覺得
我今年其實看見加學校流失了人手很厲害
流失率高
其實換了一半新老師
現在是一半新一半舊
接著你會看到很多
有時候新的老師太新
沒有經驗
接著教他做事的時候
又未必聽你的
接著就覺得很多方面
合作上也會有問題
就會覺得很煩躁
有時候又覺得有些事情做不到
一直走不到
就是我自己做的時候
我經常都會想
啊 我自己做也沒問題
但是當了一個同事
拍攝的時候
又要教他做的時候
好像拖累了整個
那天的工作流程進度
接著今年是做得特別辛苦
今年是不斷想
做不好
辭職不辭職
因為可能眼看
在這裡這麼多年都沒有老師辭職的
工作的歸屬感也很好

大家願意去合作
但是突然間看到這樣的時候
自己也會思考
這間校是不是真的沒什麼發展
或者是不是也不太適宜
是不是也要轉去一間新的學校
但是自己也會很擔心新的環境
我自己的性格
是在這裡做了七年之後才慢慢轉變的
本身很內向
之後可能做得多
慢慢去避開自己的挑戰
才變成敢於在家長面前
說這麼多話, 互動這麼多
我覺得這裡是讓我由一個什麼都不懂
進步到現在這樣的一個工作環境
還有人事方面也熟悉了
所以我覺得家庭和在學校之間的平衡很好
因為也很熟悉
回來才回家
就是想做什麼就做什麼
就是沒有什麼憂慮
今年就想到如果要辭職
就會想很多問題
如果我去做新的
就是反而辭職之後
就可能會有那些問題
人工又會冇咗一截
差很多
會不會影響到我自己的收入質素

	想到現在就還在這裡
Q4	我現在也是在這家公司七年了
	熟悉了一些東西
	關於有多少評估
	自己是會分配時間去做
	預先的編排
	想到接下來這個月要做
	想評或評
	要快點做
	分配時間
	提早多久開始慢慢做
	這些都會平衡到
	未必會有很大壓力
	但是就會自己無緣無故給自己壓力
	經常怕自己做不到
	怕自己做不到的原因是什麼呢?
	完成不了還是做得不夠好呢?
	譬如這個學校有自己的工作是不擔心的
	自己做了這麼多年
	有信心可以做得到的
	也不難做
	但是我自己進修的時候
	就會經常有新的功課
	有時候也不知道做的內容對不對
	符不符合公司的要求
	可能自信心不夠
	覺得自己英文比較弱
	譬如現在全部都是英文
	所以那個壓力可能會相對大一點
	它的課程整個都是以英文教學為主

	所以自己英文不行
	就會覺得壓力很大
	英文很弱
	語言怕做錯
	內容其實跟老師說的可能差十萬八千里
	影響學位
	主要是擔心不能進修
	因為也開始了一半
	也很想完成好
	因為我的朋友
	也不是從事這行業
	然後可能已經很多年
	因為做幼稚園壓力很大
	就轉為做文職
	文職就拿年假
	他的放假跟我的放假也未必一樣
	然後還有一個朋友去了澳門那邊
	那邊做幼稚園
	也是不太搭得來的
	相對上如果你說現在朋友也很少
	可能除了同事之外
	就是家人了
	其實現在反而是同事會比較多
	上班後吃飯
	反而自己的朋友
	這幾年前也沒有約出來
	舊同事也沒有
	可能也跟學校裡面的同事社交為主
Q5	家裡可能你回家
	買一碗靚湯
	準備一些飯

	送給你吃
	可以吃飯
	這些也是一種支持
	或者有時候我工作的時候
	我爸媽很安靜的關掉電視
	不影響你工作
	這種也是無形中的支持
	在學校的支持
	工作的支持
	其實也是自己找自己
	自己去平衡
	可能吃完飯之後有五分鐘
	就做完這個
	也有些同事是可以聊天的
	有些同事可以聊天
	大家又會
	有時候比較密切
	在學校看到一些不公的情況
	大家說了會好一點
	舒服一點
	其實我真的不外出
	在家裡多
	但是我也很喜歡在家裡
	就算不能在家裡做
	也可以在家裡休息
	所以社區有什麼我也不知道
Q6	影響到我們的工作
	剛剛最新的國安法考試
	不是說想要離職的考慮感
	離職就會考國安法考試
	今年新加入了這個
	還沒考的
	現在正在溫習

	因為轉工新入職就要有那個時間
	現在主要是想考定他
	隨時自己真的受不了
	就可以立刻有一個保障
	可以轉工
	可能我比較少去特別留意這個社會
	或者特別投入在這個社會
Q7	老闆會特別緊張
	譬如剛剛
	我們學校就爆發一個急性腸胃炎
	學校好像一大群人
	都有肚瀉
	嘔吐腹瀉
	這些症狀
	那就上了新聞
	衛生署又來了
	這些這麼大型的時候
	要上新聞
	老闆就會很緊張
	我們看看今晚會不會出新聞
	感受到
	原來我們學校其實是很重視
	傳媒有時候說的內容
	會不會有時候偏頗了
	或者會不會新聞會對我們學校的形象有影響
	管理層就是要留意這些
	特別緊張
	比較敏感
	但對我來說
	發生了就發生了
	我自己就這樣

	有沒有一些偏頗了的描述呢
	你們回顧的時候
	都沒有的
	都很中立的
	只不過他們聽我們說
	原來有這麼多男這麼多女
	我自己都不知道
	他們行政上的人
	反而傳媒就寫出來了
	就會清楚一點
	反而可能知道多一點細節
	這個時候我們只有看新聞
	才知道當中的細節
	平時都
	校長就是告訴我們
	尤其是上報衛生署
	我們自己內部都不清楚
	有多少人中了急性腸胃炎
	上新聞看
	我們才知道更加仔細的內容
	反而內部就沒有公佈
	有時候覺得內部比較
	這些就藏起來
	我們自己都沒有說
	或者他們忽略了
	可能已經太多工作了
	原來這些都要說
	可能有時候漏了
	就說有多少人
	有多少男有多少女
	又沒有特別說
Q8	說起國家的時候
	這些主題

	我覺得校長會特別敏感
	例如說中國新香港情感
	剛剛反修例
	或者那段示威遊行
	我們這個主題
	什麼警察
	不要說那些
	不要說警察
	不要說中國
	什麼香港
	我覺得好像太過份了
	我們現在
	中國是
	中國香港
	都是事實
	有警察維持治安
	這件事
	都是事實
	但校長就說
	這件事好像有點尷尬
	好像和現在
	社會現象有點不同
	你給觀眾
	或者給小朋友看到
	警察不是維持治安
	校長這樣說
	但我覺得
	其實我們教育
	最基本給小朋友的概念
	就是這樣教
	警察是維持治安的
	我們聘請警察的時候
	職責都是一樣的職責

我覺得照教沒問題
但校長自己的觀念
他自己有些想法
我覺得可能無形中
加了在我們身上
自己立場
但我覺得教育就不應該這樣
就算社會運動是怎樣也好
我們覺得
要教最基本的東西
就是最基本
我們又沒有說
加鹽加醋
教小朋友
我們是中國人
頭髮是黑色的
警察是維持治安
小朋友是教課
我覺得這些
不是說適合政治立場
是事實的分享
但他們就敏感一點
就說這些內容不要教
我就覺得好像
只是那段時間
還是以後這段時間
過了一兩年
都還是糾纏著
都會說不教
現在這些就回復正常
就沒有這麼敏感
沒有特別拿出來說
他們就說因為經濟差

所以今年可能凍薪
最擔心的就是這件事
我們人手比例多了
隨時看中一個
裁員機制計分
看誰最值得留下
今年開始有裁員機制
疫情都開始就在說
一直都有
這個機制一直都有
看什麼時候需要
可能財政負擔不到
其實都是說年資
或者進修
或者民眾的表現
其實沒有特別說
怎麼評理
可能當你收到一份你才知道有什麼
收到消息的時候
會覺得很奇怪
一方面說人手多了
有一個多了人手的
暫時沒有說炒人這個想法
但就會請一些
我覺得作用性不大的老師在
即是有一個 head count 在
但那個功能很低
他的職責不是入班
也不是寫 portfolio
不用像我們班主任那樣
即是助教
他只是來做一個代課

	如果老師沒有上班就代課
	如果全部老師都上班就進去
	不同課室的協助下
	其實我覺得對我們這間學校來說
	我們需要反而多一個班主任
	我經常覺得他就
	奇奇怪怪
	好像多餘
	既然多餘
	為什麼還要請他
	有這些想法不明白
Q9	因為自己都覺得
	教小朋友
	基本要教什麼呢
	第一時間要有禮貌
	我跟你說話
	你看著我
	然後慢慢教他
	回來要和老師打招呼
	我覺得這些
	都很明顯
	覺得家人沒有教他們
	回來才學會
	你打招呼後
	他終於說話
	他平時不看
	媽媽平時都沒有教
	明明大家都好像
	這樣讀書
	在接受這個教育的地方
	但是現在的父母感覺
	差很遠
	最基本的教育概念

	禮儀的教育
	都沒有灌輸給自己的小朋友
	感覺是比較眾望過要
	所以自己學校就
	最基本的禮貌
	和別人溝通的時候
	平時中國的傳統文化
	都想讓小朋友認識多一點
	我們這裡天主教
	聖誕節
	復活節
	這些其實教很多
	很大型的
	小朋友都很清楚
	但是尤其是
	新年傳統的東西
	就會認識比較少
	因為新年一個主題
	又剛好接近放假
	教的時間很短
	而且很倉促的時候
	所以其實我覺得
	這個學校
	教自己中國傳統文化
	好像下了很多心機去教
	感受不到有什麼傳統文化
	講十二生肖吧
	剛剛讀幼稚園
	也不像現在
	十二個生肖這麼多
	然後中國的傳統習俗有些什麼
	完全講不到
	所以我覺得很薄弱

反而我們講西方節講得好多
初頭幾年
我問學校沒有主任這件事
轉了新校長就有了主任, 副主任
階級觀念就會開始很明顯
見到職級的分別
我們所有的決定
要告訴那些層
通過了
再上去
再繼續講
那些層過了
那你不用再講了
已經給了你意見
也是剛剛月底
校長跟我聊天的時候
我也想你在
接下來的新的班級
可以講一些想法
新的 idea
接著我也老實跟校長說
其實我們也有新的想法
但是有時候新的想法之後
逐層逐層去批
如果當中
有一層說不批的話
意見就不會去到校長那裡
校長說原來是這樣
其實是很正常的
只不過是
我覺得是假裝不知道
會很明顯見到
階級的觀念很重

你有什麼為什麼不告訴我
我要知道
為什麼我不知道
接著就會追責
會問責
可能你自己想方法
老師想方法自己解決
有時候看到這些情況
還有有時候也會看到
行政上的管理
比較不清楚
雖然說這幾年
知道階級上有些分別
比較意識到
但是也另一方面就讓我
看到主任
副主任的職責
把所有工作都交給
副主任做
或者副主任做
可能太多了
然後又把職位分給老師做
因為我從來都沒有
去過一間有主任的學校
這幾年就慢慢感受到
很卸責
我完全感受不到
主任的
那個叫什麼
職責
他的領導能力
校長就很欣賞主任
就會覺得很矛盾

	他沒有做什麼領導工作
	但是校長就會覺得
	雖然也是他做的
	但是明明有其他老師
	其實我在這裡
	就是做幼稚園的學
	我覺得我們老師最基本的
	就是準時這件事
	一直以來大家都很準時的
	每次都準時的
	但是今年走了很多老師
	很多新入職的老師
	就好像打破了一個平衡
	有時候看到他們
	是不是年輕了
	然後那些文件
	教完他們
	做的時候不清楚
	沒有手尾
	其實這些以前都不會
	我回想自己新人的時候
	都不會這樣
	然後就不斷問
	自己不會用腦子去思考
	怎麼做
	怎麼處理
	會有一點辛苦
	好像每一個細節都要教
Q10	雖然要分層級
	分層級
	去傳遞意見
	但是我也有時候
	一些是用在我小朋友身上的

	一些很直接的
	課程我要改
	內容這樣不行
	應該跟很實際的用家
	就是我們課室的班主任
	去接納我們的
	整體意見
	有一個不需要入班
	對你不知情
	消化情況的一個主任
	去作主
	我覺得
	校長可能在這裡
	要多加力量
	跟我們全校的老師
	去親身去談
	接著之後
	還是要原諒
	我們的老師
	讓我們的老師
	實質感受到
	校長有聽我的意見
	還有我的意見
	是真的對我
	工作上
	教書法是有進步
	不會經常都為了做而做
	做這一行
	想保留初心

Interviewee: CT2

Questions No.	Responses
Q1	其實家庭因素我個人覺得
	可能和伴侶和家人之間的關係
	因為始終可能現在有事
	有時在學校工作都未必處理得完
	特別是小朋友的評估
	可能有時回到家都要做一些文件的工作
	或者是一些教具
	當然回到家的時候可能有時要處理家務
	要照顧家人
	有小朋友就要照顧小朋友
	可能當家人和我關係可以體諒到
	我回家工作的時候
	幫忙做家務或者照顧小朋友的時候
	我就可以盡力去處理工作
	我覺得和家人的關係都會影響到
	我在工作上投入的心情和情緒
	從家庭關係中獲得的支持
	暫時都可以的
	我覺得有時在自己的時間和生活上
	都要懂得去處理
	可能有時回到家先做家務
	或者先做工作
	要懂得自己去分配
	我覺得可能有時分配得不夠好
	忽略了事單邊的時候

	都會影響到工作上的表現
	和工作有些拉力
	因為我現在剛生了小朋友
	可能在照顧小朋友上
	我現在可以預見到的會有些拉力
	是第一個女兒
	真的有很多新的職責要做
	所以可能會在這方面
	我自己預想到的
	可能會和工作上拉得比較緊
	我自己預想到的
	家人不會對我有期望多放時間在家不要做公司的事
	工作是要做的
	始終我做這份工作
	我的職責是這些
	她都明白我要做
Q2	其實在工作方面
	一定是和同事的關係
	我經常和朋友說
	工作量多不多
	都是其次
	最重要是人際關係好的話
	就會影響到你對工作的投入度
	和完成的速度
	因為大家如果是合拍的話
	其實不用說什麼
	你說這兩句
	我已經明白你做什麼
	或者我說兩句
	你又不明白我做什麼
	大家可以分工
	分完工再聚在一起

很快可以做完
我覺得有時候是上司的理解
或者是體諒
都很重要的
工作的自主權方面
例如我做一些文件
或者一些想法的時候
要花很多時間去討論
討論完之後
可能有時候原來
校長或者主任有自己的想法
但又不跟我說一聲
我做了一大堆事之後
原來他都有自己的想法的時候
變相我就可能要再注意
做一些想法都會有影響的
所以這個就要在始終做了這麼久之後
就要自己幫助自己的工作
專業發展方面
因為學校方面或者是教區方面都想我們
增加一些工作坊或者在某方面的知識上
因為我們有增長
例如可能有些幕前的設計
可能有些新的教學方法都想我們去學
可能變相我們要再額外抽時間去學習
如果是工作時間的話對於我們來說就 OK

日間有時要額外用到自己的私人時間
比較會影響到
Q3 目前來說
都會有的
擔憂因為
我們自己的學校
現在本身的情況就是
會聘請一些新人
新同事
轉為新的校長
可能現在的情況
很多的活動
工作都會復上
可能平常
在這個方面
可能我們需要
因為我們拼過了比較久的
可能我們要多花一些時間
去處理
去做
多花時間去做
變相可能
在家庭方面
可能會有些影響
甚至影響到我的情緒
是沒辦法的
可能到時的情況
都期望希望有新的同事
有新的校長都不要緊
有新的學員有新的方法
Q4 工作和生活之間
其實主力

	都是工作量
	工作量
	所以在平衡方面
	例如在社交
	或者在其他方面
	自己的時間
	都是要
	犧牲自己的時間
	或者在社交方面
	如果是一件
	比較普遍的事
	例如假日的時候
	才可以和朋友吃飯
	或者聚會
	如果是私人時間
	就可能要犧牲自己的時間
	可能要睡覺
	又或者是
	個人的娛樂
	其實都是要
	犧牲自己的時間
	主要是生了小朋友
	都不要說了
	可能自己的時間都
Q5	其實對於我來說
	我有工作壓力的時候
	我這個人很搞笑
	主要是呻出來
	所以我覺得個人的情緒
	是很影響到工作的態度
	當我有工作壓力的時候
	呻出來就會釋放了很多
	主要傾訴的對象

	我覺得是同事
	或者是朋友
	因為同事會明白
	大家都是同行
	大家都在做一些事情
	他會明白我的感受
	朋友可能有時候聚會的時候
	大家可能不想聊天的時候
	都會聊得到
	家人我就比較少提及到
	因為我覺得在家裡
	在家裡
	都不想用太多
	工作上的情緒影響到
	在處事家人方面的
	那個關係
	我都會想一想
	但我不會說太多
	因為真的
	不會說太多
	可能同事朋友之間就會溝通
	和朋友會多一點交流
	三者之間交流就比較少
	在這方面
	通常如果我和朋友或我和家人就
	會有
	我之前試過
	會約同事一起去
	通常行山, 騎單車
	大自然會比較多
	我們定期都會行山
	因為疫情關係
	而且好像越來越熱

	就沒有去
	通常會是朋友的家人和朋友的家人聚餐會比較多
Q6	因為我暫時想到的
	比較偏向教育政策
	可能支持學位化
	或者是教育
	對於幼師的專業
	越來越高要求的時候
	可能我要不斷進修自己的時候
	就會有時會有爭議
	我都見到
	就是那時候我讀完
	可能退牌先
	出來工作已經會讀學位
	可能過了幾年之後
	再要去
	上去的時候
	可能就要以自己本身
	可能能否處理
	讀不讀到
	都會影響到我繼續
	做這份工作的意義
	可能前一年
	校長都已經問我們
	有沒有繼續進修
	讀一年的碩士
	都已經在問碩士
	我都明白
	可能所有學校
	老師的資歷越高當然越好
	我都明白
	但對於我們來說

	可能就會有影響因素
	學位化的趨勢
	可能是師資質素的問題
	對於學歷上的要求認同性
	對於其他的政策
	可能師生比例方面
	因為現在講的是一比十五
	其實可能隨著近年
	其實可能近年越來越多有 SEN 的小朋友
	可能進了不同的幼稚園
	可能當一班上面有幾個
	有 SEN 需要的小朋友
	其實一對十五壓力很大
	對於老師來說
	如果這樣的要求下
	學校如果要這樣做
	其實一對十五的小朋友
	是會很辛苦
	就會影響到
	繼續做這一行的意願
	其實因為近年
	都鼓勵一比十一的比例
	但在執行上都有困難
	都有鼓勵 但始終沒有規定
	我這樣看可能在
	學校的行政角度
	當然一比十五會比較理想
	所以我們在學校在執行方面
	都是一比十五
	天天一比十五
Q7	我覺得可能是外界人
	對幼稚園老師的看法或者是家長

在那些媒介大眾媒介的途徑
相對於學校的形式
可能影響到
因為現在可能很普及
Facebook 那些
或者一些群組
一些討論區
近年我們老師之間
都有見到家長在一些媒介上面
對我們學校的評價其實都會影響到
或者我們說一些報章一些新聞
報章可能對於幼稚園
可能說幼稚園真是十二小時
或者是十二小時
之前都有幾篇文章都講到
可能老師的辛酸
可能像湊寶寶
什麼都要懂全科
都看過這些我覺得這些報道
可能其他人看了會更加明白
我們的工作內容
可能有時跟別人講的時候都覺得
幼稚園老師很簡單湊小朋友
但可能處於現在的情況下
其實都不只是小朋友當中
很多的課程
學生的找學方法
都不斷地變化
是的還有一些文章 Facebook
或者我覺得家長之間
都會用一些社交平台去討論
例如 WhatsApp 好朋友

可能小小的問題
被家長不斷地傳
一是好事就好了
如果是不好的事
就不斷地發大
都會有影響
影響到一些工作
有時處於這些問題
都很有難度
有些家長可能
他們的要求很高
有時可能我們做到
未達到理想的時候
他們就會比較多意見就會有難度
Q8 特別是瘦身
瘦身是最大的影響
因為現在好像我們學校
有很多
都有小朋友退學
或者回到內地
就不回來
因為可能去那邊發展
因為疫情底下
可能很多人都會影響到生小朋友
所以我們剛剛才開完會
就說其實我們很多幼稚園
都面對著瘦身的問題
所以你都明白
瘦身的問題影響到的
就會直接影響到我們的薪酬
所以都會有影響
期望現在疫情沒有的時候

	我們都期望可以瘦身方面
	做得好一點的時候
	影響力就可以減低
Q9	我覺得可以直接影響到
	反而影響到我個人的看法
	我個人的看法處事的方法
	可能在中國的文化裏所講的都是 仁愛,博愛
	我覺得這方面是影響到我對於人 與人之間的關係的看法
	甚至影響到我選擇
	這個職業的影響
	所以你覺得是有
	其實我覺得是有的
	因為是影響到我
	我喜歡小朋友我才入這一行
	除了小朋友之間的工作基本的就 是要做小朋友
	我覺得是有影響
	因為可能始終以前
	讀書的時候
	儒家思想是甚麼時候都會影響到
	你一想到儒家文化就想到仁愛
	和我們的職業是很有相關性
	可能我們學校有宗教信仰都是講 愛
	無論是中學時期儒家思想
	都是講愛字的時候是好的
	特別是我自己有小朋友的時候
	我小朋友將來入一間幼稚園
	是一個充滿愛的幼稚園讀書
	所以我就會覺得是真的有影響
	所以這個愛和關心關愛的概念

	不單是中國文化還有一些儒家文 化
Q10	我反而之前沒有感覺到
	今年感覺到
	可能是團體裏面的穩定性
	因為我現在已經做了十年
	十年不是一個短的時間很長
	在之前的十年
	我覺得我們的團體很穩定
	大家之間無論是說笑, 情緒, 工作 默契都很好的
	可能近年因為很多因素的改變
	影響了穩定性的時候
	其實我曾經也有覺得
	同事走了很想走就會有這個感覺
	所以我覺得
	之前沒有那麼大的感受
	現在有很大的感受
	團體的穩定性整個士氣真的很重 要
	其他方面的話我覺得都 OK 的
Interviewee: CT3	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	其實這和我自己家本身有關係
	我自己本身沒有小朋友
	我剛剛結婚我自己的家庭狀態都 很輕鬆
	放工回到家

在家的時候我沒有很大的壓力不一定要煮飯
所以這個狀態都很輕鬆
如果問我有什麼家庭因素會影響到工作
有時會有一些突發的事可能父母有事
自己的丈夫家裡有事就要去他那邊幫忙
可能這些位置會令到不能上班
因為這份工作是長時間的工作
老師不會期望你請假這件事會有點論盡
或者可能有時冷氣機壞了但這些一定是辦公時間論盡
這些位就會有點論盡
請假這件事不容易
家庭的關係對我的支持度會影響到
譬如有時這份工作裡面一定會有OT的時間也會在家裡做教案、反思
但你的家裡也會期望你
可能外出或者做家務
有時也會出現這些問題
如果他支持我就當然好
但幸福的是我的家人也支持我
也不是太大問題
因為他知道我本身就是這樣
也是長時間的生活狀況他也知道你會 OT
很多年都是這樣明白

所以家庭的支持伴侶的支持也很重要
所以會考慮生育這個問題
因為是長時間的你放了工
有沒有時間處理你自己的小朋友
也會影響你的生育計劃
Q2 你的拍檔會影響你一年裡
小朋友的能力
也會影響你
一年裡的狀況
家長也是很重要的因素
上司也是也有去過很黑暗的公司
也有去過感覺很合得來的上司
也有試過也是有分別
公司文化也是同事大家追求的東西也有關係
自己對小朋友的要求
你會期望他們會做到
你想做的
這個年齡層應該要做到的事情
但是也要
很看你那一年
那班家長合作
這種對小朋友的要求
也會影響今年會不會很幸福
因為我覺得做老師
有很多東西很想去嘗試
如果小朋友做到就會很開心
同樣的小朋友沒做到, 要諗好多方法令佢做得到
也是會影響那一年
因為我今年的拍檔走了中途離開
所以會換一個拍檔又要去教一個

他也要融入公司文化
其實所有東西運作中
家長不會因為你轉拍檔而要求少 啲
家長只會期望一間學校給最好的 東西給小朋友
這個角度也是合理的
但就會變相會有一些壓力
可能拍檔還在熟習小朋友的時候, 你也要給你拍檔空間
這些位置會令到一些論盡
幸運的就是拍檔也可以的很快就可 以適應到
今年我們學校也有 QR, 也有其他 學校計劃
例如你剛才說的其他角色
可能是計劃裡面的種子老師你也 有成為種子老師
我負責快樂小蜜蜂
你要去做一些集隊是怎樣時間是 怎樣
這些活動
或者你要跟其他老師做一個協調 的角色
是會有影響的
當然最好就只是勉勵小朋友
但也是有優化課程發展的過程, 當然
是會令小朋友向好的方向發展
但同樣地你要準備, 工作量也會 影響到
我絕對明白你覺得在工作的

資源和支持方面, 在這間學校是 好的
例如你会有很多想法的時候
你的上師是很接納的
因為這間學校是會願意付出資源 給小朋友
只要那件事是幫到小朋友的他就 會願意
所以我一開始就說
我很多東西想給小朋友做
這間學校也可以支持
例如我想買幾本書那幾本書真的 很棒小朋友會有很多感官刺激
即使比錢也會買
又聽你的聲音
對!狀態也挺很開心
證明了努力也有人認同
好像去年我教 K3, 去年畢業禮
每一年畢業禮也是不同
你要帶小朋友去表演一個理想去 表演的項目
出來的效果很好
因為有很多人會幫你
你這樣做準備很貴
所以這間學校做得很好, 團隊合 作是很理想
在行內我知道很多不是這樣
當然只說你自己 OK
另外就是工作的自主權
其實我覺得是和年資有關
也和你一開始說的
那間公司認不認同有關係

年資的意思是這間學校做多久也有關係
就算你在這裡做很久
你本身也沒有什麼關係
是有關係的
因為你本身有年資
處理小朋友這件事
是你上手的有經驗的
你才會接到其他東西
既然你接到那麼多
人家認同你才接
所以我覺得
在這間學校
自主權也是高的
你想做的事情
也是很好的
明白 非常好
對於專業發展的要求
你覺得在這方面
學校有沒有給一些
支持或者要求
希望你們繼續升級
自己的學歷
各方面的專業領域
是不是一定是讀書的
因為我本身是碩士才進來這裡
叫讀的也七七八八
因為我本身是碩士他們不會期望我讀到博士
因為很多的坊間也有不少碩士
比如校長課程
中生領導
你是主任當然要讀校長

但我也是一個老師
所以他也不會很硬
叫你最好就行
反而他會很
讓你去進修
因為其實我覺得很多
導師很關心的
就是讀一個什麼學位
這個階段我已經過了
我不會覺得很
你想讀的都是些
很短暫的
你喜歡讀的
或者你有興趣讀的
所以也不會很慘
一個星期三天
還要不知道怎樣吃飯
一個學年要有多少個 PD hours
當然他也會有期望可能是四個小時
因為他每一年也會跟我們傾
你想今年讀什麼, 讀四個小時以上
他本身也會安排你
星期六去讀什麼, 用工作時間去讀
因為我們學校本身也有
三十個小時進修時數
來外面他要 approve 的課程
他不會理你
所以又可以補反時數
所以這方面也很支持
也給你很輕鬆不是太大壓力

	很幸運因為讀完絕對可以向興趣出發
Q3	生育的問題很重要, 健康也很重要
	因為我現在的工作星期一至六都要上班
	放假只有星期日, 或者補假
	我覺得身體需要休息
	這個位置是有些論盡
	因為你沒有休息時間, 身體其實慢慢就會出現問題
	所以希望可以自己休息 Me time
	不想黏在一起, 黏在一起反而沒得休息
	如果你問我, 我反而比較關心健康
	我們的生活除了家庭
	工作還有其他東西就是自己或者社交
	這個專注在其他自己的健康意願
Q4	好像放假長假期才放也要你的伴侶配合
	所以就會變成機票貴一點
	第一個擔憂身體是很重要
	因為長時間工作, 即使回到家也要繼續工作也是合理的
	也是需要做的工作
	所以可能你會長期接觸工作
	還有你會照顧小朋友, 要抱, 要彎腰

	還有喉嚨, 有時你長期說話也會論盡
	可以約會朋友
	因為老師加班, 朋友不斷遷就你
	因為真的關年資事
	一開始可能你沒掌握到很緊張
	但到現在一定年資的時候
	你會看到我比較自己的比較在生活上也可以平衡很正面
Q5	因為我學校參加了到校支援服務計劃
	有一些導師我本身也是一個比較喜歡聊天的人
	我偶爾也會說
	我的班裡有些小朋友也有這樣的狀況怎樣可以幫他們
	因為他們真的專業
	他們就會有一些即使不是他們計劃裡的
	他們也會說一些方法
	可能是因為這樣或者在學校裡也有社工
	社工也是針對一些小朋友的狀況也會說他們懂得一些這樣的方法
	試一下我覺得對我來說老師這個工作最大的困難就是
	怎樣令小朋友有提升, 最重要是不要說困難
	我覺得這些人是會幫得到真的有意義
	多方面的專業人士
	特別是社工或者到校支援的不同的專家

	同事也會他們也會一起開會
	沒有那麼多隔壁的同事
	甚至同事也會因為每個同事的專長也不同, 有些人很厲害可能是某些教學其實你問他們意見的時候
	他們會告訴你他們覺得這樣做是好的
	你聽了很多意見然後你會選擇一個我覺得怎樣走是最好的
	你就會覺得有不同了工作也做得更加專業
Q6	我很擔心他們現在說將會虐兒舉報你
	如果你虐兒你就會刑事責任
	這個是擔心的, 因為虐兒政策也是令人擔心的
	我覺得那個界限很不明確
	當然不是說我去虐兒
	其實有很多家長他那種管教方式或者你怎樣界定
	他是虐兒, 你有沒有投訴他
	因為其實幼兒的定義很闊
	不是說你打不打他
	可能是說你批評他, 逼著他可能只係一天兩天
	其實在家庭上這件事也不是完全不會發生的事
	可能很多人很幸福的家庭也會有一兩次
	你又會不會去舉報他, 你如何去舉報他

	這些是會令人擔心的,
	你也會有時候
	看到很多新聞
	不小心批評他就要坐牢
	當然我不會知道這件事是怎樣,
	但你會看到一些報章他的報道
	可能有幼兒工作員推倒又或者可能會看到幼兒工作員把書包扔在地上立即停職
	很多這些報道被人放大
	因為我不會知道究竟他怎樣扔書包也不會知道他有多大
	看這些報道就會坐牢這是會有些擔心的
	還有薪酬表也是另一個很關心的因為落實了很久也未落實
	幸好現在有一個範圍
	但對有年資的老師
	你敢不敢跳到另一間因為海鮮價範圍很大
	其實範圍不是影響一間學校的營運
	不是那個人想不想給你, 也不是你的實力去到哪裡
	而是那間公司營運不到, 怎樣也請不到你
	所以我覺得這個也是令人憂慮的
	也會令我考慮會不會去其他院
	還有現在開始推動國家安全
	我同意需要推動很小的時候就開始知道國家安全
	但我們本身的師資培訓沒有教過
	傳統的師資培訓以往沒有

	新的就正在增加
	很多人都會說沒有一個有系統的
	可能你教中文其實你會有一個系統你會知道怎樣教
	到國家安全究竟要做多少才夠, 要做到怎樣的程度?
	這個我覺得好像還在摸索中
	可能有時候準備升國旗
	有時候是小朋友升, 有時候老師可以準備升
	這個是令到我們在摸索中
	開始走自由遊戲都不是政策
	其實自由遊戲都有影響到政策
	因為在我們的課程指引裏面已經有
	有些鼓勵的這些部份的東西
	國民教育都有個語言問題
	算不算第二語言呢?
	因為你的語言是廣東話, 廣東話是另一回事
	英文也是當第二語言, 但英文也是官方語言
	你教的時候應該說廣東話還是廣東話呢?
	很多這些因為都是那個問題
	其實你還沒有一個很清晰的語言
	大家一起努力吧
	大家很怕做錯最怕做錯
	你有清晰的指引, 大家都會願意跟的
Q7	出生率低我也有擔心
	因為出生率低會影響你的前景

	大家對教育的看法
	可能會覺得當然是去外國讀書
	或者當然是去一些全英文的學校
	或者去追捧某一些學校
	或者某一些國際學校
	這亦會影響到究竟你現在在做的事情是否正確呢?
	例如我們現在學校跟教育局鼓勵開心學習
	但是家長或者大家的取向
	當然是越難越好越多越好究竟你是否正在做大家正在做的事情
	還是你正在做應該要做的事情
	這件事你也會擔心
	你說要教很難其實不是不行
	是可以的, 但問題係是不是小朋友最想要的
	我覺得這會令到你有些時候會覺得是否應該這樣做
	例如說一個很簡單的例子就是小一銜接
	很多很多年前係有默書的
	不停改名記憶遊戲
	現在很明顯在這五六七年已經全面禁止了
	記憶遊戲其實還存在
	但到了小學的時候你也會遇到一個問題
	小朋友真的不懂得默書是無法銜接
	家長就會有很多聲音當然是越早越好

	這些會令到大眾對學校或老師對學校的期望會影響你
Q8	社會經濟環境例如疫情改變了你的教育模式, 也不能不改變
	移民潮也會影響你, 本身也不擔心會收生的問題現在你會開始擔心
	我自己也不太擔心
	每一間幼稚園也會說
	但其實你的餅也一定在
	差在真正的餅有幾多
	會令到你到底是不是這樣做
	例如社會之前停課 Zoom
	但你又不能不 Zoom 大家都在 Zoom 你也要學
	因為你本身不會學 Zoom 學怎樣剪片你又要學
	學怎樣可以在沒有對到小朋友的情況下和家長溝通也是一個技能
	你和家長分享她孩子的反應
	但你沒理由因為這個很不穩定的因素會影響
	你自己也不會知道何時復課
	家長問你什麼時候可以復課
	這是一個問題也會因為這個很多家長會去教育局問
	因為我們是幼兒學校會問你留不留在這裡吃飯
	家長會問交多少錢學費也會直接打電話去教育局問
	也會影響你
Q9	儒家思想譬如說孝道

儒家是愛人出發
無論是孔子也好以禮待人
關乎君君父父子子臣臣
你喜歡尊重其實你這些價值觀
其實你自己本身也是這些價值觀
同樣地你覺得這個價值觀是對的
也會輸給你的小朋友
譬如你對你的父母不是平等而是孝道
你是要愛你的父母
你無法分割你不能分辨
或者你要守禮守規
宗教也是因為我們學校
主軸是宗教基督教
所以可能基督教的一些思想
也會跟小朋友說祈禱的一些習慣
教他們祈禱或者教所有東西都是天父來的
這些概念也會有至於你說西方的文化
餐具餐飲也會影響你這些東西也會是你很希望在
幼兒教育工作者的角色裏放在課程或者教學裏
我覺得這些文化也是在幫小朋友適應社會
既然是一個正面的價值觀
至少小朋友也可以繼續去學, 我覺得不同的文化也有一些正面
我們覺得有價值的地方, 我們就繼續傳承下去

Q10	我覺得五天工作, 可以工作時間短一點
	然後薪酬表是需要的
	因為我覺得我們好像幼兒工作人員 幼稚園老師
	其實我們的學位已經很高, 其實 從小學和中學已經看齊了
	為什麼小學和中學是會有薪酬表, 但是幼稚園沒有呢
	但其實大家都是一個教育工作者, 那怎麼會有這個差別呢
	如果你問我, 我也是假期和時間, 如果有五天工作
	多啲同事幫手, 人是不會嫌少的
	可能也會受到師生比例限制或者 學生的資助額呢
	因為 NCS 有額外的資助額
	但如果沒有 NCS 就只能靠 Headcount 計算
	如果要說師生比例如果可以越降 低當然越好
	因為小朋友有很多想法
	尤其是六歲以前
	如果你越少師生比例
	真的要跟著他們的想法
	去做他們想知道的事
	或是他們想做的事
	這樣一定會好過
	如果師生比例可以改善的話
	也會提升到你的幸福感
	當然多些人 多些同事小朋友也會 開心你的工作也會開心

Interviewee: CT4	
Questions No.	Responses
Q1	我覺得如果家庭因素 就我自己
	其實我覺得家人的支持是很重要的
	就是他們是否支持我做這份工作
	譬如有時候
	我真的在工作上
	有時候可能很簡單
	就這樣要加班
	家人也會覺得也可以
	有時候對教育界
	譬如我先生他會覺得
	外面的加班可能是有時數的有錢的
	但是他知道我們是教育界沒有那麼多
	但是跟他們說
	其實有時候加班
	有時候真的有些事情做不完
	或者可能學校有活動要去做
	但是他們也會體諒的
	他們不會覺得
	你要花多一點時間在工作上
	可能你遲一點回家
	或者各方面的事情
	又沒有花額外的工資給你

但是他們也會覺得這樣也是可以的
他們是支持這件事的
當然了, 不多不少有時候他們也會關心的
次數上有時候會不會太多
但是很幸運的是
在這間學校的加班時間
其實我的資質相對外面
就不是多很多, 不會太多
或者時間會太長
所以我覺得家人的支持
認不認同我正在做的工作花的時間
可能有時候是
譬如看到我回到家
我也可能要打教案
或者有時候也要處理一些學校文件上的事情
但是他們也願意支持
或者有時候他們會陪著我一起去
做
就會覺得
也不會降低了我的幸福感
所以我覺得家人的支持是很重要的
另外就是看看會不會跟家裡生活的節奏
跟我的工作的節奏
到底是不是可以平衡
目前來說在這間學校
我已經覺得可以的
我也依然會有一個時間

可以陪我的家人
譬如也會有假期, 如家裡有時候有事
也可以讓我請假
我會處理家裡上的事情
這個也會影響到
可能我比較幸運的
就是在我自己家裡的角色上
可能我要分擔的工作未必是這麼多
我會有家人可以幫我
所以我就可以專注一點在我的工作上
所以我會比較輕鬆
當然有時候, 譬如在我的角色上
譬如我家裡有小朋友
無可避免有時候真的在
可能我有小朋友的一些家長活動
我未必真的可以有很多時間去參與
如果我在這裡請了假
變相在這裡少了一件事
所以這個有時候會有一點顧慮
有時候我就會想
其實可能我在外面找其他的工作
就是其他的行業
我可能比較容易
在這些時間可以請假
但始終做老師
我覺得每個老師都有責任
如果我很容易
我在這裡請了假
我去陪我的小朋友

	但不可以經常都是這樣
	剛才有說過
	這裡是可以請假的
	但你不可以經常都是這樣
	所以有時候
	我會看媽媽在學校來說
	譬如我有時候都會請家長來做義工
	我就會想在我的角色上
	如果我兒子的學校
	他邀請我做義工
	我會不會這麼容易就能夠答應呢?
	坦白說真的不行
	我有同個仔講
	媽媽來不了你學校說故事
	真的可以很投入地去陪兒子的時間上的確是少
	但你問我會不會讓我覺得很拉鋸
	或者我有時候會有一些
	閃過一點點的念頭
	但是你問我是不是真的
	讓我很擔心, 我沒有
	整體來說都是平衡到
	在家裡小朋友或者身邊的親人都會很支持我
Q2	我覺得是第一我覺得是整個同事的氛圍
	就是工作環境是
	大家是不是都很投入去做這件事
	最簡單的
	譬如一個開放日
	是不是大家都投入去做

	就是大家一致有一個共同的目標去做
	我很喜歡這個感覺
	就是大家都朝著同一個目標去進發
	所以我覺得同事之間的氛圍
	是不是一起互相合作
	對我來說這是第一個我覺得很重要
	在職場上第二就是老闆, 校長, 主任
	他到底是不是都很支持我們
	或者是不是很信任我們這個團隊
	正在做的一個工作
	目前嚟講學校是
	由我們同事之間到上面的人員, 以至於姐姐
	整體我們都是真的很共同去做這件事
	就是我不覺得
	我不是只有我自己一個人去做付出的
	這個都會很有影響
	團隊的合作性是很高的
	因為我除了班主任的角色
	可能也有很多不同的角色, 不同的需求
	也會有影響工作幸福感
	譬如除了一個老師的角色之外
	有時候在我的角色
	我會想我和小朋友之間的關係
	或者我和家長之間的關係也會影響

譬如小朋友到底喜不喜歡我這個老師
家長到底信不信任我這個角色的工作正在做的事
至目前來說這麼多年都還可以
家長對於我的信任度很高
我們有時候很多子女畢業之後
大家還會像朋友一樣我們會聯絡的
我和家長之間的關係多了一個層面
再其他譬如各方面
我覺得 so far 來說在關係上是做得很好, 所以也 OK
如果自主度方面
在這個學校來說
我覺得這裡的彈性是很大的
它可以讓我去發揮的地方是很多的
譬如很簡單, 有時候可能
譬如教案或者課程大綱的東西
其實很早就已經編好作品了
但是有時候有一些新的想法
可能你上網會看到
或者有時候可能
你可能看書會看到
有些東西啟發了你
你想改變這個活動
我知道外面坊間可能
之前有一個備課會
備課會完之後
大家共同就會聊好了
會是這樣的

大家大致都會朝著這個方向去做
但是我們學校就比較多的彈性
這一方面譬如你覺得
這樣好像比較好
我們可以即時去做一個調配
當然不會說這一秒想到下一秒就做
我覺得是其實可以早一點
可能早一兩天
大家發現這樣會比較好
我們也可以做一個彈性
這個彈性是我和我拍檔
就是我同一級的老師
裡面可以再調配
有時候可能一些資源的運用上
譬如很簡單
有一些教材我們沒有, 需要去買
主任和校長說
他們都合理地願意去幫忙, 會出錢去買
而且效率也挺高的
有些新的建議都可以馬上採納
對於專業提升的要求
因為其實我現在也正在進修
在 BU 那裡也繼續進修
我覺得這個進修
現在這個行業係必須
學校有提供很多資源給我去做
譬如很簡單我要實習
譬如我會有 professor 會來看
去跟校長說的時候
他也很願意去幫我
因為始終我們是一個機構

	所以有時候未必只是校長批准就可以
	他也會幫我譬如跟 HR 溝通
	各方面會做溝通會做聯絡
	會幫我去安排整件事
	然後譬如主任或者校長
	他們會針對譬如說要寫文件給別人看
	真的很誠實
	他們會再在我的教學上幫我去做一個調節
	還有他會知道可能有一段時間我會很忙碌
	因為除了我的教學上還會有我的學習上
	他會嘗試會跟我說
	可能你要預早一點去做, 會幫我管理一下
	看看會不會有些可以盡量幫我減輕一點
	令我的壓力可以減輕一點
	這個也是令我覺得非常支持
	可能 24 小時就是 24 小時
	但是譬如工作再加上學習進修那方面
	為什麼分配上的壓力沒那麼大呢?
	校長這方面是可以幫到我的
Q3	工作和家庭之間的平衡
	都會有一點憂慮
	譬如剛才我有說過
	可能始終都要帶一些東西返屋企去做

	有些時間是會特別忙碌一點
	譬如剛才有說過 Placement 撞正我帶主題
	有些時間可能真的
	兩三個星期都是很忙不斷地工作
	或者好像現在學期尾有些事情要完成要做
	都會開始覺得
	好像分配在家裡的時間不是很趕
	但是這個是很斷斷續續的不是長時間
	一整年都會維持著這個狀況
	覺得有時候有點壓力
	開始覺得有點擔憂
	覺得安配做得不好
	不是整天都是有間歇性地就會出現
	即是有些 peak seasons
	就會有這樣的情況
	因為其實很坦白說
	我自問是一個很忙碌的人
	我剛才說我是進修
	我是有家庭工作, 我有教學
	但是我同一時間還有很多東西我在學習
	例如我最近在學陶瓷
	然後我還有我本身打球我又要練習
	其實我本身就是一個很忙碌的人
	但是我覺得未必是關於我的工作
	我覺得工作是我生活的一部分
	可能我一天 24 小時
	我就預留了八九個小時去做

之後我怎麼去做分配
其實是我自己的,所以我覺得
這個就是我自己的時間管理的一個能力
就不關於會不會工作會影響到我的平衡
我覺得不是太過關心
主要是時間分配
是你自己時間分配的能力
你怎麼可以在一星期有限的時間
做你想做的事情
怎麼去做分配
絕對是影響力
我經常都說這就是個人效率的問題
但如果你問我
我放棄了一些小部分睡覺的時間去做
去滿足我每一樣
我都想做的
可能我比較貪心
因為我想我可以
你的過程是滿足
就犧牲了睡覺的時間
我犧牲睡覺的時間
一天大概平均睡多少個小時
我都睡了六個小時
可能剩下一些時間有時候就會
例如交通我也覺得人生花很多時間
那我會用錢去買我的時間去坐計程車

	盡量可以滿足我每一樣想做的目標
Q4	我的同事已經是一個很好的分享
	我很少將我工作的壓力
	或者一些我覺得解決不了的事情帶回家
	因為我覺得工作上的事情留在職場上解決
	所以我會跟同事分享
	因為我也覺得這是最有共鳴的一個人
	同事是我覺得我身邊的同事是值得信任的
	所以我會跟同事分享
	他們也會分享到很有效的解決方法給我
	剛才我也說過我有做運動
	這個已經是最快捷
	只要我在球場跑一小時
	就已經解決了我的問題
	所以這些都是一個很好的解壓
	還有所有事情達到我的目標
	對於我來說就是滿足感
	我做得完就很開心
	所以這個就會解決我的壓力
	會的 他們會有的
Q5	同事跟我們的朋友之間
	同事跟我們的家人
	或者朋友跟我的家人
	他們全部都有連繫的
	所以我有做運動
	我會找我的朋友去傾訴
	其實我覺得這件事是很個人的

	如果你是一個人
	你願意很隨意地跟其他人分享
	你就可以將你的壓力慢慢地瀉落 去比其他人
	所以也 OK
	不同的朋友或者家人中間的連繫
	他們都很好, 都帶來一些積極的 東西
Q6	先講教育
	我覺得其實香港的幼兒教育制度 就是幼兒教育的政策
	對於現在我們這個行業的支持
	其實不是很足夠
	變相有時候
	就好像我們這個學校
	我們是一間長全日的學校
	我經常都覺得
	那個支援上不夠多
	最簡單就是那些學費的問題
	半日制的學校
	大部分如果他有資助的他都不用 錢
	但可能全日制的學校
	他無法覆蓋我們學校要的資助
	所以就變相我們學校要加學費
	作為我是一個 N 班的老師
	我就會有壓力
	就是那個收生的壓力
	我作為一個家長
	很坦白講
	一個學校不用錢同一個學校
	我要可能給一千元的學費
	在一個屋邨的學校來說

	其實就會是如果我是一個家長
	想省一點錢的
	我一定會去選幼稚園
	所以就會令到
	作為我一個 N 班的老師
	我可能教完一年的小朋友
	他們很多都會走了
	其實是很捨棄
	我看不到他繼續成長
	或者我可能由一個不停哭
	到他現在很開心的上學
	但這個很開心的上學的小朋友
	他下年一九月不會再回來
	他不會去另一個學校
	所以其實是會有一定唔開心
	也不是很大壓力
	但是始終會令到
	會有一些不開心
	會有一些失落
	是會有一些失落感
	還有很多的支持
	很多時候都是去了
	一些半日的幼稚園
	最簡單來說就是算人頭
	因為每一個資助都是算人頭
	如果那間學校他有上下午班
	基本上他可以收到
	一個上午一個下午
	他就有兩個人頭的資助
	但是一間全日的學校
	他只有一個半的資助
	但其實那個小朋友
	那邊收生的錢其實也是少了

整體來說我就會覺得
是很不足夠的
另外就譬如說薪金
譬如中小學是可以
每年都可以跳
我帶出去轉一間新的學校
我帶著我的年資去走
但是在幼稚園所有的老師
就算譬如我當我有十年年資
我走了, 我這十年年資就是沒有的
令到很多老師都沒有一個
覺得可以發揮的空間
其實我累積我的經驗
我一定要留在這間院
跳出去再去忙其他的學校
不然我就要放下很多的錢
所以這個方面我覺得其實
在老師的支援
或者整體在學校的支援
其實都真的要再多很多
另外譬如你說
不關學校的事
整體一個社會
譬如出生率最簡單
我們是最首當其衝
如果出生率保持住
因為今年好像是三萬多
可能對比起出生率已經下降了
很多學校會殺校那方面
很多好的老師
其實可能都會將會
可能他的工作

他的職位可能是沒有了
這些其實都會
你問我我的壓力不是很大
但是不多不少都會有擔憂在
如果你問開交的話
另外譬如還有整個政策, 政治的 氛圍
有時候有些事情你不知道怎樣去 教
過了社運之後
有時候你會覺得你會很擔心
你不知道會得罪哪一方面的人
最簡單我就這樣教警察
其實對於我來說
這是一個很中立的角色
他是一個職位
但是你不知道你會說了哪一番話
可能你會令到
隨便一方面
有政治立場的人
會帶給你有壓力
這些在整個社會氛圍
是令到你整個教學
是會有一定的壓力
也有很多
還有現在的虐兒事件其實也是
你要小心你的行為, 你的動作
你不知道你做當下各方面的事情
你是一心想為小朋友好
但你不知道你其他人
到底怎樣看你的教學
怎樣看你的言行
這些很無形的壓力

	是會令到你開始
	會多了顧慮
	未必是一個很大的壓力
	但是會有很多顧慮
Q7	大眾傳媒對於我的幸福感沒有很大的影響
	因為我估計我還未面對到這個問題
	但是可能有一些老師
	或者我聽說
	有一些老師或者有一些學校
	可能會承受著這些壓力
	又或者像我剛才所說
	你不知道什麼時候會到你
	你也不知道
	可能因為我們課室有窗
	你不知道可能有一天你正在做的事情
	突然有人影低咗
	這些全部都是我未遇到
	但是如果你問我
	我會突然之間
	可能會有這樣的機會會有壓力
Q8	我覺得最重要的社會風氣影響我
	就是移民影響我
	就是我身邊的人陸陸續續都走
	譬如我家裏的人有很多人都走了
	移民了
	朋友也有很多人移民了
	那種分離的感覺是不好受的
	其實我的學生也有遇過
	他們要移民
	突然之間讀讀吓就話他們要走

	是有點失落的
	而且也會令我
	開始覺得人人都走了
	其實也會令我考慮
	我也有考慮過
	會不會也跟隨著這個腳步
	是有這樣的考慮
	不多不少會你聽了
	又有人移民你要送機了
	多不少是有一點失落
Q9	中國的傳統文化
	不多不少也會有
	但是你問我
	佔我自己不是很多
	因為我不是一個土生土長
	我的文化因為我媽媽不是香港人
	但是對我來說
	這些觀念好像啟發了
	因為有一些
	是我平時家裡沒有的傳統習慣
	可能在學校我要教的
	反而令我會覺得
	我會好奇我會想試
	我就會去找一些資料
	最簡單可能一些
	新年的習俗
	其實很多我都沒有
	我不懂的就會去研究去學一下
	然後再教我的小朋友
	還有一些價值觀
	我覺得
	譬如孝道或者一些
	告訴小朋友譬如在中國文化裡面

	一些團結的主義
	這些我都想小朋友去認識
	所以我也會教他們
Q10	有什麼地方需要改善
	我覺得可能改變
	可能是我心態自己要調節
	我覺得因為
	幸福我經常都會覺得
	一些問題可能是我自己調適到
	我就可以再提高一點
	如果你問我
	其實家裡或者朋友之間
	整體工作的氛圍
	其實我也滿意
	但是可能有些地方
	可能會令我有不少的失落
	譬如我看到一個政治的氛圍
	或者一個社會的氛圍
	會是這樣
	但是這件事情
	其實我很難去改變
	可能是我自己內在
	我自己要去做一個調適
	當然社會的事情, 可能自己改變不了
	但是你覺得
	如果它改變了
	又會更加好
	如果真的
	政府在幼兒教育界的支持
	如果它是多一點
	或者可能很簡單來說

	學校不需要再太大去為它瘦身(裁員)
	也不可以說完全沒有瘦身(裁員)
	但是在一個可能這麼低出生率的情況下
	如果教育局可以做到一些措施
	可以穩定到每一間學校的資源或者它的運作
	其實這件事已經很大大可以幫到
	整個幼兒教育界
	其實就已經可以直接幫到老師
	所以這個我會覺得
	其中一個我會覺得可以幫到忙
Interviewee: CT5	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	例如兒子那段時間有很多工作
	或者臨近考試七月
	要兼顧他
	兼顧公司
	可能突然間,好像剛剛
	有很多工作和活動
	又要應付那些
	又要應付兒子
	於是就會覺得很辛苦
	壓力很大
	又要應付他
	沒有時間去休息
	可能要做公司的工作
	又要做溫書

	一天要做四個溫書
	又來不及做學校的工作
	變成一個人有壓力
	睡眠質素會很差
	睡眠質素和時數都會有影響
	情緒也會差一點
	不會像平時那麼開心
	兒子方面的學業會影響到我的幸福感
	有一點
	如果真的放假
	都盡量和仔仔出去玩
	仔仔想去哪裡玩就去
	想去吃東西就去
	看電影就看電影
	仔仔都會喜歡這些
	但平時趕著工作的時候
	或者和仔仔去
	晚上回家就工作
	都會找時間
Q2	同事之間的相處
	互相協調
	大家談得來
	或者合得來
	當然開心
	有時候可能有些是面左左
	很計較
	這些是你的
	你不要想著我會幫你做
	這樣就會影響到自己的情緒
	心情
	你覺得大家都是同一班小朋友
	應該是大家一起協作

	你沒有分得那麼清楚
	這樣都會有影響
	因為不是停課
	但之前的活動都堆在學校
	我們都停了一點
	突然間
	那一堆
	排山倒海
	如果是往事
	如果沒有停課
	其實會攤分咁多個月
	就會好一點
	即是不需要受到停課的壓力
	影響的情況下
	工作量都可以接受
Q3 & 4	我喜歡去逛街買東西去減壓
	不買自己就買兒子的東西
	消費
	因為我們工作有錢
	有錢就可以
	買東西
	都有累的日子
	我都有累的
	日子會累
	兒子放假
	中學多啲假
	他放假
	但我又不能陪他
	我都可以
	偶爾放假
	其實是很好的
	我會盡量滿足他
	他想去吃什麼

	我會和他去吃
	我努力去上班
	就是為了賺錢
	滿足自己的喜好
	見到小朋友開心
	自己也會開心
	他開心我就開心
	他不開心我就慘
	有個原動力去上班
	我覺得是不錯的
	抽到一些時間
	可以有私人的社交
	和家人一起放鬆的時間
Q5	家人
	同事都有的
	有時是呻吓
	安慰你
	朋友都會
	安慰你
	就算不是面對面聊天
	可能會給你一些鼓勵
	幫你
	總之
	會感到被安慰
	即是 WhatsApp 的溝通
	或者面對面的溝通
	都可以得到家人和同事的支持
Q6	教學 幼稚園要愉快學習
	不要寫那麼多字
	升了小一的家長
	就很慘
	又少銜接
	他們又不懂默書

	又不懂寫
	你幼稚園不可以寫那麼多字
	他們一大堆功課
	小朋友一升上去
	其實都很辛苦
	搞到寫得深又不行
	寫得淺了寫得很舒服
	有些小朋友
	上了小學
	其實他們很辛苦
	幼稚園和小學課程銜接
	上了高班
	其實是否可以調深一點
	不如嘗試寫默書
	因為上小學都要寫默書
	一開課就寫默書
	我覺得小朋友很慘
	我想編又不可以編
	課程真的很悶
	看完都不知道要看甚麼
	都簡單一點
	填寫顏色
	深度就多功課
	小學課程
	真的有很多
	新的元素在裏面
	幼稚園也有些開始很深
	所以小學有
	但教不給我們
	我們在其他深科試試
	開始作客
	但填寫了但不給我們
	但一想到小學已經是這樣

Q7	外面的人
	我經常覺得
	教幼稚園是跟小朋友玩
	不是教他們
	有多辛苦
	其實沒有報道到
	其實幼兒教育工作者
	其實都很辛苦
	外面很多朋友
	你跟小朋友玩有多開心
	很多事情
	小朋友放暑假
	你又很長
	我只有十多天的暑假
	其實大眾傳媒
	很少報道關於幼兒教育工作者的事情
	最多是虐兒
	最近有很多這些
Q8	少了學生
	學生少了
	會影響
	收入
	還有師生比例
	以前
	多些老師一起
	少學生
	會減少老師
	活動的資源有很多
	分擔少了老師
	三個活動
	變成四個或五個活動
Q9	都是尊師重道這方面的影響

	起碼小朋友
	要尊重別人
	都會教他們
	一定要疼愛爸爸媽媽
	因為小朋友都會欺負爸爸媽媽
	現在的小朋友
	都會跟他們聊天
	教他們
	要疼愛爸爸媽媽
	他們很辛苦照顧你
	等從小時候開始
	將來就像現在
	新聞報導
	打爸爸媽媽
	可以很嚴重
	我們都是佛教學校
	其實都是叫人
	對人好
	對傷害人
	其實我們都會有
	這一類的東西
	我們都有一些大德法院
	教小朋友品德
Q10	小朋友的生活經驗不足
	只有我自己說
	他們有時不明白
	因為他們沒有生活經驗
	沒有任何回應
	我覺得是否編錯了東西
	是否我教得唔好
	是否有些東西不夠
	是否編錯了東西
	小朋友學習的共鳴

他們基本上是圍繞街市	
有時上課	
講吓香港啲野食	
他們都認識不多	
上課	
有時我說	
他們聽完未必明白	
他們沒有互動	
有時有些小朋友	
多互動	
自己越來越興奮	
可以延展更多話題	
但他們沒反應的時候	
自己都有點氣餒	
希望小朋友的生活經驗提升	
Interviewee: CT6	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	我覺得我的家庭因素就是小朋友的學業
	因為我自己上班的話, 小朋友的學業就要靠家人
	小朋友小學三年級升四年級都很緊張
	要報分的開始, 所以他的因素就比較影響我自己
	家人都很支持, 很多都可以幫我忙

他們對我的要求都沒有太多, 因為我通常下班都是回去又是陪著小朋友
有時間也會跟他一起出去, 已經可以相處很多時間, 就是也很平衡
Q2 理解和包容, 就是人與人之間的理解和包容
有時候不小心或者有什麼錯誤, 我都希望彼此之間會理解到, 還有給你機會
就是在同事之間, 你覺得這方面是正面的
工作量的影響稍微少一點, 也不是很重的, 有一點點影響, 輕微降低幸福感
工作上的支持和資源方面的配合, 我覺得大家都很支持, 是正面的
自主度 OK, 也是正面的
專業發展, 進修等等, 我們也有一起做
Q3 都是小朋友, 小朋友身體不舒服也想抽身去照顧
但是有時候未必做得到, 可能很難請假, 你又不可以放下班學生
這方面是有一些隱憂的
Q4 最主要是平日的工時很長, 就是晚上很晚下班, 下班之後
你又累了, 時間又晚了, 你就做不到你想做的事情
Q5 先生, 最主要是家人給你積極的支持

	有什麼你跟家人說, 他們都會支持的, 都會正面的
	同事之間也有的, 平時同事之間聊天
	其實跟他們一起相處融洽的話, 融洽的話我覺得對於工作來說也是很正面的影響
Q6	我之前那段時間經常出現那些虐兒的新聞
	你就覺得會不會其他社會裡面的人看到那些新聞, 會將整個業界的人都視為差不多
Q7	就是這些新聞可能有一點影響, 這些就是跟大眾傳媒有關的一些情況
	但是譬如在虐兒的這些報導, 有時候負面的新聞比較多
	也有見過很多正面的, 好像之前有說過什麼幼稚園會開展一些什麼新的活動
	小朋友也喜歡這一項活動, 小學的類型也有見過
	小學也會有不同地方的交流...或者是現在疫情後開放一些
	好像是海外或者是國內的交流等等, 好像可以開展小朋友和學校知識上或者是社區上他們的活動
Q8	最近好像是鼓勵加薪的, 好像是公務員之類的加薪
	就是薪酬調整的情況, 就是在經濟方面有影響
Q9	你覺得專師重道這四個字, 做了這麼多年幼兒教育的工作者, 感

	受到別人的專師重道比以前低了一點.
	以我自己為學生的時候, 我們自己真的很專師重道...到現在可能社會不同了或者不知道什麼不同了, 感覺上沒有以前這麼濃厚
Q10	如果真的需要改善的話都是跟家裡的平衡
	因為我唯一的顧慮, 我覺得還是照顧小朋友
	我覺得對於我們來說是沒有什麼的, 就是想跟家裡人相處得更開心
	幼稚園跟小學的放學時間不同, 那麼小學的小朋友放學得早, 媽媽又還沒下班可能還沒回家....是很難改變的
	但是如果這裡可以再近一點就可以好一點了, 或者小學的時間可以拉長一點
	那麼他夜啲放學, 這個可能會比較容易做到, 他放學我下班, 這樣就更好
Interviewee: CT7	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	因為本身家庭沒有什麼壓力
	沒有什麼壓力的
	是的
	會不會有什麼特別的職務或者角色

	你要去演出
	或者有人扮演一個角色
	不是太多家務要你去做的
	是的 不用做家务
	比較輕鬆一點
	家人的支持會不會都影響到你的 幸福感呢?
	都會影響到
	因為他們都很支持的
	所以下班就不用做任何事情
	另外家人沒有投訴加班這麼多
	或者星期六日留在家陪我們
	就是很放鬆的情況
Q2	同事之間的關係
	還有工作壓力
	就是工作量方面的問題
	現在也滿意的
	現在這兩方面都是正面的
	就沒有什麼負面的事情
	可能資源上司的鼓勵
	或者怎樣去達到目標
	但是也很好
	工作的自主度上
	可能做到可以有話事的多一點
	其實也會影響到
	就是會更加努力去做
	都是正面的
	就是你想做一些事情也可以有時 間去處理
	是有支持的
	另外就是對專業發展的要求
	因為其實剛剛也讀完大學
	其實也一身輕鬆了

	也花了幾年時間
	那今年就完成了
	三年可以畢業了
Q3	就是從家裡到工作的時間
	長短的也會有影響
	就是說交通的時間
	交通的時間
	還有投入的時間
	就是你放工了會不會在家裡繼續 工作
	就是目前也可能拿一些東西回家 做
	現在不會拿的
	其實我覺得現在也挺平凡的
	也平衡
Q4	就是有時候下班一個星期可以做 三天的運動
	我覺得也滿意
	就是放工之後
	放工之後也可以做運動
	解決一些壓力
	或者是放鬆一下自己的 me time
	其實已經很好
	也會讓自己更有能量
Q5	家人、同事也能幫到的
	因為有時候有壓力的話
	也會互相跟大家說
	就是怎麼去解決
	他們也會給我們一些意見
	然後他們怎麼去做
	家人就負責談判
	就是純粹這樣
	其實我們同事之間也會出去吃飯

	也會聊天
	也是跟朋友相處而已
Q6	政策其實不是免費教育那些
	就是對我們老師的支持度是怎麼樣
	就是最多是薪酬表
	什麼時候要納入
	其實也會影響到的
	因為現在其實做幼兒教育
	做幾年就很快離職
	也會影響到這個關係
	其實也要等政府落實了這個方案之後
	就會令到我們更加穩定
	你覺得舉個例子就是薪酬表
	因為其實不是每間學校都會跟著薪酬表去做的
	其實也會影響到那個前後問題
	也會影響會不會繼續是一間機構去做他們的決定
	其他的政策
	可能前一段時間的虐兒事件也會相關
	也相關就是因為有閉路電視
	老師本身跟小朋友的關係很親密的
	也不太敢這樣
	就是避免有太多的其他問題
	身體的接觸
Q7	大眾傳媒可能有每天的新聞報導
	例如可能有虐兒事件
	看完報導難道全世界的老師都虐兒嗎?

	純粹是看過就算了
	最重要就是由自己那邊
	就是周邊的事件真的幸福就行了
Q8	收生問題算不算?
	因為也擔心收生問題會影響你的職業
	那就有一點點的憂慮
	就是怎樣才可以讓你做得更加好
	就是主要近年的環境
	也是你覺得收生問題最嚴重的
	因為有出生率又低
	其實也會影響我們這個行業的
	因為我們畢竟都是小朋友
	你沒有小朋友
	那就其實就是倒閉了
Q9	其實中國有中國的一套
	我們也是有我們自己的一套
	我們是中西合併
	其實有它的好處
	就是例如傳統文化
	其實我覺得是可以教小朋友的
	沒問題的
	西方也有不同的
	例如聖誕節那些
	還有一些說話的方法
	或者是相處方式其實也可能不同
	其實兩者互相合併在一起
	其實我覺得是好的
	就是中西文化是併在一起的
	因為其實香港也是一個國際大都會
	沒理由只有一邊的
	其實也有兩方面去抉擇

Q10	其實現在已經很滿意
	很滿意了
	所以其實也沒什麼可以改變
	繼續下去就行了
Interviewee: CT8	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	我想是家務吧
	家裡都有些職務要自己去做的
	但又不是說多的
	如果家務很重
	就應該是吃力的
	因為我是已婚的
	我就有先生去分擔
	家人的支持也很重要的
	因為他們覺得你這份工作
	也不想你繼續
	那可能自己也會覺得
	也不是那麼願意繼續
	現在就是正面的
Q2	教學上吧
	體力上
	教學上就是一個工作
	就是要預備很多
	就是事前準備要花時間
	那也會影響到幸福感
	還有可能處理一些比較
	就是有些特別需要的小朋友
	也會有一些壓力
	在工作的資源和支持

	也支持到的
	也有幫助
	工作的自主權正常的
	因為我暫時也沒有說在讀什麼
	也是比較自由的
	不是說下班就要上課
	因為我一直在進修
	有一個技能
	在學琴
	接下來也準備考三級的
	這個在我的行程裡面也不是很急切的
	因為我不想壓力太大
	你說想專業發展
	暫時也在音樂方面
	之後可能就
	特殊需要方面
	因為現在也有很多特殊需要的小朋友
	我覺得這方面我是要更好一點的
	也是自己對自己的要求
	因為也是方便你創作
	因為也需要一些知識去處理
	不然的話
	就無從入手
Q3	沒有什麼憂慮
	很輕鬆的
	要取得平衡
	有些人可能會覺得很困心的
	也很難拿捏平衡
	但是這樣就會有很多憂慮
	暫時我也沒有
	因為我還沒有小朋友

	如果有的話真的會比較困心
	但是暫時也沒有
Q4	可能有時候到了某些階段
	例如學期尾比較忙碌
	可能會少了一些 me time
	或者是比較緊張
	就是工作會比較趕
	就是一些特殊的
	特別加進你的工作
	大型活動
Q5	家人、同事也有朋友
	就是也會聊天
	舒緩情緒
	說一下
	說出來會比較好
	又或者有些同事也給你一些建議
	或者教會
	教會也有一些
	就是同學也有
	就是大家也給一些建議
	大家有些困難上或者是一些喜悅
	可以分享
Q6	我想應該也是薪級表
	我覺得幼兒教育真的很重要
	應該是給老師一個薪級表
	因為現在如果轉工
	會的薪金會從頭來過
	還有一些朋友或者會減一大截
	我想應該沒有什麼行業會轉工
	但是薪金會差太多
	就是我覺得這一點要改善一下
Q7	大眾傳媒
	可能只是聊聊天

	說說話
	純粹說
	發表一下意見
	影響也不是很大
Q8	因為其實做老師是一定辛苦的
	不要說真的很舒服
	這樣是沒有可能的
	我覺得也合理
	社會的變化
	或者經濟環境的變化
	也沒有什麼特別影響
	因為其實有些事情
	我覺得控制不了
	出生率低
	我們控制不了
	其實也沒有辦法
	已經是現況
	改變不了
	也要接受
Q9	我也是用我自己的理念去教育小朋友
	我沒有說一定要沿用以前的方式去教育
	我覺得也沒有什麼影響
	可能是文化裡面的一些內容
	也可能有機會影響到自己的工作
Q10	應該是要給自己多一點自信
	去更加放膽去工作
	從中獲得一些成功感
	我想會更加幸福
	也要看學校會不會給你多一點機會嘗試
	因為可能會擔心你的年資也很淺

	可能擔心你能否應付得來
	學校方面也會有影響
	就是看看你是否可以擔當很多不同的工作
	其實也能夠表現自己
	我真的做得到
	其實也有成功感
	變成幸福
Interviewee: CT9	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	家庭可能是地點吧
	因為家人都要住在一個比較遠的地方
	又比較困難搬家
	可能離工作地點很遠
	也要一個多小時搭車回來
	家人來說就沒什麼特別的
	因為我的家人都很獨立
	他們也不太知道我的工作是什麼
	跟我正在做的職業也沒關係
	他們也沒有說不支持
	因為已經做了很久了
	例如做家務、煮飯等等
	也要兼顧一下
	那些也沒關係
	從小做到大
	也是那個家而已
	其實也沒有說突然間有多有少
Q2	工作的因素影響職業幸福感

我覺得是跟同事的相處和合作
是最大的因素
還有另外一個就是
因為我們主要服務的對象是幼兒和家長
幼兒和家長的關係
可能就是一一些人際關係
跟幸福感的關係我覺得比較大
始終我們做緊嘅工作就是對人的工作
我想也是人際關係算是比較重的
跟不同持份者的關係
就是最首選就是同事
然後其次就是家長和小朋友
工作的需求和性質
我想可能要去到
看回社會或者是業界對於幼兒教師的工作量的看法
大家好像這個業界
或者差不多的工作量
如果大家都是個人
覺得這個工作
正如有些行業就說地盤要日曬雨淋
我覺得這些是一些固有的看法
就是對於這個職位的工作性質
覺得教師是要這麼多東西
我個人的工作量
隨著年資的提升
都是有加沒減的
自己的看法
自己的平衡
我覺得還可以應付的就應付吧

工作的資源和支持是有的
但是有時候時間和時機就不太對
例如移民潮
薪酬的福利和提升就比較遲
一些好的同事也可能有一次離職了
但是薪酬和待遇的提升就比較遲
這些跟業界或者一般 NGO 的做法一樣
可能都是商討一大輪
然後就全部過了
別人 NGO 也有做了
也在搶人才
我覺得是有的
這個機構
那個支持和配合機制
也有一些職員的團隊
甚至這個機構
不僅是學校有的團體
或者是老師之間的聯誼活動
另外關乎到機構的
也有機構的職員小組
是全機構都在做的
其他行業可能已經很早做到這些
或者在辦公室設立一些遊戲間之類的
是很前瞻的做法
但是可能回到我們的學業
有些事情未必做到
自主權
我覺得始終學校的工作
所有事情都是團隊的工作

我想未必可能要放這麼多自主的成分在這裡
當然學校也有參考的意見
當人覺得你的意見被人參考的時候
所以尊重當然可能會比較好
我想在這裡工作
很多的決定
都要知道是團隊的決定
教育行業也不是這麼的
我覺得對於要求也屬於高的
而且轉變得快
疫情期間可能
你知道有些教育同事的教學模式轉變
又要適應一對新的
現在就是法例的轉變
收生的轉變
也是要老師不斷去遵守去做的
在工作上
主要是
進修的時間
教師也是用私人時間來進修的
除非是修讀教育局指定的課程
才可以請代課
當然請了代課也不容易
你一定要進修才能做到下一個步驟的事情
譬如真的有一個新的條例
或者新的系統要做了
你真的要花時間去學習和進修的話

	就變相會拉扯到你的現時工作的 情況
	可能有些人認知這份工作的時候 就沒有計算進修的情況
	原來也是你工作的職責
Q3	而且我個人也未必傾向有太多家 庭日的時間
	因為大家也很大
	最多也是放假去旅行而已
	所以就未必說跟工作有關係
	如果透過工作期間的人際關係 可以獲得這些需要的話
	那也可能是已經比較平衡了
	當然你在工作上認識到朋友是一 個很大的額外贈助
	甚至是認識到一些好的伴侶 是一個很大的額外贈助
	但是有時候就未必這麼幸運
	或者是你的工作上
	如果你工作生活不是一個很獨立 的概念的話
	你工作和生活都可以在這個環境 發生的
	那麼他自然就會比較幸福
	我離開了才可以有生活生活的話
	那麼可能工作量真的要通一通才 行
Q4	我想是自己的態度決定
	這件事情平衡不平衡
	就是看看工作能否和生活融為一 體
	人際關係是有幫助的
	當然你做得開心

	你的人際關係是好的話
	家長也好
	喜歡你的話
	那就會有不同的
Q5	我想最能夠支持的一定是自己的 同事
	因為他們跟你工作是同一個範疇
	可能你的壓力也是源自於你無法 解決問題
	不妨問身邊有機會幫助你解決問 題的人
	如果你工作態度也是不妨試試分 出去
	但是有時候如果你的壓力不是來 自於工作問題
	或者工作量的話
	而是來自於一些人際關係
	或者是一些其他
	管理自己的因素、財政等等
	我覺得是比較難的
	那就要找一些工作以外
	外面的人幫你解決
	我自己傾向
	我自己可能也曾經經歷過一些財 政問題
	那麼通常也是家人跟你談才是最 重要的
	那麼也是跟家人談才是最重要的
	如果工作有壓力的話
	我剛才聽你說
	最主要是同事幫到你
	我現在比較傾向是先解決問題
	比較舒壓

	通常我覺得有壓力
	我自己的壓力也是比較
	未解決問題的
	我比較傾向還是先解決問題
	如果是一些工作量的情況
	就可能自己去調節一下
	也有去做運動或者各樣的
	機構也很好
	有些身心靈津貼
	是真的有用的
	就是做到病也要看醫生
	機構也有在工作的
	有身心靈津貼
	這些都是叫做在外面拿到的資源
	或者是在你工作期間拿到的資源
	但是我自己比較傾向還是找同事解決
	工作有壓力
	最好找同事解決
	解決了問題就沒有壓力了
Q6	我想就是對教育行業的整個發展
	是有萎縮的情況
	另外就是跟周邊鄰近地區的比較
	而且不是那麼容易轉變
	現在可能我們隨著方向
	也可能要融合內地的政策多一點的話
	我也不知道會轉變成什麼樣子
	始終我們是香港本身獨有的教育制度
	不是由中國那邊衍生出來的
	但是當然兩地有相似的
	也有不似的地方

	我想有些同事離開教育界
	也是有些覺得未必能夠適應
	有些移民因素
	整體來說
	是因為太多未知的因素
	我也很難說
	是哪一方面比較困難
	可能最大的問題就是整個行業都在萎縮
	因為現在可能
	人們會看重一些升大學
	或者一些職前
	可能將資源撥到大專或者中學
	但是其實有些國家將資源放在學院比較多
	我想是看政府或者教育局
	覺得決定教育的意義
	其實是放在小朋友成長到什麼階段
	因為其實
	學習也是一個教育行業
	我覺得這個行業現在有些萎縮
	就是你出生了
	但是你放多少資源下去呢?
	可能他覺得萎縮中
	再削減資源的情況
Q7	可能有些人覺得
	所有的學務和教師的工作
	其實都是陪小朋友或者是照顧者
	始終媒體也是有把資訊拆碎
	再自己上載
	再包裝
	再放上去的

	可能其他人讀到的
	只是別人想你看的部分
	就容易有偏離了對這個行業的一些誤解
	可能他們也會覺得
	教師也未必需要讀得這麼專業
	或者是 Master(大學)
	但是其實現在的報師
	前輩已經在讀四年五年大學了
	你想想看
	四年五年的大學
	比起我以前讀
	只讀三年
	他們其實已經讀出來更加專業了
	讀了五年
	是這個專科的東西
	原來現在的幼師
	其實專業程度已經這麼高了
	可能坊間還不知道
	就是對於這個行業可能還有一些誤解
Q8	幼稚園的工作
	也是社會經濟環境
	我覺得變得最多的可能是
	就是說防疫的政策
	很多時候要
	這裡也要立刻配合
	所有行業都是
	可能是防疫上
	或者經濟上
	人才流失
	鼓勵生育政策
	還有整個行業都在萎縮

	也是有影響的
	直接也有很大的影響
Q9	我想到了儒家思想是說到
	很生活化地用
	你仁者愛人
	這個教育的角色當然也是每一天都在實踐這件事情的
	會是有幫助的
	但是你實踐了這個東西
	他們是否知道是儒家文化就未必是這樣
	回想起來就是了
	這個工作恰當地也是可以很表現出這件事情的
Q10	我想是嘗試對自己工作的一些工作量或者挑戰
	嘗試改變一些形式
	正如我最近也做到累了
	突然間有我男朋友跟我說
	你這段時間應該升級了
	然後我就說
	可能當你打遊戲機
	可能是累的
	但是原來有些你累當中不是拿到累的
	有其他東西拿到的
	也可能會好一點
	主要也是自己的心態
	個人心態的調整
	因為有時候
	現在的工作量也來得很突然
	也剛剛說到你培訓的需要是突然之間有需要的

政策改變也是突然之間的	
當學到新的東西	
就是改變自己的心態	
然後調整覺得是幫到自己的	
當作一個學習	
永遠都可能好一點	
有時候也會有怨氣的	
做到這樣	
但是我聽到他這句	
又覺得	
其實我這樣做也有改變一些東西	
自己提升了一些東西	
如果能夠推動你身邊的同事	
又或者是家長認同你的工作的話	
或者同事感染了	
會跟你一起工作	
家長會認同你	
欣賞你的工作	
都可能會是一些挺重要的因素	
Interviewee: ST1	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	因為我的家庭是幸福的
	雖然我還沒結婚
	但是我現在可能姐姐的子女都在我這裡住
	我覺得是很開心的
	其實如果我覺得家庭開心
	令到一個人開心
	其實我上學只是看看工作環境

確實開心
影響到我自己
所以當然了
如果家庭裡面發生了一些爭執
腦袋不停想著這些
其實工作的時候
你會覺得有一點點擔憂
我們是自由分工的
家裡也沒有什麼壓力
也很自由的
我現在可能跟媽媽一起住
我又不用煮飯那些
Q2 當然是人事
我覺得人事是最重要的
小朋友和家長其實也有影響的
不過如果是最重要的
應該是人事
因為你對最久的那些
其實是同事
如果真的上司
就是不喜歡你的
你工作就不停有很大壓力
你的拍檔又不喜歡你的話
就是又爭辯
又壓力更加大
我是很久以前的
就是曾經做過一些學校
校長是新到的
有其他地方轉過來
好像那時候玩針對
就是好像你做什麼都是錯的
加上那段時間
有同事收到他的警告信

簡直是整間幼稚園的所有同事
情緒非常大
我們每一次走過對面
同事都跟我說
我想死
他帶著班仔
我帶著班仔
一走過就唉
所以其實你知道那時候的氣氛是 非常之大
所以我就非常覺得就是人事關係
尤其是上司
同事都有影響到你
還沒一年
老師已經走了半年
所以為什麼我也走了
即是離職意向是其中一個
我是兼修老師
有時候覺得
校長給我多了一些工作
就是一些行政上的工作
多了這麼多工作
我覺得 OK
我喜歡
例如校長給我
就是他跟我說
你做司儀了
你講得這麼好
你去做司儀了
我覺得 OK
得到欣賞
因為我做司儀
但我不用做其他的

佈置那些
這樣會覺得開心一點
雖然有時候多了工作
但那件事要覺得自己做得好
我覺得我已經比別人輕鬆了
第一其實我沒有拍檔
只有我自己一個
大家要有時間交
我又沒有了這個壓力
自由度大一點
可能因為每個人崗位不同
工作上有自由度
有自主權
我想做一些事情
這間學校也可以投放一些資源給 我去做
這間學校的薪酬也不錯
還有退款
退款就是公務員的加薪可以追加
本來我們不是公務員
但是機構會加回給你
校長也很聽我們說
就是三個星期六
放一個星期六
我們跟校長說
長短多一個月
校長不如我們每天加一點時間
我們就多給一個星期六
校長聽到我們的意見
對我們來說是很大的鼓舞
現在可以變回異議
不過多了一個星期六
自己用的時間就好一點

	所以我覺得
	這裡的薪酬
	假期也好
	還有獎勵
	其實也非常好
	很貼心
	我有時候會看到一些課程
	我覺得有時間就讀
	因為我在工作的時間
	輕鬆到我甚至不需要帶東西回家做
	因為其實聽別人說
	可能 12 點還在家裡工作
	我就會進修一下
	因為我是兼收老師
	可能有時候有些自閉症的課程
	上網看的
	是不是免費的
	覺得可以配合我的時間
	或者配合我的需求
	也可以配合到你自己的工作
	我就覺得參加吧
Q3	我好像現在說
	我現在暫時學期末
	我要交的文件
	我還沒有做完
	如果在期限前
	我還沒有做完
	我一定會回家做
	這個就是我有一點憂慮的地方
	就是我的小朋友要升小學
	有些去主流
	有些去特殊學校

	這些我又要分別跟不同部門打一份文件出來
	我又要跟他們的社工
	要談一談
	可能有一點憂慮
	就是不知道什麼時候完成
	好像還有很多事情沒做
	這個可能是一些工作範圍的事情
	我們很希望可以早一點完成
	這些可能對於你放工回家也會繼續思考
Q4	因為我不是很多節目
	說要出門那一種
	而且我會看我的錢
	因為我現在還在
	我前幾天還在供樓
	我的腦袋不停在想
	最主要的因素可能是財政的考慮
	我覺得這不是很關工作的事
	反而是我私人的錢的問題
	所以說平衡都拿得很好
	因為我也很準時放工
	我是很準時放工
	所以不會影響到我交
	也不會影響我看電影
	我也是很準時放工
Q5	我想校長主任那些
	因為我的工作崗位
	我不會跟其他老師交談
	因為有些私隱
	因為他們有什麼特殊需要
	其實私隱
	我只能夠跟我上司談

其實主任也不是很清楚
因為他也是做法
可能是幼稚園那邊
反而校長他很多特殊的東西
其實我也知道
他做了很多年特殊
反而他知道
前幾天困擾著我的就是小朋友
特殊小學他
他要收他
他又要回主流
他又打來又說他特殊
搞了很久這些東西
其實可能我剛才問了校長
這些東西其實是困擾著我的
其實是上司的支持
我有時候批不批都要看著他
都要看上司的
我自己個人來說
我在工作上沒什麼煩惱
我也不會特意跟家人說
我工作上的問題
也不會特意跟他們說壓力
但是可能有時候會跟他們說一些趣事
可能小朋友對著蘋果批說蘋果貴
所以我覺得
上司的支持是最重要的
在工作環境裡面
其實因為可能做兼收這個角色
會不會也有機會接觸一些社區的資源
例如社工

其他的專業人士
非常多
治療師
有時候社署的人
或者是社署的心理學家
所有的東西我都會接觸的
其實目前來說他們都很友善
即是說你也有積極的支持
還有我們的駐校社工
有時候我的小朋友
可能需要轉介所有的東西
但是他不是我的小朋友
我不可以去找他
我只能跟社工
所以社工之間跟我的合作是很重要的
社區的支持反而是真的最多
我跟他們真的差不多
跟一些姑娘
治療師
可能一個星期
比我跟同事的時間更多
因為我經常煩
因為互相要交流
我覺得社區的交流
溝通這件事
在工作上來說
好像是很大的
Q6 其實可能應該是
中華文化
如果真的教育好的話
他們在做中華文化
即是加入了這個課程裡面

我們就要找很多不同的課程
找到不同的工作
好像我們學校來說
我們之前就沒有星期隊
也沒有小蜜蜂
那些制服團隊
都是因為因應政府
他說現在你們就要多一些
中華文化的東西
我們就要加這些
其實這個東西是
在我們工作上的一個轉變
就是多了很多工作的元素
要跟這件事相關
國安法
因為國安法出來了
我們都會就是
在生活裡面
在教學裡面
其實是
你講這些東西的時候
其實會想清楚
譬如你教國旗
你就要慢慢想清楚
你想講什麼
你要教可能是升旗禮
我有時候代課
代升旗隊
他整本書都是講這些
然後又要想一想
其實我錄了一次
究竟我想講什麼
都要小心一點

跟家長也是
可能家長有時候
有些東西
是要告訴你的時候
你現在是不會回答他
是這句話
你都不可以說
要很中立
聽完他說之後
Q7 有時候
我貼文
就是近幾年
都多了一些
就是說這個
幼稚園界的東西
可能其他學校
就有些問題出來了
他們就會說
幼稚園老師就是這樣
然後我看完之後
不是那個新聞
只不過他可能說
採訪家長
家長就說
老師應該怎樣怎樣
然後我經常都說一句
你不知道老師
本身是多麼辛苦
還有一直都是這樣做
就覺得你們對我們的誤解
有很多對我們職業有些誤解
還有有時候他真的寫出來的東西
我覺得有時候不是事實

	還有你了解到傳言
	他的確是媒體
	是很影響著我們
	其實他真的挺影響我們的情緒
	即是覺得可能曲解了我們正在做的事
Q8	就好像剛才所說
	或者一些國安
	政治的問題
	他現在多了錢去幼稚園
	因為他多了叫你們做一些關於文化的東西
	多了資源
	我們就多了一些錢去做
	多了去宣傳一個活動
	我現在做的很大的項目
	就是老友所為
	我要做統籌
	他的確撥了很大筆錢給我們
	叫我們和區內的教育長者一起玩
	是長者共融其實是很好的
	他的確可以宣揚他們所說的關愛
	和一些中華文化的精神
	我們學校的確多了一筆錢
	所以工作是多了非常多
	就是工作量相對和資源一起提升
	這些特別活動
	通常都是 IP 老師負責的
	他的確影響了我的工作量
	這個和 MC 的工作有點不一樣
	因為和社署的社工合作
	很多工作量
	我做統籌

	我是要決定很多活動
	社工和我
	已經合作太多次了
	我參加了兩年多
	現在政府多了宣傳的
	就是一些活動
	他已經不再有時 Fax 過來
	我們有時收不到
	我們不知道有活動
	現在多了就是寄信來
	在網頁發佈出來
	或者會發 E-mail 過來
	我覺得這個資源撥得挺好
	通常都是我和主任在網上收到消息
	有這些東西
	那就要做了
	為什麼近幾年
	活動多了這麼多
	學校多了這麼多活動
	就是因為政府撥了多一些資源去宣傳
	就是溝通方面的效率又高了
	宣傳這個活動的費用可能他們高了
	我知道了
	他們的改變
	就使我們資源豐富了
	和工作量提升了
Q9	有沒有宣傳中華文化
	有沒有著重這件事
	我們都會教小朋友禮貌禮儀
	但這都是宣教思想

我們不會著重說
這是中國人的傳統文化
就是要禮貌
但現在突然間多了
因為他們的宣傳多了
小朋友和家長在家中會多了這件事
中國人的禮儀是怎樣
他們多了這件事
還有我們會在角色來說
都多了這件事
因為政府免費給我們的教材多了
我們就自然這樣說
所以我們的角色來說
多了和小朋友宣揚這件事
原先都有教這件事做內容
不過現在多了一些資源
把它包裝成一個
更加強調和中國文化相關的
之前可能真的不會有立日課程
但現在就直接放了很多課程
還有可能現在網絡上
我們都會搜尋多了
我們就會有這個知識
其實我們也會給小朋友知道
影片也多了
一些互動的小遊戲
都很新奇又多了
我們都會告訴小朋友
因為其實有時候我們說薪金
為什麼我們的人工不及中學小學
有時候會覺得這樣
很大對比

前一陣子我才收到	
有位同事發給我的薪酬表	
裡面有小學和中學的薪金	
我們現在加的好像是通脹	
只不過不是高一點的錢	
我們又想	
其實主任校長	
他們也不是賺得我們很多	
總之幼稚園好像被人忽略	
被政府忽略了	
錢又不加	
就越來越多東西給我們做	
如果薪酬表可以	
小學和中學可以看齊	
那又會覺得	
職業幸福感就會很高	
Interviewee: ST2	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	家庭因素絕對是一個很大的 point(點)
	去支持我去做這行業的
	因為我媽媽本身都是老師
	她教過小學
	亦都教過幼稚園
	亦都有教過 SEN
	所以我讀完中學
	之後我媽媽本身都是在做這行業
	那時候已經在教 SEN 的幼稚園
	之後她就說

既然你這麼喜歡小朋友
你有沒有想過入這行業呢?
然後我說很好
因為我小時候
我媽媽都已經帶我去那間學校的 幼稚園
跟小朋友玩
知道是一份工作
其實都是開心的
我說也好
反正我喜歡小朋友
所以我就跟隨我媽媽入這行業
其實家人的支持度很高
如果說影響的話
都是正面的
本身我自己
純粹我說我自己
我都是比較正向的人
很樂觀的人
我自己為什麼一直這麼多年都在 做這行業
主要都是因為
我除了喜歡小朋友之外
我會感覺
在這行業的環境
讓我覺得簡單一點
因為我對小朋友的時間
大部分時間都是
所以我會很期待
繼續留在這行業
沒有想過回頭
投入度是很高的
那會不會下班回去要做家務

要煮飯等等
托賴我的家庭方面
就是我先生
我老公
我和我奶奶住的
他們本身都是一個
很願意在家庭上
去幫忙負一些責任的家人
變成了對於我下班回家
甚至有時候有機會
真的有一些文件要拿回家做
他們都會說
你做你的事情吧
行了
你做好自己的事情吧
變相都是支持我
很支持
Q2 我想都是主要是小朋友
我很喜歡他們說的天真爛漫
這件事是很重要的
給你很大的動力
還有我自己
個人偏向喜歡
尤其是教小朋友
很多老師都說
教小朋友實在很辛苦
體力勞動
教大學的
你可以告訴他們
他們會思考
會想怎麼做
因為我也說了
本身真的喜歡小朋友

他們這些天真爛漫
很可愛
甚至是剛進來的時候
還不夠兩歲
剛剛就在學語言的時候
然後到了完結了 N 班之後升上去
你看到他們懂了很多東西
進步了很多
讓我覺得很有成功感
成功感特別大
我就偏向喜歡教小朋友
事實上由我入行到現在
在工作量
尤其是在文書方面
真的多了很多很多很多
以前我們可能比較做教案
或者是做教具
教具可能偏向美藝方面多一點
但是現在不同了
現在的文件真的多了很多
現在很多都有依有據
到你想去找資料出來的時候
就容易找一些
不要說只有記憶
可能有機會錯漏
所以文件真的多了很多
因為其實有一樣東西
你要接受社會的改變
是因為你要接受新事物
你要隨著潮流的轉變
隨著世界的轉變
你才會進步
我覺得我還有這個動力

有這個活力
可以做到這件事
工作環境我覺得其實
每一間學校
每一個員工
每一位老師
他都有自己應該要做的事情
你要知道自己本份是做什麼
最低限度你要正常地完成到
你的本份應該要做的事情的話
其實都有一定程度上的
因為我覺得
我完成了老師應該要完成的事情
這是我的責任
我覺得
很幸福
可能繼續不同類型的進修
我讀完中學之後
其實我也在一些行業不斷進修
基本上因為我入行年資比較長
所以我讀的院校、學校
是比別人多的
我讀過理工
我讀過教大
我讀過 IVE
我也讀過 CU
其實我也讀過很多
大部分都讀過了
本來 CU 也報了的
不過後來因為某些原因
我手傷斷了腳
就變成了遺憾在這裡
其實你的思想要進步

你要知道隨著環境的改變
你要有這樣的學識
時代不斷進步
接著可能有些東西
好像日新月異
你真的需要去學的
是需要更新的
無論是對小朋友的心理
態度
行為各方面
其實都會不斷可能有些新的東西
學的
你是要靠讀書
你才可以收到最新的資訊
那麼我覺得
還有社會會認同
根本現在老師是真的需要不斷提
升學歷
這件事情我覺得是好的
起碼我知道
現在的人
去看幼稚園老師
跟以前的人去看幼稚園老師
是完全兩回事
以前我最初入行的時候
真的有人說
只是帶小孩而已
但是現在的人是會認同你的專業
那麼你要真的有某一個專業
你要值得別人尊重和認同你
那麼我覺得
所以我一直要讀
是會開心了

	因為別人尊重了你
Q3	工作和家庭之間的平衡
	暫時在我身上沒有發生
	主要是因為我和我丈夫沒有小孩
	但是因為共識了這件事情
	變成在家庭上
	我沒有特別有一些憂慮
	或者我需要去顧慮要怎麼照顧他
	們
	就是托賴我婆婆
	我媽媽
	身體也健壯的
	人很簡單
	甚至現在我晚上有時候也會去讀
	書
	學習一些簡單的東西
	我自己會在每一個階段
	每一個年紀
	每一個階段
	其實都有一個目標
	我覺得這樣人生會有意義一點
	就是在工作與生活的平衡上也可
	以做到
Q4	工作壓力的時候
	首先一定是家人
	家人很支持我這件事情
	所以我就
	在這方面我無可顧之憂
	那麼學校方面
	其實這麼說
	這間學校其實資源算不少的了
	真的 OK 的了
	每個老師

每一位員工
他也有自己應該要盡的責任
絕大部分的同事
都會真的願意去協助
或者幫你解答問題
我自己較為弱的
事實上在電腦方面真的比較弱一點
可能遇到一些電腦上比較難一點的問題
做不到的事情
我就可能不幫同事
同事是很樂意幫我的
社會資源我覺得
我沒有利用太多
但是我自己去讀書而已
讀書方面其實
某程度上我也算是在用社會資源的
真的比較少
我們試過讀書的時候
碰巧碰到同機構的同事也是去讀書
但是其實是不同部門的
只是碰巧大家聊天
大家真的這麼巧合
一早一起做功課的時候
現在說多兩句就說
大家也是同機構的
真的這麼巧合
當我有時候不上學的時候
你幫我聽一下今晚金堂說什麼
有些需要的話

你提一提
或者發給我
就是在學業上有一些同行者
一起支持的
Q6 又或者是跟老師有關的
可能是福利等等
我們也會特別關注
不是特別很正面或者很負面的影響
沒有什麼太大影響
Q7 因為我們資訊這麼發達
我們經常不斷地看電腦
很多不同的新聞
尤其是自己的行業
可能也會關注一些跟我們行業有關的新聞
遇到一些不開心的話
那可能心裡就會特別不开心
甚至可能是虐兒新聞
我們也會特別關注的
因為做這些行業也很正常
有一些老師或者一些團體
去幫老師發聲
去爭取一些東西
那些新聞我們也會看
我可能這方面有點被動
一看到就會看
不會刻意去發掘的
這件事情我會比較被動
因為我的心態也是
在自己控制的範圍之內
自己做到的範圍之內

	真的我會盡量做好一點
	但是可能太大為了一些事情
	我自己未必可以做到什麼
	我也是接收多一點
Q8	當然大家最熱門的話題就是移民
	還有一直纏繞香港很久的不生孩子
	好像我不生孩子
	那麼很多年前都已經聽到有些同行
	就說藉由行業
	現在人們都不生孩子
	如果不是怎麼會有這麼多殺校啊
	加上現在這幾年的移民遲到
	其實不得不少都會有些影響的
	我自己抱著的心態就是
	我仍然一天是做老師
	一天還在這一行
	我就要好好對待我的工作
	好好對待我的小朋友
	情緒影響對於我來說就不是太大
	因為有一天我面對著那些小朋友
	我也是要這麼教他們
	也是要令他們開心
	就是做好自己的工作
	因為可能跟我年紀也有關係
	那麼我就不生孩子了
	那麼就快要退休了
	開心最重要
	那個人是開心的
	你看到我也是開心的
	所以可能真的會比較有感覺
	所以我就覺得

	我很珍惜我現在擁有的
	我做好
	能夠做得多好
	我就盡量做好一點
	當然如果我真的年紀不同
	會有不同的想法
	可能年輕一點的話
	真的會擔憂著我將來
	這些行業的發展會是怎麼樣呢
	那麼每個人的心態都不同
	我的心態就是
	看到繼續做好就做吧
Q9	教不嚴師之惰
	當然我不可以用嚴字
	以前那一套
	古代那一套不同
	但是我覺得
	老師這個責任是一定不可以推卸的
	我覺得是真的
	作為老師我自己有時候也挺失禮的
	我覺得小朋友學習一些東西
	老師是有責任一定要教好他
	他要懂得這件事情
	他一年多應該要懂得這件事情
	我就應該要教導他
	當然我不可以勉強他說
	他是 SEN 的
	他學不來就學不來
	這件事情我是理解的
	但是有一般普通的小朋友
	我覺得

	他應該要懂得那些東西
	我應該盡我能力去教好他教會他
	這件事情我比較固執
	不是一種堅持
	是專業的堅持
Q10	始終我覺得是不夠的
	對幼稚園這一行的老師有關顧
	希望可以再落實
	再仔細一點去想多一點
	我們切身可以關顧到幼稚園這一行的
	人事方面
	就是老師方面的資料
	怎麼樣照顧這些人
	就是盡量再提升老師在這一行上
	有感覺到尊重
	對我們專業的肯定
	那就更加好
	我覺得大環境社會
	政府是一定要做一些事情的
	我覺得是真的不夠的
	我覺得其實自身本身的自覺性是很重要的
	就是說老師自己
	因為我可能浸淫了這一行一段時間
	也看到很多很多不同的老師做法
	當然大部分都很好
	都真的在自己的工作上很盡心盡力
	有些做得一般般的
	我也盡可能可以用我的一點點的資歷

	我不想被人說我自老賣老
	我是期望將來的新一代老師
	他也可以知道自已的站在哪裡
	我可以提點到他
	我就會提點他
	整體的團隊都是有責任的老師
Interviewee: HT1	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	就是家庭上的
	當然工作也是為了維持生計
	但是我覺得開心的是
	整個家庭大家都是很積極、很正面的
	因為譬如我自己上班的事情是怎麼樣的
	我自己有一個女兒
	其實我先生和我
	或者我女兒上學
	我想我們是從小到大都是這樣教她的
	所以變成我們自己晚上回到家
	很多時候都會將自己上班的事情
	開心與否都會拿出來講
	比較負面的
	可能是一些不開心的事情
	當然會有
	但是你說帶來
	我們又很少說得很深入
	令到小朋友好像造成一個擔心

譬如在我自己工作上
因為可能很多時候都面對小朋友
我們是
其實都頗為無所不談
很多事情我們都會說
我們在學校
小朋友怎樣怎樣
我自己習慣了帶出來的訊息
就是將開心的事情講多一點
但是始終
你說在工作上沒理由會有不開心的
一定會有一些
我都會照樣講的
今天有一點不開心
因為什麼
可能有很多事情做
遲了下班等等
但是我們習慣了坦誠
所以我覺得在工作上的感覺
當然坦誠地告訴大家
最初我女兒小時候
她有時候都會說
媽媽為什麼你今天這麼晚回家
不陪我
我要做功課等等
她會問很多這些
有時候我都會照樣
將我自己的生計
我都告訴她
我在學校因為在做什麼
所以晚了一點點走
我覺得令到大家的隔膜又少了

大家都知道
原來爸爸媽媽上班的時候
會怎樣
我自己的工作
有時候都會帶來什麼
甚至可能在我工作上
因為有些事情要帶回家做
變成
大家都好像互相有一個支持
到她現在長大了
有時候她會說
要不要做學校的事情
可能不用
我們一起出去
去哪裡
就令到自己都覺得
在工作上
好像多了一份認同
家人也有一份支持
女兒也有支持
在工作的層面
就會得到家人對自己的一些支持
我覺得是家人的支持
就是我老爺奶奶
會照顧我小朋友
我現在有小朋友
小六
所以從她小時候
在還沒有讀幼稚園之前
就是我媽媽照顧的
到她開始讀幼稚園
開始就老爺奶奶
她們照顧

所以可能因為
大家已經有一個分擔
她們也很支持
令到我自己
就是在上班
也很擔心
很重要
要怎樣去接小朋友
等等的事情
我覺得
這件事情
令到自己
很安心
因為我本身
自己很喜歡煮東西吃
我每一晚
我都會煮東西吃
就是晚餐
就算簡單的
可能蒸一下
小小的餸菜
都是我自己預備的
但是有時候呢
無奈
譬如有時候工作啊
有些大型的活動
很難可以準時下班的
那她們呢
因為很體諒的
那今天不要煮了
那就一起出去吃
沒有這份擔心
真的是開心起

因為回到學校
我又可以很安心去做事
就是可能我們真的習慣了坦白
整件事
我覺得反而體諒多過
大家會埋怨
為什麼今天媽媽這麼晚回家
為什麼老婆這麼久不回來
就不會有這件事
因為其實
我在這間學校
我是由讀完書出來
就在這裡工作
那到現在
其實都
已經二十年了
就是在這份工作裡面
由我自己
還是一個
就是最初出來社會工作
做別人的女兒
到現在
真的有角色的轉變
拍拖
結婚
生完小孩
生完小孩
還有做媽媽
生完小孩
我都跟同事分享
真的好像全部都在這間學校
都經歷了
Q2 第一件事

就可能是工作的需求
因為我比較多會做
會比較多一點
因為是在工作上
就是一些文件
就好像剛剛這個學年
因為人手不太夠
其實我都會入班
就是自己要
很清楚自己做的事情
又或者是
譬如可能要
平衡一下所有的時間
譬如工作上的優次
哪些要先做
哪些要做後
這段時間
我要進去照顧小朋友
因為通常學期初
可能很多行政的事情
我們又要偏頗穩定
那麼到學期中
我們又有一些同事
又會有離職
所以變成我覺得
那段時間反而是要
是要抓緊
怎樣穩定
我自己又要
平衡到我自己的工作
只是做完學與教育的時候
又忽略了行政
因為可能行政

會影響整個機構多一點
開心的
就是我覺得
在學校裏面
其實因為可能團體
雖然新同事加入
但是我們本身
教育那一層的同事
相對的關係
一直都維繫得很好
就是整個機構
就是有時候
新同事都有分享
你們很關愛
不用說經常因為
有些紛爭衝突等等
我們就沒有了
在工作上
我覺得都順利一點
就是可能關係上
叫做和諧一點的時候
做事都容易一點
清心一點
就是除了
同事之間
有好的默契
我覺得
就是機構對於
就是你的工作
給你的資源
舉辦一些的時候
一定要用
不同的資源

你無論是
金錢或者是場地
至於你說比較夢想性一點
完美一點
可能我們慢慢計劃下去
在資源上或者財政上
甚至我們行政上
起碼是比較容易的
可能譬如
有些東西可能是舊了
當然大家都很想換新的
但是另一方面可能那件東西壞了
是直接影響到教學上的
我們會取捨一下
譬如說用哪一樣東西先做
那件事不是不做的
但是因為資金上
財政上
我們會考慮多一點
至於你說其他的資源
譬如說社區
我們都盡量上層用多一點
就是爭取多一點資源
這些或者有時候有些什麼方面的
津貼等等
這些都是我們很好用到的資源
所以我覺得薪酬上
我覺得也算是很好的
我覺得在這幾年
我覺得社會上
COVID-19
或者等等的經濟方面
我自己也容易滿足的

可能的確是不及其他的機構
可能很多機構
譬如醫療等等的
我們機構暫時沒有這件事
因為我覺得自主權是直接看到自己是否能夠發揮
就是我看到你這樣做的時候
還有對自己的信心
或者你自己有沒有決心
我覺得跟自主性是很有關係的
想做一些事情
為一件事做好
因為校長也給我們很多機會去嘗試
不只是給我自己
給我們的同事也是
他經常都會說的
就是你放膽去想
放膽去嘗試
想我們發揮一下創意
反而不是很想我們很守舊
每年都在做同一件事情
其實有時候校長也會幫我們想一下
我們可以拿一下當中的點子去做
就不一定是拿你整個的構思
一模一樣拿出來做
我們會抽當中的東西
所以我覺得這個自主權是直接幫到我自己
就是做事無論你說成功感上面
那個感覺我覺得是第一重要的

第二就是我覺得也有這件事情存在在我自己工作當中
變成很多事情我去做的時候
因為我做主任其實不是很多年
我做了準備第五個學年
這幾年其實我自己還是邊做邊學
但是幸好校長是會願意放手讓你去嘗試
你可以這樣做
我自己也有在讀校長課程
就是幾件事情大家都在知識上學習
在實際操作上
校長也會適時介入支援我
也會提醒我怎麼去做
我也可以去發揮一下
如果你說去到讀校長課程這些
專業一點的一些知識上
我覺得不是壓力來的
反而我覺得有一點動力
輔助一下我自己怎麼去平時做的事情
這個也是我自己希望多的
所以這個我反而覺得不是壓力
說真的工作很難緩和的
始終我們是一間宗教的學校
其實校長也有意希望我去慕道
成為一個天主教徒
其實我自己也沒有這方面的想法
的確在這方面我會有一點壓力的
就是我們通常有時候
可能參加 EDB 一些的支援計劃
或者有時候坊間有很多的

譬如賽馬會啊
可能是在學校學了一些東西
但是這個我也不覺得是太大的壓力
反而我覺得是
有一點與時並進
其實自由遊戲
很適合小朋友
反而我覺得當我們學了一個概念而放在學校
我又覺得
這個又滿足的
我又不會覺得很大壓力
反而提升到你的投入的工作
還有我覺得很多東西都是
或者可能說早幾年
在 COVID 前之前
我們有試過做一些戲劇教學
我覺得都是一些不同的形式
去幫到我們的小朋友
所以這個我又不覺得
就是你又享受這些
反而在學校推一些計劃
就不是一推就全校性一起推
因為這樣就很難拿捏到
雖然是一起全校這麼多班去做
但是如果真的想發揮一些計劃
我反而都頗喜歡
是由種子的一些班級
或者班年試了
大家看到噢 OK
或者甚至當中看到
原來有些東西都不行

	原來這樣做
	我們學校會有些什麼產生了
	我們即時去做一些檢討
	才自己下一年再推
	這樣都頗好
	就是有很長長的清晰的計劃
	有時候不是每個人的接受程度這麼高
	變了令到大家
	就是有很大的工作壓力
Q3	work life balance
	其實也沒有說很多
	當然譬如我現在小朋友快升中了
	我會擔心他升中的東西
	因為可能大家都很正面
	我不喜歡藏私密
	我都是一個比較喜歡
	簡單一點
	有些什麼就說了
	就是今天不開心的話
	我們今天就會說出去
	就 OK 的了
	和家人都是這樣相處
	我和朋友或者和同事
	我都是這樣相處
	所以我覺得
	可能這件事情
	都令到我自己的心態
	容易開心一點
	容易處理
Q5	有些什麼
	都是找朋友
	我覺得在工作以外

	或者家庭以外
	我比較多都是約朋友
	比較認識多年的
	我們經常都會維繫住
	我覺得平衡一下
	雖然你說大家小學同學
	大家做的工作
	工種各方面都不同
	但是有時候你會覺得
	真的叫做有一個知己
	家人當然是一個支持
	但是有時候
	我自己在朋友上面
	又有人互相支持
	大家有些共同的嗜好
	有時候一起約出來玩
	輕鬆一下
	我覺得這個
	基本上覺得可以
	平衡你的工作生活
	和朋友之間
	基本上我們比較熟絡的朋友
	他們都認識我家人的
	所以有時候
	偶爾我們可能是
	一些個別的聚會
	我自己和同學
	和以前的同學
	有時候我們都會
	兩個家庭一起出來
	特別是小朋友小時候
	有時候會一起去公園
	一起野餐

玩一玩
我覺得整件事
樂趣都大很多
不只是兩個
有時候我們
有時候有些心事
或者上班
都有些事情想聊一聊
也有時候有些假日
特別是長假期
我們又會一起約
譬如我們幾個
以前的同學
大家都有小朋友
差不多年紀的
所以我們有時候出來
一起拍照
有時候我們上網看到
這個地方
或者佐敦谷的公園
我覺得這些都是
有用一些不同的資源
我們又會善用一下
我們去那邊拍照
做些什麼
所以這個都會的
會拉近了我們
同事但是比較資深一點的
我想有四至五個
我們都會一起約
就算工作以外
我們都會約一起外出
之前多幾年

	因為我都在這裡工作了很久
	以前還沒有小朋友的時候
	我們又會下班
	可能約在一起
	去做蛋糕
	很開心
	所以變成一個關係
	默契都會大一點
Q6	我覺得早幾年
	之前政府又說學券
	又經常爭取免費幼稚園教育
	我覺得這些時間
	是比較緊張的
	可能業界上
	無論是說薪酬
	或者說小朋友
	免費幼稚園教育
	對家長可能是一件非常好的
	免費幼稚園教育
	不用加學費等等
	但是對於我們自己
	在工作上
	大家都會的確有一份擔憂
	首先自己學校的質素
	因為教育質素
	其實很自然
	就是影響到口碑
	家長會不會選擇你學校
	這個看闊一點的時候
	那段時間是會擔心這個比較多
	近幾年
	因為可能有 COVID
	很多人又會移民

	或者你說譬如
	我們自己區內也是
	很多家長有時候都會選擇
	同樣可能都是不用加學費
	或者附近
	那間學校大很多
	有兩層
	他們自然就會去選擇
	我很明白
	人一定會這樣去想去比較
	所以我覺得這個反而是令到
	我們自己在行業上
	在工作上
	是有些壓力的
	就是怎樣可以令到
	我們硬件校舍
	可能沒得怎樣改
	你不會突然間建多一層
	但是我們怎樣可以令到
	裏面的一些軟件的東西
	或者裏面
	我們有些配套的東西
	令到家長都覺得
	我真的要選擇你這間
	我覺得壓力會在這些地方
	就是免費幼兒的教育政策
	會影響到你
	就是工作要有很多的考慮
Q7	新聞那些
	或者近期說到的
	就是來年會不會加薪
	薪酬等等
	我覺得這些聽完

	通常都是會
	有時候會擔憂
	我的擺放方向是這樣的
	會不會直接影響到我們自己的行業
	或者我們自己學校的工作
	我覺得
	未必去到負面
	通常是會令我去
	刺激一下去想
	會想到這件事
	或者譬如可能是
	一些報章等等
	雜誌
	教育的雜誌
	很多時候我會
	影響
	可能這間學校
	做了什麼特色的東西
	這個反而我覺得是一個
	我喜歡看的
	或者譬如這間學校
	這位老師做了什麼
	令到小朋友帶動了什麼氣氛
	我覺得這個又是
	令到自己
	刺激一下思維
	會想一下
	原來這樣做的時候
	又不錯
	又可以幫我的話
	我覺得像一個
	人家是一個先行者

他做了一些事
你看到
很成功
亦都是一個動力
令到自己覺得
人家也可以這樣做
我們可以想一想
未必是 100%
但我覺得可以借他們想一想
很多年前
人們會說
種植
耕種的東西
放進兒教育
人們會覺得
什麼都可以
有時候譬如
我們自己收到一些信件
一些有效
或者小學
等等同區的
他們都會記的
我都喜歡看看
又擴闊一下自己
又知道更多
知道其實業界
或者甚至中小
可以在做什麼
都很相關
我覺得這個對自己
工作又擴闊一點
我覺得自然
自己都會滿足一點

幸福一點
Q8 孔子是因為人師表
人性本善
所以我整個概念
特別在我自己工作上
我就覺得
支持一件事
就是有教無累
不要說因為那個小朋友
就算我們平時
跟同事分享
自己的心都要存在
他不會教不到
只因為我覺得
可能是一個方法
或者是時間
等等的東西
我們用不同的形式
去幫小朋友
我覺得用這個心態
我覺得會開心一點
因為始終我們每一天
都對著不同的小朋友
我們都是對著
一百多個小朋友
他每一天都會有他的變化
每一天都會有他的不同
所以我又覺得
只要自己覺得
他今天頑皮
不代表他明天頑皮
他今天有這個行為
其實可能我們慢慢教他

	其實你可以怎樣做
	他的確會改善
	所以我一想起
	一看到這個思想
	我就想起這個
	可以每一天去
	循循善誘小朋友之外
	家長對於我們的角色
	專師重道
	這個概念
	又甚或乎
	可能是
	一些階級的觀念
	因為儒家思想
	裏面都有很多
	我覺得的確
	沒有以前那麼強
	以前的家長
	對老師是比較
	真的尊重一點
	他自己都是一個榜樣
	說謝謝老師
	我覺得現在
	因為可能
	隨著時間
	他們後一輩
	就是年輕的
	反而我覺得
	我們要教到
	尊師重道
	是反而是
	我們自己的課程
Q9	因為近幾年

	最大經歷的
	就是應該是 COVID 那些
	好像很無奈
	或者這些我們控制不了
	還有我們自己都眼見
	在疫情之下
	其實家長那方面
	就是經濟
	是明顯大的轉變
	有些家長都會
	他自己也會主動
	告訴我們
	變成我們盡量
	都會多了一些支援
	去幫家長
	就不只是教導小朋友
	他們無論是情緒上
	有些可能是因為 COVID 之後
	又沒有工作
	令到自己的經濟
	各方面
	這些都有些影響
	所以我覺得近幾年
	其實反而比較多的是
	做多一些家長教育的事
	甚至我們有時候
	都會讓我們學校社工
	再跟進一下他們的個案
	看看怎樣幫到他們
	Interviewee: HT2

Questions No.	Responses
Q1	家人的認同
	始終你們做教育這一行
	多數都會覺得可以
	可能覺得你做這一行
	我們都會覺得有點驕傲
	如果他們真的看到你工作
	可以幫你做家務
	幫你照顧小朋友
	當然會好一點
	如果很多工作
	回到家再晚上工作
	就變成你無法兼顧
	那是很辛苦的
	特別是 Portfolio 的時間
	或者表演的時間
	你還要回家煮飯
	那一刻就有壓力
	還有之前進修
	我們這一行都要不停進修
	加上進修
	其實你完全沒有時間
	你本身自己兼顧的都很難
	可能一星期反兩三天
	讀完的就好一點
	或者現在前職已經讀了 degree 就好一點
	如果不是兼顧三天就很難
	家務是其中一樣
	可以不做那麼多
	不是每天都需要很清潔
	每天都要拖地

Q2	但你工作和照顧小朋友
	就一定要了
	因為我們是全日學校
	變成我們中間小朋友睡覺
	可以做下耶，少極都有一個鐘
	所以我們回家做的工作 workload
	可能比起某些幼稚
	會少一點
	所以還可以
	聽同學說回家有很多工作
	你們那時候有沒有
	回家的時候
	你們經常都要做很多
	我們已經不算
	回家一定會做很多
	可能都做得完
	有些做不完的話
	回家不停做
	家人一定會稱讚你
	很多手帳
	對
	又或者打東西
	小孩
	媽媽你為什麼不和我玩
	幻想就是媽媽在看著電腦
	自己做飯
	自己等他睡了
	你自己晚上再做
	但你自己就真的沒什麼可以睡
	這應該是最大的
	團隊合作
	大家互相體諒
	如果大家都覺得很開心

	辛苦都不要緊
	這件事是重要的
	你說心甘情願也是一個因素
	但現在我們其實價錢已經比以前好很多
	假期也不會太差
	但最主要可能是工作量
	還有同事相處
	你的工作對你有沒有認同你的機構
	這是最重要的
Q3	應付到就 ok
	應付不到就不行
	我們這裡就應付得到
	都知道是忙的
	但因為外面的人聽得更忙
	覺得這裡是一個天堂
	即是不需要受到停課的壓力
	影響的情況下
	工作量都可以接受
	都 ok 有要求
	但有要求其實都對的
	現在的問題是提高了師資
	提高了對我們
	可能薪金
	正常都是專業給家長
	家長沒理由學歷比我們還要專業
	我們本身讀完的
	其實就沒有壓力
	未讀的就會有壓力
	但也沒辦法
	其實都是需要去讀的
	但希望有支援給他們

	我突然要讀的時候
	我還要背著這麼多東西
	可能又要反早放晏
	我又要上學
	又要跟別人調班
	看看有沒有支持他們
	就會好一點
	應該有的
	不過現在是整個大氣候
	係學生少咗
	那個憂慮是有的
	工作上是有
	是有壓力的
	教小朋友方面
	工作方面
Q4	不過都要慢慢自己去調節
	下班就會咁
	因為我近
	下班是有時間的
	可能用得腦較久
	其實是會累的
	就算
	讓你去街上
	或者做 Facial
	你都會累
	會到唔願郁的那一刻
	你可以靜下來
	但自己的腦袋也會累
	不想去動
	但其實多去做
	對你來說是會開心的
Q5	我通常係朋友
	或者比較好傾

	就是同行
	了解一點
	同行的意思是
	以前的舊同事
	或者讀書認識仲有聯絡的朋友
	這樣會明白一點
	因為我做主任
	就和同事說
	以前做老師
	當然和同事
	也有同行的舊同事
	或者做我的職位
	可以分享一下大家唔同學校
	壓力如何
	都有這個困難
	明白大家都有這個困難
	處境也是這樣
	或者有些東西你不懂
	他可以幫你解決
	幫你想方法去做
	就多一點
	家人就不太明白
	家人就不太支援
	也不想和家人說這些
	因為他們也不太明白
	再花多一點時間解釋
	對
	始終也不會明白
Q6	師生比例
	其實師生比例
	慢慢收窄了之後
	如果比例少一點
	或者可以做行政

	就照顧到你的工作量
	但政府給了錢之後
	其實很多的規限
	只是報價都頭暈
	或者你說像現在
	有很多要求
	很多報告要寫
	給了錢又要去做
	國安那些教育
	那些報告又多了
	這一類是現在不停推出來
	又給了錢你們學校的時候
	收到很緊
	沒有以前那麼主導
	但有它的好處
	始終要監管
	就不像以前那些人
	經常說校長是山寨王
	真的有監管
	但有很多報告上的東西
	多咗 paper work 就好叻
	我覺得過教政策
	是不停地加
	不停地加數目
	學的內容
	但其實會否很專業
	需不需要學那麼多
	不停地加深
	優化內容越來越多
	但其實只有場次
	沒有廣闊到整個專業
	是否真的要讀那麼多科
	如果不是讀那麼多科

	我女兒經常問我
	我為何要學圓周
	我日後都不會用
	其實我問
	你學了後想讀數學
	真的有需要
	但你對他們說太多
	小學課程
	因為整個課程應該要裁剪
	現在不停地加
	應該要收窄
	但專業
	會否早點分科
	還是怎樣
	真的要靠他們去想
	教得很深
Q7	大眾傳媒去讚優兒教育
	我覺得比較少啲
	你覺得比較負面
	傳媒很難令人了解教書
	不是用書來講而係要寫教案
	他們不明白
	現在好一點
	以前更差
Q8	移民會中國
	現在選擇多了
	可能之前有些
	遠一點的學校沒有位置
	過來讀書
	現在選擇多了
	大學或名校
	多學生或少學生都選擇了
	名校

	流不過來
	就影響市場因素
	政府 KG 的問題就不多
	我讀書的兩年
	心態會
	私校的
	私校兩歲就立即離開
	因為一千元
	我們兩歲還可以
	退錢給他們
	因為我們是全日
	不能說全年
	都要交幾百元
	對他們來說
	幾百元是零
	他們不明白
	為什麼你們收錢
	收這麼貴
	其實我們是全日
	政府只收了幾千元
	他們是半日
	了解家長就了解
	可能加多了
	國安教育
	很多活動的元素
	都要加進去
	例如升旗
	要慢慢調整
	教小朋友
	每個活動都要加進去
	我們又怕做錯
	回歸
	十月一日國慶

	都一定要大型一點
	不像之前
	奏國歌
	做所有的事
	但都要儀式是莊嚴
	不要做錯
	這兩年
	都要適應
	社會、政治等等
	氣候的轉變都會影響
	但小朋友都喜歡
	始終都一起出來
	不過我們就要
	有時間去適應
Q9	因為儒家思想
	和傳統思想都是尊師重道
	我們以前
	一直都是聽老師說
	亦都會期望
	我們做老師的時候
	學生和家長都會
	尊重你
	我們這裡有小朋友
	其實是乖的
	不過有些家長
	都會有些挑戰
	不過我們這一區的家長
	始終是平民一點
	都盡量聽你的意見
	我覺得是很尊嚴的
	但有些可能
	有錢一點的
	他們就會

	這方面是會影響到
	都很大壓力
	我們的壓力就是
	我們在家裡支援不到
	但起碼他們都聽我們說
	他們的壓力就是
	可能家長會的東西比老師多
	兩方面的壓力
Q10	我們這行很難請假
	如果比起
	其他行業
	有需要的時候
	請了假
	不是很嚴重
	但有親子活動
	可以請假
	不會覺得對不起小朋友
	可能會覺得輕鬆
	可能工作上
	有時很難
	如果同事同步
	就這樣
	在團隊上的協調
	維持良好的水平
	幸福感會提升
	不然就常被人拖住
	很難
	會不會有支援
	給老師
	每一年都評估一下她的心理狀況
	而家愈嚟愈多人都有情緒病
	你不覺得嗎
	你壓力太大

幼稚園老師會很多
很多朋友都有
在情緒上給老師多些支援
專業的支援
很普通
好似身體檢查一樣
定期或每一年
身體狀況
精神上
身心都要支援
希望讓她知道
這不是醜事

	COVID-19 那些
	會不會這些令到
	再繼續工作會有影響
	那都是一種壓力
	家人的支持溝通
	但是有時候說得多
	怕他們擔心
	其實我們工作教育是很忙碌的
	沒有那麼多時間可以陪伴他們
	所以這裡也要拿捏老人家
	對自己的工作上的了解
	還有他叫我們不要那麼辛苦
	但是我們也有壓力的
	哥哥結婚之後
	他自己的家庭
	我變成對父母
	父母照顧就會多了
	可能是身體力行
	或者是經濟上的事情也會多了
	時間陪伴
	變成好像很單一
	只有我一個去處理
	公務也繁忙的
	變成有時候也兩頭不到岸
	就是有些拉力在兩頭
	家人也可能會很希望你陪我多一點
	老人家也想見你
	他們也是這樣擔心你
Q2	可能人事變動
	因為覺得很投入了
	跟同事有感情
	有默契

然後工作上很順利
就是學校小朋友幫到家庭越來越好
他們總有一些不同的個人因素
結婚搬家
生小孩
很多因素
大家要分手的時候
要分開
其實不捨得之餘
又覺得他有新的發展
而承擔一些工作的重組分工
一重組分工
就會要了解同事的意向
或者優勢等等
又要再動動腦筋
要有很厲害的智慧
才可以游說同事
要在不同崗位下力量
這也是一些壓力
過往一年
一半多是移民
還有去一些比較輕散的工作
因為 COVID-19 和社運這兩三年
其實大家心態很不同
不是轉工, 是轉行
變成了開心的發展
在工作裡面有不同同事的去留會影響到
因為我們管理層、中層
有些領袖、Mentor 的角色
也是一些承傳知識、智慧給一些新晉的同事

這方面其實也是要有一個職責在
有一個社會責任在
也想多花一些時間
但是時間又不夠
有時候年輕一代
原來跟我們的工作理念、方向
或者教育的想法有些不同
要跟他們去
好像朋友形式
或者師徒形式
或者姐妹形式
就是很親切
要友善地跟他們聊天
這裡也是一個很新的智慧拿捏的方向
因為 XYZ 世代
你說代溝也沒有達到
但是也是要磨合
磨合的一個過程
因為本身我們機構有一些計劃要做的
就是對家庭、對小朋友好的計劃
同時你去到我們老師層面的時候
他們要認識這個計劃
要願意覺得這個計劃是好的計劃
其實也要花心神去跟他們溝通
所以你說自主性
其實有時候一半一半
除了自己決定的事情
還要跟同事一起去處理
也有很多持份者去幫我們想一些智慧的學校方向
我也有很多進修的项目

	就是工作需要
	覺得工作需要
	所以就學一下這個、學一下那個
	或者有時候也會覺得同事未必認識這個東西
	我又想學了回來
	跟他們分享一下的時候
	自己在這個位置的層面
	就會比較八卦
	想學多一點東西
	但是又看到有些同事原來
	他未必喜歡在這個行業裡面
	涉獵這麼多範疇
	因為我們是綜合教學
	不是專科專教
	好像每樣東西都要拿捏
	你說是音體藝
	或者是科數
	全部都是全科教學
	變成同事未必有興趣這麼多的科目
	所以我們也要看同事的優勢
	我們也是由我們出發去學習了
	尤其是社會
	可能教育局很多的政策變動
	這些其實也是一個學習
	就是有一些法律、法例
	都是我們學了
	然後要跟我們分享
	其實也有很多學習的東西
	終身學習
Q3	取得一個平衡
	也很憂慮

	是,因為星期六、日其實也有些工作
	我們這一行一定是星期六、日
	是,現在經常都覺得要社區性一點
	不要只是在學校層面
	可能要出去有些交流的活動
	即是互訪等等
	甚至是宗教活動也是星期天的
	有些宗教活動可能你回自己的教會之餘
	又會抽空去自己學校所屬的區的教會
	可能這些就有些時間真的要撥出來
	是,星期六、日也要跟工作相關的時間
	是,尤其是現在年頭年尾
	真的要還債
	你去過我的畢業禮
	或者去過我的週年慶典
	我們要去一下不同的
	大家互相支持
	當然有觀摩的作用
Q4	是,你說旅行復常了
	其實未復常
	前後大家在我們幼稚園
	中間是沒有什麼時間去
	我們只放紅日
	因為是幼兒中心
	是長存日制
	所以除了暑假那一個多星期
	你覺得是真的
	兩個星期

	是,沒有了
	那個星期可以
	小朋友不上學
	同事也一起放假
	如果你在平日自己放兩三天
	想去一下離島也好
	總有電話找你
	其實 Me time 這件事是挺難的
	有 Me time
	其實也有一點
	可能在那裏犧牲了 Me time
	去做這份工作要做的事
	是,也挺多時候
	晚上同事也會找你
Q5	家人、同事和社區資源
	可能朋友也可以
	其實各方面都提供得到
	各方面都有不同的提供
	因為如果同事在工作上幫到忙
	有時候讓大家去紓解兩句
	其實大家會正向的
	紓解完之後
	又會用正向的心去繼續工作
	家人就會更加去支持
	一直都是支持
	社區那些就真的
	因為其實也去過一些
	例如教會
	或者有些參加一些社區
	有音樂治療
	或者有一些園藝等等
	其實玩這些都很開心的
	還有滑油畫也試過

	這些都會幫到
	真的要去做一下
	因為這些才可以
	停止一些我覺得不是工作的事情
	做一些好像
	跟工作沒有什麼關係的
	減壓的活動都會好一點
	做這些活動的時候
	或者朋友一起去
	例如回教會那些
	都會不會有同事或者家人一起去
	教會就是以前的同學
	在這些範疇就拿到很多正面的積極的支持
Q6	國安法
	我覺得認識國民教育是真的有需要的
	而我們推行的時候
	我們都是一個平常心
	因為始終都是有需要
	而都是在推行的時候
	可能家長、同事那方面
	要怎樣慢慢去了解
	而心都是要平常心去處理
	因為總有教育局慢慢慢慢
	要考國安法的測試
	然後之前不用
	現在要入職的時候
	一定要要的時候
	同時就會覺得我要轉高
	變成那裡都會
	最近討論空間是會大了
	多了人要考

	又不夠位考
	然後又要加位考
	其他政策
	其實有很多津貼
	譬如非華語
	有非華語的津貼
	因為有政策想我們去幫它
	有很多想我們
	資訊科技高一點
	有校園智慧的津貼
	也是一個政策
	我們校網要有中英文
	很多津貼的時候
	都是幫到學校
	但那個工作工序
	可能是非華語
	或是對資訊科技方面的政策的改變
	都會影響到工作量
Q7	看了就當是真的
	有時恐怖的
	就會
	害怕
	喝一口湯都會害怕
	有時看同事
	又紛紛在說的時候
	有些同事又覺得
	不如這樣說
	氣氛有點
	嚴肅一點
	有些恐怖的新聞
	可能有些八卦性
	可能是一些藝人

	如果談這些
	都覺得他們好像
	有些爭拗性
	對觀點角度
	同事之間
	都會拿一些議題出來討論
	都會有這些
	通常他們吃飯時間
	未必輕輕鬆鬆地
	影響到我們
	最早前就是幼兒的傳媒
	都挺大的一件事
	好像未試過
	變了可能
	要去整 CCTV
	學校剛剛簽了
	或者有些指引
	要加強行政工作
	要逐個派
	要簽名
	要官貨物組
	要簽名
	睇 CCTV 都要簽名
	每次都要看
	看完每一份東西都要簽名
	證明你看了
	都有些影響
	工序就多了很多量
Q8	都大影響
	社運或者
	移民等等
	本身我們這行
	好像經常自食其力

	真的要收到學生
	有資金
	以往政府資助更少
	現在有政府資助都要收到學生才有資助
	變了老師
	真的流失會高
	真的有些覺得這行
	一個人要負責很多東西
	因為收生的情況
	會減人手
	但是有些不同的位置
	維修角落
	都是要大家一起去分工
	所以其實這行
	相對地好像越來越少人
	但是工作量
	就變相地多了
	所以都是一個壓力
	收生和資源
	都有些掛勾
	都影響到
Q9	以往其實都老師都有教
	中國傳統習俗的起源
	或者它的習俗節慶, 食物等等
	其實他們現在都喜歡教的
	他們一直都喜歡
	做這件事
	再講到一些歷史
	或者國情
	他們就變了
	始終我們自己一代的教育
	都未去到這麼深入

	始終以前殖民地
	去到其實現在
	我們的老師都不是太了解那麼多
	未必可以那麼教導出來
	可能都還是圍繞在節日
	有興趣一點
	還有小朋友又好像有得玩
	最主要是課程裏面
	可以探索到一些事情
Q10	我覺得都是團隊從教育出發
	因為老師喜歡小朋友做這行
	他一定想教育學提升
	如果教育學裏面
	能夠大家互相幫助
	有個合適的教學水準
	令到家庭和小朋友
	讚賞老師
	鼓勵性很高的時候
	其實大家就願意
	多一點時間都想做好一點
	讓小朋友投入一點玩這件事
	他們做這行一定是想小朋友開心
	學到東西
	在這裏其實慢慢團隊就會建立
	你幫我我幫你
	在教學上有不同的角落去分擔
	因為這件事見到他們在這裏
	有快樂的感覺
	我相信
	他們很喜歡做手作
	這裏是可以幫到他們的
	有時會覺得
	我們 Plan do Review

或者備課、官課、反思	
其實都是一個過程	
容許團隊有很多	
的甩漏、出錯	
當然是小小的出錯	
錯誤是可以大家包容	
大家有個展望	
有個期望	
這些想法其實	
在我們品格計劃裏面一直推行	
成長心態其實一直同時	
在這兩三年	
吸收的時候	
都過渡到社運和疫情	
我覺得已經是很重要	
共渡時艱	
這段時間	
很多的轉變都影響到	
每一個人在團隊裏面的心情	
希望整個團隊可以一起繼續努力	
提升大家的幸福感	
Questions	
No.	Responses
Q1	家庭最重要就是
	都要支持我的工作
	因為始終我都是全職工作
	都很長時間
	但是就慶幸我現在工作的單位
	其實都可以
	沒有說要加班這麼長時間
	所以變成可以在工作時間內
	可以做好我要做的事情
	所以變成家庭上

因為我自己本人
其實我是未婚的
所以變成我比較自由度多一點
所以變成我可以在工作上放很多時間
所以變成家庭上
就支持我的生活上
就是那些
幫我煮飯等等
所以變成我
因為家庭有後盾的支持
家人在精神上都很支持我的工作
所以變成我暫時可以在
現在這個崗位上
都可以應付得到
就是應付月月的
都可以的
就是全程投入去工作
全程投入
就是家庭裡面的角色可能都會是女兒
我是自己獨立生活的
只不過是因為家庭的支持
就是支持我的食物方面
其他的方面都是我自己獨立搬出來住的
所以我其實要自己照顧自己
自己照顧自己
那也沒問題的
很多家務那些都要自己做
因為工作和暫時家庭上
生活暫時都做到平衡的
因為始終爸爸媽媽都年紀大了

	所以其實都覺得
	就是作為子女都是盡量有機會
	時間就陪伴他們
	所以變成我們暫時最忙的時間
	就真的好像現在這些時間
	就是暑期
	就是學期完結
	然後再開新學期的時候
	就最忙的
	在這個忙的時間
	他們都希望多一點回去吃飯
	但是有時候因為忙的時候
	可能偶爾也要加班
	那變成就會有一點影響了情況
	但是我想過了這個暑期之後
	就應該問題就沒了
	就是開學之後就可以了
	就是我作為一個崗位而言
	那好像跟老師有一點不一樣
	老師就是一開始就很忙很忙
	就是大家的工作性質不同
	還有就是他們主要是做一些前線的
	就是老師有前線工作
	那我是支持他們的
	但是我們就想在思想上
	思考上就是一些決策
	或者是一些協調的功夫
	所以變成那個工作的性質又不同
Q2	關於工作上的因素
	其實政府上的資源的支持也很重要

	近年其實政府也給了很多不同的資源給我們
	譬如說一些健康校園
	空氣質素的
	就是買一些設備去令空氣質素改善
	又或者是一些資訊科技的投入資源
	也有很多不同的
	比如中華文化的資源
	交友合作的資源
	很多資源下來的時候
	其實業界
	有時候業界裡面就是
	因為多資源運用的時候
	其實就可以信心很多
	所以這個是政府資源
	當然就是他們的很多培訓
	就變成了業界的老師或者是校長
	參加了這些培訓之後
	其實也增長了自己的知識技能
	所以就變成了在工作上再順暢一點
	類似是這樣
	就是這個資源上面的情況
	都會令到自己的幸福感
	那方面也會有些提升
	最重要就是工作的暢順
	這樣就可以在工作時間內完成自己的情況
	也可以滿足到家長、老師、持訓者
	就是校董會的要求

當然我的工作量
就是兩體的
我會用腦的比較多
或者是不同的持訓者協調
時間上會用得更多
所以就變成了這個量上面
其實我暫時也覺得自己能夠處理得到
我們暫時也覺得自己能夠控制得到
工作的自主權
因為其實工作也需要交代
但是要交代之餘
其實自己的自主去決策的權力
其實也是校東會授權給我的
當然校董會跟我關係是 OK 的
所以變成了我們有些決策上
我可以很大的自主去處理
然後我們再報告給校東會
又或者一起討論的
所以這方面也會免卻了很多要架床疊屋的問題
可能免卻了要跟很多架構交代
所以相對地簡單的時候
工作就會更順利
因為你有自主的時候
其實你不會受制肘
變成了比較容易去做任何事情
因為教育局也會有要求
就是每一個人
老師或者校長
所以不斷進修的
但是這方面有些進修比較長的

變成了我這個角色也未必能夠參加很多
因為本身最基本的要求
就是學前教育的我們已經完成了
當然不是完成了
就止於此
不斷再去進修
如果一些比較長期的
我們真的難一點參與
但是如果是短期的
有很多短期的課程
或者是一些工作坊
或者是一些 Zoom 的課程
就會方便我們去參與
所以這個也有影響的
短期的課程就會比較容易一點
長期的課程可能在時間上已經要配合
還有要有優次的篩選
通常這些專業發展的課程
無論長期或者短期
是你自己自發去想報名的
還是可能在職場上也有要求要你去加強
因為其實局方也有很多需要你去參與的課程
因為一定要知道
所以那些會參與
有些當然是讓你去選擇的
所以變成了在一定程度上我們就可以自己去選擇
但是當然我們也希望盡量參加多少就多少

	但是太多也會影響到本身的工作上的安排
	所以我們就要適當地去篩選
Q3	工作和家庭的平衡
	我想最主要就是要求
	還有陸續其實家長的要求也會越來越多
	所以變成了我們要花多一點時間去加強溝通
	所以一定要得到他們的支持才容易
	如果真的會有投訴的話
	其實也要花一點時間去處理投訴
	可能也會用多一點時間
	但是如果我們要做一個加強合作的工夫
	我們會用多一點錢和心機
	所以也會影響到工作的時間
	加強合作這方面用多了時間
	會不會也會影響到你和家人的相處時間
	或者質素會不會有影響令你擔心呢?
	偶爾也會有一點時間上
	不是很經常
	有時候可能是星期六、日的時間
	其實也算是正常的
	因為和家人合作也要星期六、日的時間
	通常家長也要上班
	星期六、日就會多一點時間去做親子活動
	我們也不是經常

	偶爾也會暫時有一點
Q4	其中一個原因是因為
	其實很集中精力在全日多時間工作
	下班後回家其實真的很累
	所以如果有進修的課程可以參加
	如果沒有的話
	回家時純粹是 V 時間
	或者是和家人一起吃飯
	很休閒地聽電視
	會比較累
	因為下班後已經沒有電
	反而星期六、日如果沒有親子活動
	我會做義工
	我也會有幫忙做義工
	都是機構相關義工還是社會的?
	也是機構的
	周圍會有一些活動
	可以參加的人可以做到
	會開心一點
	始終也會再面對多一些
	和自己業界不同的人
	所以經歷多了
	認識多了朋友
	我覺得這也幫助到
	在工作上
	例如在義工中認識了某個人
	有需要幫忙的可以問問意見
	可以擴闊視野
Q5	如果是朋友
	有些是業界
	有些是以前讀社工的

	我們也有社工的朋友
	所以有些情況
	不開心
	或者在工作上
	大家已經到了管理層的階段
	都會問
	例如在管理上
	如何處理人事問題
	都會和朋友家人談談
	當然家人就盡量
	我們很少令老人家擔心
	至於社區
	暫時未到這麼嚴重
	有什麼問題
	暫時社區沒有特別去找幫助
	每個人的處理情緒方法都不同
	我自己就會找朋友
Q6	幼兒教育就在那裏
	教育政策上
	其實因為要求都會多了
	亦都和以前有些分別
	所以我們需要跟從政策去走
	但暫時我們都跟得上
	譬如現在的重點
	發展中華文化
	但這方面未必和業界很擅長
	所以我們都要去找資源
	正好我們學校的社區
	都有一些龍獅隊
	因為我們這個地方是坑口
	他們有個龍獅隊或麒麟隊
	關於中華文化的事
	原來是我們自己家長去做的

	因為坑口是比較少人的村
	所以他們已經做了每年一些習俗
	所以才發現原來家長和小朋友都在我們學校
	所以這方面可以配合社區上的資源
	或者一些情況
	當然未至於是政策
	只要有教育政策就可以幫助我們
	去推廣中華文化
	現在相關影響比較大
	都是在教育政策上
	比較注意中華文化的進步因素
	社區通常有些道路的改善
	譬如附近有個地方需要
	當時的護船處或交通
	其實他們都會諮詢我們
	我們都覺得還可以
	但我們很多家長都是開車進來的
	他們都會講清楚何時怎樣改路
	因為他們都認識社區
	區議員都會有來探訪
	都會捐一些物資
	定期來
	他們不會定期來
	尤其是疫情期間特別多
	都可以捐一些物資給學校
	我們對隔壁的教會
	都保持一些關係
	他們都會過來探訪
	我們都保持良好關係
	變成社區上可以好一點運用
	搞好鄰里關係

Q7	以前我業界多一段時間
	我們都會看 Baby Kingdom
	Baby Kingdom 會看網上的家長
	如何看學校
	近年家長通常會用 Facebook
	或者是一些交流區
	其實我們也有加入
	例如將軍澳交流區
	我們也是其中一份
	將軍澳交流區
	在 Facebook
	我們會看家長
	我初搬進來
	究竟是哪一間學校會好一點
	家長就會有意見
	當然我們就少出聲
	我們會看
	從而知道原來家長
	對我們學校的觀感
	或者社區人士對我們的想法
	是怎樣的
	正面也好
	負面也好
	負面我們會想
	原來他們對我們有這樣的意見
	我們就想想如何改善
	透過這些
	另外因為學校也需要宣傳
	所以我們也透過一些媒體
	回來拍攝一些節目
	放在社交媒體
	當作是介紹一下學校的情況

希望可以多一些家長認識我們學校
所以大眾媒體的影響也大
因為始終現在我們
媒體到處注視
很多社會事件
所以我們更加要小心一點去做
不希望有些特別大的不好的事件發生
引致傳媒過來拍攝
所以我們會盡量互相監察
因為始終媒體也會
按照教育的政策或安排去留意
所以我們更加要處理好
尤其是現在很多虐兒的事件
在現在的社會裡也多一些情況出現
所以我們也會很小心
留意家長如何照顧小朋友
因為我們有駐校社工
他們也會特別留意
因為政府很注重這方面的政策
特別是家長會否有虐兒的情況出現
社會對這個意識提高了很多
所以學校也相對地
要加強老師的意識
所以會影響傳媒對學校的監察
我們要更加謹慎一點
也會有一點壓力
所以政法也有
傳媒也幫助你認識市場家長的需要

	也很正面地邀請他們回來報道下一位
	那邊也會有壓力
	可能也會擔心會成為某些事件的焦點
	所以你會留意多一點
Q8	社會環境最大都是受疫情影響
	其實疫情對我們影響也是因為收生變差
	所以在這段期間
	資源緊張和家長的關係上
	也有關於學費上的安排
	但慶幸也能處理
	但因為疫情
	再加上香港社會環境的情況
	也有很多移民
	例如同事或家長也會移民去別的地方
	人數就會下降
	再加上我們也有很多非華語學生
	他們通常讀到第二年
	然後就會轉到國際學校
	他們會轉到那裡讀
	現在國際學校的策略也提早收回年輕的學生
	變相在競爭上
	整個學制改變了
	以前不會收 N 班或 K1 的學生
	現在會提前收
	現在我們在學生的家長選擇上
	他們會覺得
	因為他們都是非華裔學生
	可能會用自己家鄉語言的學校

	所以在這方面有影響
	影響了收生
	移民也影響了很多同事
	資深同事也會離開
	當然業界也有很多人補充
	但始終這類型的都是新的
	換新血
	有好有壞
	很多資深的也會移民
	所以會有影響
	移民的情況是過往一年還是過往幾年?
	移民是過往一年的事
	之前是少一點
	這年是很多
	現在這個學期有同事會去外國讀書
	也會移民
	以為去年已經完結了
	現在疫情開放了
	因為全球交通便利
	所以更多移民
	之前是有社會事件影響了
	現在通關後
	他們覺得更容易
	所以會有更多同事離開
	或者家長回原居地
	你們的非華裔學生不單止流亞裔
	有些美國、英國、日本、俄羅斯
	也有很多不同國籍
	印度、印尼
	我們學校不同膚色不同種族
	這是我們學校的特色

	特色之餘
	也會有很多隱憂
	也會有很多變化
	所以可能培養了他們學中文
	學了一年兩年
	然後又回原居地
	或者去別的地方又學英文
	變了有一點點
	會有影響
Q9	因為我年紀也有一點
	也是受香港的教育
	香港教育也會受儒家思想
	譬如在品德教學上
	其實也很好
	例如四書五經
	學了很多文學的東西
	其實也會影響到文化修養
	所以這一方面我覺得是好的
	尤其是對儒教
	在品德上
	其實是需要學習一些孝道
	或者是真的要有禮貌
	所以我覺得這方向其實是好的
	因為政府也積極推廣中國文化
	其中儒家文化思想是最大影響的
	這個就是未必每個新派的同事
	所謂新派的同事都是年輕一點
	或者他們對於傳統文化的認受性
	只是有些很再深層次
	譬如說會不會每個同事都認識呢
	或者想法
	或者他們的受到多少
	接受了多少

	都是我們要掌握的
	所以這一方面也會有一點
	我們也要不斷地尋求資源
	究竟哪裡可以幫到他們更多
	在尋找資源上
	需要一點時間
	你覺得在這個工作環境裏
	除了中國文化之外
	有沒有其他類型的文化
	也在影響你的角色呢?
	因為我們也有很多不同國家的學生
	我們當作是一個中國和西方的
	暫時可以說是二分化
	其實西方的家長
	對於學校的要求也有不同
	所以他們對小朋友的教養也有分別
	所以他們在香港讀書的時候
	我們在文化方面也會有一點衝擊
	也需要時間去解釋給他們聽
	為什麼我們在香港會這樣做
	所以這裡就有一點
	有沒有一些例子
	家長會特別有疑問呢?
	譬如說在功課上
	我們的家長也會覺得
	其實也不用做功課
	西方的家長覺得也不需要
	做太多功課
	香港的家長覺得不做功課也不行
	功課也不行
	當然也會有一個平衡

	其實功課也會照樣出的
	但是對於西方的家長
	不重要的
	你做就做吧
	但是我們也會協助他們完成
	如果小朋友真的不能夠完成
	或者不能夠完成這麼多
	譬如寫字的數量
	未必很多
	總之他寫到
	但是他學到
	我們也接受
	其實也會有一個平衡
Q10	如果業界來說
	說實話
	雖然政府資源多了
	但是老師的薪酬
	其實一直都是一個
	大家都很關注的
	就是那個薪級別
	中小學其實是有的
	但是業界幼稚園是沒有的
	現在的問題出現了
	就是很多資深的同事
	可能他一直在某一間學校
	這樣做的時候
	其實他每年那個
	因為沒有跟薪級別的關係
	有些學校會有跟
	有些學校沒有跟
	那就令到他可能真的
	在職場上的流動性
	會比較覺得比較難一點

	所以變成如果
	但是又反過來
	再轉出去工作
	也未必能夠銜接到那個資歷
	所以在這方面
	當然也明白政府也在做事
	但是暫時也沒有新級別
	也沒有一個很大的保障的時候
	其實業界同事也會有一點灰姑娘 這樣
	可能
	有兩個姐姐在
	會有一點看前景上
	可能未必是很樂觀
	會有憂慮
	所以如果這方面有些改善的話
	因為幼稚園和中小學
	也沒有說哪一個教育是重要性感
	其實也會各有各的重要性
	但是如果拉勻了
	會令到同事的工作上的滿足感幸 福感
	或者自己生活的保障會多一點
	我想可能業界的安排
	大眾對於學校
	尤其是幼稚園
	那個想法也是
	現在慢慢改變
	因為有些其實仍然還有一些家長
	或者可能有些
	在尊重老師上
	所以要加多一點力
	是的 因為始終教育儒家文化

專師中道
但是到了現在這個環境
這個社會有很多不同文化的交流 的時候
其實未必做到這一點
所以同事在這一點上
他們自己也會有些沮喪
或者會不開心
就是沒有得到家長的尊重
人們也會覺得我們幼教界
不是說只是照顧孩子這麼簡單
其實也是一個很專業的學校
教育上是銜接小學中學
不是只是小學中學才叫正式的教育
15 年來的教育也是包含了幼兒教育
所以可能這邊
就是政府可能也希望多一點
令到大眾對於幼教界的看法
當然幼教界也要自強
也要多告訴人家在做什麼
要專業一點的時候
家長也會放心一點