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## Influence of School Environment on Occupational Strain among Public School Teachers in Sapang Dalaga District, Schools Division of Misamis Occidental

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aimed to determine the influence of school environment on occupational strain among public school teachers in Sapang Dalaga District, Schools Division of Misamis Occidental, during the school year 2025-2026. It involved 144 public school teacher-respondents and employed the survey descriptive-correlational research design using a questionnaire checklist. The data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient. Results revealed that perceived the school environment as high overall, with administrative/leadership support rated very high, while physical facilities/resources, classroom conditions, collegial relationships, and recognition were rated high. Occupational strain was rated average, with physical strain slightly higher than emotional strain. The test of relationship revealed a significant negative relationship between school environment and occupational strain, indicating that a better school environment is associated with lower occupational strain among teachers. It is concluded that supportive school conditions, especially strong leadership support, adequate resources, positive collegial relationships, and recognition practices, help reduce teachers' physical and emotional strain. Based on the findings, DepEd officials, school heads, and district/division supervisors are encouraged to strengthen teacher well-being programs, sustain supportive leadership practices, improve classroom conditions and facilities, promote recognition mechanisms, and provide wellness and psychosocial support initiatives. Teachers are also encouraged to participate in professional learning communities, communicate work-related concerns, and practice coping strategies that reduce occupational strain. Future researchers may expand the study by including other districts and examining other factors such as coping mechanisms, resilience, workload, and social support.

**KEYWORDS:** school environment, occupational strain, physical strain, emotional strain, administrative/leadership support, public school teachers, Sapang Dalaga District, Misamis Occidental, Philippines

### INTRODUCTION

The school environment plays an important role in shaping teachers' work experiences because it includes the physical, social, and organizational conditions that support or hinder daily teaching tasks. A positive school environment is characterized by adequate facilities, conducive classroom conditions, supportive leadership, strong collegial relationships, and fair recognition practices, all of which help teachers perform their duties effectively and reduce work-related stress. According to Hascher and Waber (2021), teachers' well-being is strongly influenced by the quality of their school environment, particularly the social relationships, support systems, and working conditions present in the school. Thus, when teachers work in a safe, supportive, and resourceful school environment, they are more likely to feel motivated, valued, and capable of handling professional responsibilities.

Occupational strain refers to the physical and emotional pressure experienced by teachers when work demands become heavy, prolonged, or difficult to manage. It may appear through fatigue, headache, body pain, sleep disturbance, irritability, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and reduced motivation, especially when teachers face excessive workload, limited resources, classroom challenges, and administrative responsibilities. According to Agyapong et al. (2022), teachers are vulnerable to stress, burnout, anxiety, and other mental health concerns when school-related pressures are not properly addressed. Thus, occupational strain is an important concern in education because it affects not only teachers' well-being but also their classroom performance, professional commitment, and ability to provide quality instruction.

Teacher performance refers to the extent to which teachers effectively carry out their instructional, professional, and school-related responsibilities to promote quality learning outcomes. It includes lesson planning, classroom management, delivery of instruction, assessment of learners' progress, professional behavior, and participation in school activities. According to Klassen and Kim (2019), teacher performance is strongly connected to teachers' effectiveness, motivation, and ability to manage classroom demands, which directly influence students' learning

experiences and achievement. Thus, high teacher performance is essential in ensuring that learners receive meaningful instruction, appropriate guidance, and a supportive classroom environment that contributes to their academic success.

Despite the increasing body of literature showing that school climate, leadership support, collegial relationships, recognition practices, and workplace resources influence teachers' well-being, a clear research gap remains in the context of Sapang Dalaga District, Schools Division of Misamis Occidental. Many existing studies on teacher stress, burnout, and well-being have been conducted in international, urban, or broader provincial settings; thus, their findings may not fully reflect the actual conditions of teachers in smaller and rural public school districts. Teachers in these areas may experience distinct workplace realities, such as limited school facilities, inadequate instructional resources, classroom congestion, multi-grade or overloaded teaching assignments, and varying levels of administrative and peer support. Moreover, previous studies often discuss teacher stress in general terms and give limited attention to occupational strain as a specific outcome measured through physical and emotional strain. There is also limited localized evidence examining how particular dimensions of the school environment, such as physical facilities/resources, classroom conditions, administrative/leadership support, collegial relationships, and recognition practices, are associated with teachers' occupational strain. Although the Job Demands–Resources Model explains that supportive work environments can reduce strain by strengthening resources and buffering work demands, this relationship has not been sufficiently examined among public school teachers in Sapang Dalaga District. Hence, this study is necessary to provide district-based empirical evidence that may guide DepEd officials, school heads, and district supervisors in developing relevant school improvement initiatives, teacher well-being programs, and context-responsive interventions to reduce occupational strain among teachers.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### School Environment

School environment literature emphasizes that physical facilities/resources and classroom conditions shape teachers' day-to-day functioning by influencing comfort, safety, and the ease of delivering instruction. In a study of secondary school teachers' physical working environment, findings suggest that the adequacy and usability of facilities (e.g., workspace, basic amenities, and instructional resources) are important determinants of teachers' satisfaction with their work setting and their perceived ability to deliver services effectively (Ekpoh, 2018). Similarly, research that examined how environmental conditions and teaching schedules relate to teacher stress using wearable measures indicates that situational classroom/work conditions can correspond with measurable stress responses, reinforcing the argument that the physical and immediate instructional environment is a meaningful contributor to teacher strain-related outcomes (Fretes et al., 2023).

### Physical Facilities and Resources

Physical facilities and resources are consistently treated in the literature as core “enabling conditions” that shape teachers' effectiveness and comfort at work, particularly when they determine access to instructional tools, workspace, and basic amenities. In a survey of public secondary school teachers in Nigeria, **Ekpoh (2018)** reported that a majority of teachers were **not satisfied** with most facility components and found **significant positive correlations** between satisfaction with the physical working environment and multiple aspects of service delivery (e.g., overall service delivery  $r = .65$ ,  $p = .000$ ), indicating that better facilities/resources are associated with stronger teacher functioning. Likewise, a comprehensive infrastructure report stressed that investments in school facilities can improve educational quality and highlighted the need for evidence on infrastructure projects across diverse contexts supporting the view that facilities and resources remain a critical, policy-relevant dimension of school effectiveness and workforce conditions (Barrett et al., 2019).

### Classroom Conditions

Classroom conditions especially noise levels, acoustics, and the general conduciveness of the teaching space are widely documented as factors that can shape teachers' comfort and strain at work. In an open-access study of 31 foundation-phase classrooms across 10 public schools, Pillay and Vieira (2020) found that excessive background noise was evident in all classrooms, with air traffic noise and noise from adjoining classrooms identified as major contributors; teachers also reported that their voices were affected by occupational demands, predominantly through physical symptoms, highlighting how unfavorable classroom acoustic conditions can create daily stressors that undermine teacher well-being and instructional delivery.

### Administrative/Leadership Support

Administrative/leadership support is widely identified as a critical protective factor in teachers' working conditions because it shapes workload management, professional guidance, and the availability of practical and emotional assistance in day-to-day school life. Martinez et al. (2020) synthesized evidence that school administrators' support practices are closely connected to teacher outcomes such as satisfaction and retention-related factors, highlighting administrative support as a key lever for sustaining teachers in the profession. Likewise, Alzouebi et al. (2025) found that leadership practices significantly predicted lower workplace stress through the mediating role of job satisfaction, indicating that supportive leadership reduces stress partly by improving teachers' overall work experience.

### Collegial Relationships among Staff

Collegial relationships among staff are consistently identified as a crucial social resource that shapes teachers' well-being within the school environment. A systematic review of teacher well-being research highlights that social relationships in schools (including supportive interactions with colleagues) are among the most consistent predictors of teachers' well-being and related outcomes, emphasizing that positive collegial ties can protect teachers from stress-related difficulties (Hascher & Waber, 2021). In the same line, evidence shows that school-level social interactions help explain differences in teachers' emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction across schools, indicating that when collegial interactions are supportive and constructive, teachers tend to report better well-being outcomes (Schulze-Hagenest et al., 2023).

### Recognition Practices

Recognition practices in schools such as praise, public acknowledgment, awards, and meaningful feedback are increasingly discussed as organizational supports that strengthen teachers' well-being and reduce negative work outcomes. In a large survey of 1,069 teachers, Dreer-

Göthe et al. (2025) found that perceived appreciation from multiple sources (e.g., students, colleagues, school leaders, parents, and wider systems) positively predicted job satisfaction and negatively predicted emotional exhaustion and quitting intentions, highlighting recognition as a protective workplace factor. Similarly, experimental evidence shows that even simple forms of recognition such as gratitude expressions can improve teachers’ professional well-being; Xusheng et al. (2025) reported that teachers who received gratitude letters showed higher perceived relationship quality and professional identity, which were linked to better well-being outcomes.

**Occupational Strain**

Occupational strain among teachers is commonly described in the literature as a set of emotional and psychological stress reactions that develop when job demands persist and coping resources are insufficient. Longitudinal evidence indicates that job-related pressures such as time pressure are strongly associated with emotional exhaustion, suggesting that teachers who consistently perceive high demands tend to report higher levels of emotional depletion (Maas et al., 2021). Research examining changes across time also shows that teachers’ emotional exhaustion can shift with major work-context disruptions (e.g., pandemic-related demands), reinforcing that emotional strain is not static and can intensify when teaching conditions become more complex and uncertain (Bleck et al., 2022).

**Physical Strain**

Physical strain among teachers is widely recognized as a somatic manifestation of prolonged occupational stress, often expressed through fatigue, headaches, sleep disruption, and other bodily complaints that can interfere with daily teaching tasks. A systematic review of teacher burnout and health outcomes found that higher burnout is consistently associated with somatic complaints (e.g., headaches), illnesses, and voice-related problems, suggesting that strain is not only psychological but also linked with measurable physical health indicators (Madigan et al., 2023). Relatedly, evidence syntheses on teacher stress and burnout note that these conditions are risk factors for poor physical well-being, reinforcing the view that sustained workplace stressors can translate into physical strain symptoms among teachers (Agyapong et al., 2022).

**Emotional Strain**

Emotional strain among teachers is commonly expressed as emotional exhaustion, persistent worry, irritability, and feelings of being overwhelmed, often arising when work demands remain high over time. Evidence from a large German study showed that teachers reported high levels and an increase in emotional exhaustion during the COVID-19 period, with workload and health concerns positively associated with emotional exhaustion, while social support was negatively associated, indicating that emotionally straining conditions intensify when demands rise and support is limited (Klusmann et al., 2023). Similarly, a latent-change analysis documented that teachers’ emotional exhaustion increased from pre-pandemic to pandemic periods, supporting the view that emotional strain can intensify as work conditions become more complex and uncertain (Bleck et al., 2022).

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1. Part I outlines the profile of the respondents, categorized according to gender, age, civil status, educational attainment, years of experience; and position/title. Part II highlights the independent variable, school environment which is measured through five indicators, namely: physical facilities / resources; classroom conditions; administrative / leadership support; collegial relationships; and recognitions. This section consists of twenty two (22) items designed to assess the level of school environment. Part III presents the dependent variable, occupational strain which is measured through two indicators, namely: physical strain; and emotional strain.

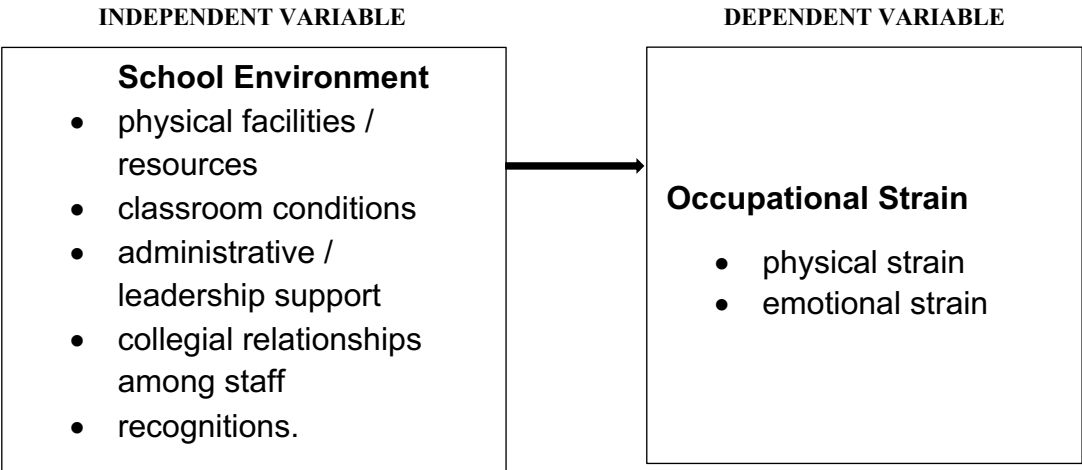


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

**Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to determine the influence of school environment on occupational strain among public school teachers in Sapang Dalaga District, Schools Division of Misamis Occidental, during the school year 2025-2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents’ perceived level of school environment in terms of:
  - 1.1 physical facilities / resources;
  - 1.2 classroom conditions;
  - 1.3 administrative / leadership support;

- 1.4 collegial relationships among staff; and
- 1.5 recognition?
2. What is the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain in terms of:
  - 2.1 physical strain; and
  - 2.2 emotional strain?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of school environment and the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain?

### Hypothesis

3. There is no significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of school environment and the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain.

### Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the influence of school environment and occupational strain and examines the relationship between these variables among 144 public school respondents in Sapang Dalaga District, Schools Division of Misamis Occidental during School Year 2025–2026. The investigation is delimited to two major variables. The school environment is assessed using five indicators: (1) physical facilities and resources, (2) classroom conditions, (3) administrative/leadership support, (4) collegial relationships among staff, and (5) recognition practices. The occupational strain of teachers is measured using two indicators: (1) physical strain and (2) emotional strain. The results of this study are intended to provide empirical evidence on how the quality of the school environment is associated with teachers' experiences of strain within the district context.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Method Used

The study utilized survey and descriptive-correlational research methods. The researcher utilized the survey method to collect data on the school environment and occupational strain through a questionnaire. Fowler, (2014) explain that surveys “involve asking a series of questions to participants” and can be administered in different modes, with the resulting data analyzed quantitatively and/or qualitatively. Likewise, Symbaluk (2024) states that the purpose of surveys is essentially “to find things out by asking questions,” emphasizing their use for describing individuals/groups and examining relationships among variables. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) define correlational research as the systematic investigation of relationships among two or more variables, conducted without any experimental manipulation of those variables. Correlational research is a non-experimental approach in which a researcher quantifies variables and assesses the statistical relationship between the school environment and occupational strain, without the influence of extraneous variables.

### Research Instrument

The questionnaire used in the study consisted of three parts: Part I: school environment adopted from Angana, R. M., & Abellana, A. L. (2025), with five indicators, namely: school environment which is measured through five indicators, namely: physical facilities / resources; classroom conditions; administrative / leadership support; collegial relationships among staff; and recognitions. Part II: Occupational Strain Angana, R. M., & Abellana, A. L. (2025), with two indicators, namely: physical strain; and emotional strain.

### Ethical Consideration

This study secured approval from the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Education before the conduct of data gathering. Informed consent was obtained from the institution and the individual respondents prior to their participation. The questionnaire was written in clear and understandable language to ensure voluntary and informed participation. The identities of the respondents were kept anonymous, and all information gathered was treated with strict confidentiality. Only essential research data were retained for academic and future research purposes.

### Statistical Treatment of the Data

Presented below are the statistical tools utilized in the treatment and analysis of the data gathered.

**Weighted Mean.** This is used to quantify the respondents' ratings on the school environment and occupational strain.

### Scoring Procedure

#### School Environment

| Scale | Range of Values | Description | Interpretation |
|-------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 5     | 4.50-5.00       | Always      | Very High      |
| 4     | 3.50- 4.49      | Often       | High           |
| 3     | 2.50-3.49       | Sometimes   | Average        |
| 2     | 1.50-2.49       | Rarely      | Low            |
| 1     | 1.00- 1.49      | Never       | Very Low       |

#### Occupational Strain

| Scale | Range of Values | Description | Interpretation |
|-------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 5     | 4.50-5.00       | Always      | Very High      |
| 4     | 3.50- 4.49      | Often       | High           |

|   |            |           |          |
|---|------------|-----------|----------|
| 3 | 2.50-3.49  | Sometimes | Average  |
| 2 | 1.50-2.49  | Rarely    | Low      |
| 1 | 1.00- 1.49 | Never     | Very Low |

**Standard Deviation.** This is used to determine the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the employee's score, where  $SD \leq 3$  is homogenous and  $SD > 3$  is heterogeneous Aiken & Susane (2001); Refugio et al. (2019).

**Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho).** This is used to determine the correlation between school environment and occupational strain. The following guide in interpreting the correlation value proposed by Cohen et al. (2014) was utilized in this study:

| Value                    | Size           | Interpretation                         |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------|
| $\pm 0.50$ to $\pm 1.00$ | Large          | High positive/negative correlation     |
| $\pm 0.30$ to $\pm 0.49$ | Medium         | Moderate positive/negative correlation |
| $\pm 0.10$ to $\pm 0.29$ | Small          | Low positive/negative correlation      |
| $\pm 0.01$ to $\pm 0.09$ | Negligible     | Slight positive/negative correlation   |
| 0.0                      | No correlation |                                        |

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data are presented following the statement of the problems of the current study. The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' perceived level of school environment in terms of:

- 1.1 physical facilities / resources;
- 1.2 classroom conditions;
- 1.3 administrative / leadership support;
- 1.4 collegial relationships among staff; and
- .5 recognition?

**Table 1. Respondents' perceived level of School Environment in terms of Physical Facilities/Resources.**

| Statements                                                                            | AWV         | SD             | Description  | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. I have access to well-maintained classrooms with sufficient space for my students. | 4.35        | 0.722          | Often        | High           |
| 2. I use desks, chairs, and tables that are comfortable and adequate in number.       | 4.45        | 0.657          | Often        | High           |
| 3. I have access to sufficient lighting in my teaching space.                         | 4.44        | 0.677          | Often        | High           |
| 4. The multimedia / ICT equipment I use is in good working condition.                 | 4.44        | 0.634          | Often        | High           |
| 5. I feel satisfied with the school's Investment in physical resources/facilities.    | 4.36        | 0.744          | Often        | High           |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                        | <b>4.41</b> | <b>0.58577</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>High</b>    |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 1 shows that the respondents perceived the school environment in terms of physical facilities/resources as High, with an overall AWV of 4.41 ( $SD = 0.59$ ) described as "Often." All five statements were interpreted as High, with AWVs ranging from 4.35 to 4.45, indicating consistently favorable perceptions of facilities and resources. The highest-rated indicator is the adequacy and comfort of desks, chairs, and tables ( $AWV = 4.45$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ), followed closely by sufficient lighting ( $AWV = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) and functional multimedia/ICT equipment ( $AWV = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ). The lowest-rated but still High item is access to well-maintained classrooms with sufficient space ( $AWV = 4.35$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ), suggesting that classroom space and maintenance, while positive, may be the area with relatively more room for enhancement. This means that teachers generally experience adequate and functional physical facilities and resources that support daily instruction, particularly in terms of classroom furniture, lighting, and usable ICT equipment, which contribute to a supportive working environment. This implies that sustaining investments in physical resources especially maintaining furniture adequacy, lighting, and ICT functionality may help preserve teachers' positive perceptions and support effective teaching. At the same time, the relatively lower rating on classroom space and maintenance implies the need for targeted actions such as repairs, classroom upgrading, and space optimization to further improve the learning and working environment.

The observed finding is supported by Ekpoh (2018), who reported that teachers' satisfaction with the physical working environment is significantly associated with their service delivery, emphasizing that adequate facilities and resources help teachers perform effectively. The current finding is also supported by Barrett, Zhang, Davies, and Barrett (2019), who emphasized that school infrastructure and the quality of

physical resources are important foundations for effective schooling and improved outcomes, reinforcing the value of continued investment in facilities.

**Table 2. Respondents' perceived level of School Environment in terms of Classroom Conditions.**

| Statements                                                                             | AWVSD       |                | Description  | Interpretation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. I have enough space in my classroom for all students to move around comfortably.    | 4.03        | 0.923          | Often        | High           |
| 2. The classroom size is appropriate for the physical space available.                 | 4.01        | 0.920          | Often        | High           |
| 3. I have reliable access to essential utilities.                                      | 4.09        | 0.775          | Often        | High           |
| 4. I am satisfied with how much the physical classroom conditions support my teaching. | 4.09        | 0.819          | Often        | High           |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                         | <b>4.06</b> | <b>0.81301</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>High</b>    |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 2 shows that the respondents perceived the school environment in terms of classroom conditions at a High level, with an overall AWV of 4.06 (SD = 0.81) described as "Often." All four statements were rated High, with AWVs ranging from 4.01 to 4.09, indicating generally favorable classroom conditions. The highest-rated items are statement 3 on reliable access to essential utilities (AWV = 4.09, SD = 0.78) and statement 4 on satisfaction with how classroom conditions support teaching (AWV = 4.09, SD = 0.82). The lowest-rated item is statement 2, "The classroom size is appropriate for the physical space available" (AWV = 4.01, SD = 0.92), followed closely by statement 1 on sufficient space for student movement (AWV = 4.03, SD = 0.92). The relatively higher SD values suggest some variation in classroom conditions across schools or teaching assignments. This means that teachers often experience classroom conditions that are generally conducive to instruction, particularly in terms of access to basic utilities and overall support for teaching, although perceptions of classroom space and size are slightly less favorable than other classroom-condition indicators. This implies that school improvement efforts may prioritize addressing classroom space-related concerns (e.g., room layout, seating arrangement, congestion, or class-size management) to make learning spaces more consistently comfortable and functional for both teachers and learners. Ensuring consistent utility reliability and maintaining classroom conduciveness can further strengthen teachers' instructional delivery and reduce stress related to physical teaching conditions.

The obtained result is supported by Pillay and Vieira (2020), who emphasized that physical classroom conditions such as acoustics and environmental quality shape teachers' daily instructional experience and can contribute to comfort or strain in teaching contexts. The current finding is also supported by Barrett et al. (2019), who highlighted that school infrastructure and classroom physical conditions are foundational to effective teaching and learning, reinforcing the importance of maintaining classroom conduciveness as part of a supportive school environment.

**Table 3. Respondents' perceived level of School Environment in terms of Administrative/ Leadership Support.**

| Statements                                                                                                       | AWV         | SD           | Description   | Interpretation   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. I receive clear guidance about school goals and vision from the school administration.                        | 4.53        | 0.625        | Always        | Very High        |
| 2. I am given opportunities for leaders to participate in decision-making about my classroom or school policies. | 4.56        | 0.577        | Always        | Very High        |
| 3. I feel school Excellent leadership supports my professional growth.                                           | 4.57        | 0.563        | Always        | Very High        |
| 4. I get timely feedback from the administration on my instructional practices.                                  | 4.53        | 0.566        | Always        | Very High        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                                                   | <b>4.55</b> | <b>0.528</b> | <b>Always</b> | <b>Very High</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 3 indicates that the respondents perceived the school environment in terms of administrative/leadership support at a Very High level, reflected by an overall AWV of 4.55 (SD = 0.53) with the description "Always." All indicators were rated Very High, with AWVs ranging from 4.53 to 4.57, showing consistently very high perceptions across leadership-related practices. The highest-rated statement is item 3, "I feel school leadership supports my professional growth" (AWV = 4.57, SD = 0.56), closely followed by item 2 on opportunities to participate in decision-making (AWV = 4.56, SD = 0.58). Items 1 and 4 clear guidance on school goals/vision and timely feedback on instructional practices both obtained AWV = 4.53 (SD = 0.63 and 0.57, respectively), still within the Excellent range, suggesting strong administrative clarity and

responsiveness. This means that teachers consistently experience strong and supportive leadership practices, particularly in professional growth support and participatory decision-making, which helps create a stable and enabling school environment for instructional work. This implies that sustaining leadership behaviors such as clear communication of goals, shared decision-making, and timely instructional feedback may help maintain a positive organizational climate and can serve as a protective resource against occupational strain; however, continuous improvement efforts may focus on making feedback and guidance even more responsive and differentiated to teachers' needs.

The evidence from the present study is supported by Martinez et al. (2020), who emphasized that administrator support is closely linked to positive teacher outcomes, including work attitudes and retention-related indicators, underscoring the importance of leadership practices in shaping teachers' experiences. The current finding is also supported by Alzouebi et al. (2025), who found that supportive school leadership is associated with lower teacher stress through improved job satisfaction, indicating that strong leadership support can function as a key organizational resource that helps reduce strain.

**Table 4. Respondents' perceived level of School Environment in terms of Collegial Relationship**

| Statements                                                                              | AWVSD       |                | Description Interpretation |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. I receive respect from my peers for my professional opinions.                        | 4.34        | 0.569          | Often                      | High        |
| 2. I feel comfortable sharing my ideas and perspectives with my colleagues.             | 4.33        | 0.591          | Often                      | High        |
| 3. I believe my colleagues are willing to help when I face challenges in my work.       | 4.29        | 0.613          | Often                      | High        |
| 4. My colleagues and I trust each other.                                                | 4.26        | 0.666          | Often                      | High        |
| 5. I observe and learn from my colleagues' teaching or classroom management strategies. | 4.32        | 0.611          | Often                      | High        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                          | <b>4.31</b> | <b>0.55966</b> | <b>Often</b>               | <b>High</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 4 shows that the respondents perceived the school environment in terms of collegial relationship as High, with an overall AWV of 4.31 (SD = 0.56) described as "Often." All five statements were interpreted as High, with AWVs ranging from 4.26 to 4.34, indicating consistently positive peer relations. The highest-rated indicator is item 1, "I receive respect from my peers for my professional opinions" (AWV = 4.34, SD = 0.57), followed by item 2 on being comfortable sharing ideas (AWV = 4.33, SD = 0.59) and item 5 on observing and learning from colleagues' strategies (AWV = 4.32, SD = 0.61). The lowest-rated but still High item is item 4, "My colleagues and I trust each other" (AWV = 4.26, SD = 0.67), suggesting that trust, while positive, is the area with relatively more room for strengthening. This means that teachers generally experience a supportive and respectful professional community where collaboration and knowledge-sharing are common, reflecting a healthy interpersonal climate within schools. This implies that maintaining and strengthening collegial practices such as peer mentoring, collaborative lesson planning, and professional learning communities can reinforce trust and mutual support, which may help buffer occupational strain by ensuring teachers have readily available peer assistance when work demands become challenging.

The analysis revealed is supported by Hascher and Waber (2021), who identified social relationships in school as among the most consistent predictors of teacher well-being, indicating that positive collegial interactions contribute to healthier work experiences. The current finding is also supported by Schulze-Hagenest et al. (2023), who emphasized that school context and social interactions are linked with teachers' emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction, implying that stronger collegial relationships can serve as protective factors against burnout-related outcomes.

**Table 5. Respondents' perceived level of School Environment in terms of Recognition.**

| Statements                                                                    | AWVSD       |                | Description Interpretation |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. I feel appreciated by my supervisors for the work I do.                    | 4.40        | 0.583          | Often                      | High        |
| 2. I receive verbal praise from colleagues or leaders when I perform well.    | 4.37        | 0.612          | Often                      | High        |
| 3. I believe that my efforts are noticed by the school administration.        | 4.38        | 0.567          | Often                      | High        |
| 4. I am recognized publicly (in announcements, meetings) for my achievements. | 4.39        | 0.581          | Often                      | High        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                | <b>4.39</b> | <b>0.54346</b> | <b>Often</b>               | <b>High</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 5 shows that the respondents perceived the school environment in terms of recognition as High, reflected by an overall AWV of 4.39 (SD = 0.54) with the description “Often.” All four statements were rated Very Satisfactory, with AWVs ranging from 4.37 to 4.40, indicating consistently positive recognition practices in the schools. The highest-rated indicator is item 1, “I feel appreciated by my supervisors for the work I do” (AWV = 4.40, SD = 0.58), followed closely by item 4 on public recognition for achievements (AWV = 4.39, SD = 0.58) and item 3 on efforts being noticed by administration (AWV = 4.38, SD = 0.57). The lowest-rated but still High statement is item 2, “I receive verbal praise from colleagues or leaders when I perform well” (AWV = 4.37, SD = 0.61), suggesting that while recognition is generally strong, verbal praise from peers/leaders is the area with relatively more room for enhancement. This means that teachers frequently experience appreciation and acknowledgment of their efforts, both from supervisors and the school administration, and they are often recognized publicly for achievements, which contributes to a positive and motivating work environment. This implies that sustaining recognition practices such as timely praise, fair acknowledgment, and public appreciation may help strengthen teacher morale and engagement, and may also serve as a protective factor that reduces occupational strain by reinforcing teachers’ sense of value and support within the organization.

The current finding is supported by Dreer-Göthe et al. (2025), who found that teacher appreciation positively predicts job satisfaction and negatively predicts emotional exhaustion and quitting intentions, highlighting recognition as a meaningful organizational resource. The current finding is also supported by Xusheng et al. (2025), who reported that gratitude expressions and appreciation are associated with improved teacher professional well-being, reinforcing the importance of recognition in promoting teachers’ positive psychological outcomes.

**Table 6. Summary of Respondents’ perceived level of School Environment**

| Statements                         | AWV           | SD             | Description  | Interpretation |
|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| Physical Facilities/ Resources.    | 4.4097        | 0.58577        | Often        | High           |
| Classroom Conditions               | 4.0538        | 0.81301        | Often        | High           |
| Administrative/ Leadership Support | 4.5486        | 0.52829        | Always       | Very High      |
| Collegial Relationship             | 4.3083        | 0.55966        | Often        | High           |
| Recognition                        | 4.3854        | 0.54346        | Often        | High           |
| <b>Overall</b>                     | <b>4.3301</b> | <b>0.46797</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>High</b>    |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 6 summarizes the respondents’ perceived level of school environment and shows an overall AWV of 4.33 (SD = 0.47) described as “Often” and interpreted as High. Among the five indicators, Administrative/Leadership Support obtained the highest rating (AWV = 4.55, SD = 0.53) with the description “Always” and interpretation Very High, indicating consistently strong leadership practices. The next highest indicators are Physical Facilities/Resources (AWV = 4.41, SD = 0.59) and Recognition (AWV = 4.39, SD = 0.54), both interpreted as High, followed by Collegial Relationship (AWV = 4.31, SD = 0.56). The lowest-rated indicator, although still High, is Classroom Conditions (AWV = 4.05, SD = 0.81), which also shows the largest variability in responses, suggesting differences in classroom conditions across schools or assignments. This means that teachers generally perceive their school environment as favorable and supportive, with leadership support standing out as a major strength, while classroom conditions remain the area with comparatively greater room for improvement. This implies that school and district initiatives should sustain strong leadership practices such as clear direction, participatory decision-making, and timely feedback because these are consistently perceived as very high and may serve as key protective resources for teachers. At the same time, the relatively lower rating and higher SD in classroom conditions suggest a need for more targeted interventions (e.g., improving classroom space, ventilation, noise control, class size management, and availability of classroom resources) to make teachers’ daily teaching environments more consistently conducive across schools.

The results is supported by Demerouti et al. (2001), who explained in the Job Demands–Resources model that organizational resources (e.g., leadership support, recognition, and positive collegial relations) help buffer job demands and promote well-being, which aligns with the very satisfactory to excellent ratings across the school environment indicators. The current finding is also supported by Hascher and Waber (2021), who identified workplace conditions and social relationships as among the most consistent factors linked with teacher well-being, reinforcing that positive perceptions of leadership, recognition, and collegial support are important contributors to healthy work experiences.

2. What is the respondents’ perceived level of occupational strain in terms of:

2.1 physical strain; and

2.2 emotional strain?

**Table 7. Respondents' perceived level of Occupational Strain in terms of Physical Strain**

| Statements                                                                                       | AWV         | SD             | Description      | Interpretation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. I experience soreness or pain in my lower back after a day of teaching.                       | 2.81        | 0.784          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 2. I feel strain in my neck or shoulders when writing on the board or using overhead projection. | 2.84        | 0.816          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 3. I often stand for long periods without sufficient breaks.                                     | 2.78        | 0.743          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 4. I sometimes feel fatigue in my legs or feet by the end of the teaching day.                   | 2.74        | 0.800          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 5. I am required to bend, twist, or reach frequently during class.                               | 2.74        | 0.817          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 6. I experience discomfort in my wrists, hands, or forearms from writing, typing, and marking.   | 2.68        | 0.754          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 7. I feel general exhaustion in my body due to carrying heavy teaching materials or equipment.   | 2.75        | 0.724          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 8. I feel stiff or have reduced mobility after long teaching hours.                              | 2.70        | 0.700          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 9. I often wake up with aches or pains related to my work the next morning.                      | 2.65        | 0.787          | Sometimes        | Average        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                                   | <b>2.74</b> | <b>0.63538</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Average</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 7 shows that the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain in terms of physical strain is Average, with an overall AWV of 2.74 (SD = 0.64) described as "Sometimes." All nine indicators fall within the Average range, with AWVs ranging from 2.65 to 2.84, indicating that teachers sometimes experience physical discomfort related to teaching tasks. The highest-rated item is statement 2 on neck/shoulder strain when writing on the board or using overhead projection (AWV = 2.84, SD = 0.82), followed by statement 1 on lower back soreness/pain after teaching (AWV = 2.81, SD = 0.78) and statement 3 on standing for long periods without sufficient breaks (AWV = 2.78, SD = 0.74). The lowest-rated item is statement 9, "I often wake up with aches or pains related to my work the next morning" (AWV = 2.65, SD = 0.79), suggesting that lingering next-day pain is less frequently experienced compared with same-day discomfort. This means that teachers experience moderate physical strain associated with common teaching postures and routines particularly board work, prolonged standing, and back/shoulder discomfort although these symptoms occur only sometimes and are not perceived as severe or constant. This implies that schools and administrators may reduce physical strain by strengthening workplace ergonomics and health-support practices, such as providing appropriate board height/teaching aids, promoting micro-breaks during long standing periods, improving classroom layout to reduce bending/reaching, and encouraging proper manual handling when transporting teaching materials, which may help prevent the escalation of minor discomfort into chronic musculoskeletal issues.

The current finding is supported by Madigan, Kim, and Zettler (2023), who reported in a systematic review that teacher burnout and stress-related conditions are associated with physical health outcomes and somatic complaints (e.g., headaches and bodily symptoms), underscoring that occupational strain can have physical correlates. The current finding is also supported by Collie (2021), who documented teachers' somatic burden as a relevant outcome linked with workplace conditions and leadership resources, reinforcing that physical strain symptoms can be meaningfully connected to teachers' work context and daily demands.

**Table 8. Respondents' perceived level of Occupational Strain in terms of Emotional Strain.**

| Statements                                                                                     | AWV  | SD    | Description | Interpretation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. I feel emotionally drained by the end of the school day.                                    | 2.60 | 0.795 | Sometimes   | Average        |
| 2. I often worry about work even when I'm not at school.                                       | 2.64 | 0.790 | Sometimes   | Average        |
| 3. I find it hard to relax after work because I'm thinking about things I need to catch up on. | 2.59 | 0.752 | Sometimes   | Average        |

|                                                                                                   |             |               |                  |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| 4. I feel anxious when I anticipate difficult interactions with students, parents, or colleagues. | 2.63        | 0.698         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 5. I feel irritable or frustrated more often than I used to because of my work.                   | 2.55        | 0.792         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 6. I feel that my emotional energy is depleted from managing student behavior or learning needs.  | 2.56        | 0.764         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 7. I find that emotional issues at school affect my mood outside of working hours.                | 2.51        | 0.908         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 8. I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the expectations placed on me as a teacher and staff member.   | 2.58        | 0.865         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| 9. I worry whether I am doing enough to support all my students.                                  | 2.57        | 0.890         | Sometimes        | Average        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                                    | <b>2.58</b> | <b>0.6667</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Average</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 8 shows that the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain in terms of emotional strain is Average, with an overall AWV of 2.58 (SD = 0.67) described as "Sometimes." All nine statements fall within the Average range, with AWVs ranging from 2.51 to 2.64, indicating that teachers sometimes experience emotional strain related to teaching demands and role expectations. The highest-rated indicator is statement 2, "I often worry about work even when I'm not at school" (AWV = 2.64, SD = 0.79), followed by statement 4 on anxiety when anticipating difficult interactions (AWV = 2.63, SD = 0.70) and statement 1 on feeling emotionally drained at the end of the day (AWV = 2.60, SD = 0.80). The lowest-rated item is statement 7, "I find that emotional issues at school affect my mood outside of working hours" (AWV = 2.51, SD = 0.91), though it remains within the Average level; notably, its SD is the highest, suggesting varied experiences across respondents. This means that teachers experience moderate emotional strain that manifests as occasional worry outside work, anticipatory anxiety about challenging interactions, and end-of-day emotional fatigue, but these experiences are not constant and are generally perceived as manageable. This implies that schools may reduce emotional strain by strengthening psychosocial supports such as regular check-ins, peer support systems, workload planning, and professional development on behavior management and communication with parents/colleagues. These strategies may help teachers manage persistent worry and emotional fatigue before they escalate into more serious burnout symptoms.

The current finding is supported by Maas et al. (2021), who reported that teachers' perceived time pressure is significantly associated with emotional exhaustion over time, indicating that routine work demands can contribute to emotional depletion. The current finding is also supported by Klusmann et al. (2023), who found that teachers' emotional exhaustion is related to stressors and resources, suggesting that emotional strain is influenced by the balance between demands (e.g., workload, challenging interactions) and available workplace supports.

**Table 9. Summary of Respondents' perceived level of Occupational Strain**

| Statements       | AWV         | SD             | Description      | Interpretation |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Physical Strain  | 2.74        | 0.63538        | Sometimes        | Average        |
| Emotional Strain | 2.58        | 0.66676        | Sometimes        | Average        |
| <b>Overall</b>   | <b>2.66</b> | <b>0.61358</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Average</b> |

*AWV-Average Weighted Value, SD-Standard Deviation*

Table 9 summarizes the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain and shows an overall AWV of 2.66 (SD = 0.61) described as "Sometimes" and interpreted as Average. Between the two dimensions, physical strain obtained a slightly higher rating (AWV = 2.74, SD = 0.64) than emotional strain (AWV = 2.58, SD = 0.67), indicating that teachers reported physical discomfort somewhat more often than emotional difficulties. Both indicators, however, remain within the Average range, suggesting moderate levels of strain that occur occasionally rather than frequently or consistently. This means that the teacher-respondents experience manageable and moderate occupational strain, with physical symptoms (e.g., fatigue, bodily discomfort) occurring somewhat more often than emotional symptoms (e.g., worry, emotional exhaustion), but neither dimension is perceived as high or persistent. This implies that preventive and supportive interventions should address both dimensions of strain by combining ergonomic/health-support measures (e.g., workload pacing, safe physical work practices, short breaks, and improved classroom setup) with psychosocial supports (e.g., peer support, stress management activities, and leadership check-ins). Strengthening school-

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based resources may help prevent occasional strain from escalating into chronic stress or burnout, especially among teachers who consistently encounter high demands.

The current finding is supported by Madigan, Kim, and Zettler (2023), who reported that teacher burnout and stress-related conditions are associated with physical health concerns and somatic complaints, supporting the inclusion of physical strain as an important aspect of occupational strain. The current finding is also supported by Maas et al. (2021), who found that perceived time pressure is linked to emotional exhaustion over time, indicating that even moderate demands can contribute to emotional strain when sustained without adequate support.

3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of school environment and the respondents' perceived level of occupational strain?

**Table 10. Test of significant relationship between school environment and occupational strain**

| Variables Correlated                       | rho-value | p-value | Interpretation                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| School Environment and Occupational Strain | -0.389    | <0.001  | Negative medium/moderate correlation<br>Significant |

*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level*

Table 1 presents the test of significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of school environment and occupational strain. The analysis yielded a Spearman rho coefficient of  $-0.389$  with a p-value of less than .001. The rho-value indicates a moderate negative correlation between the two variables, while the p-value is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between school environment and occupational strain is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The negative direction of the relationship indicates that a more favorable school environment is associated with a lower level of occupational strain among teachers. Conversely, less favorable school conditions are associated with greater physical and emotional strain.

This means that improvements in the school environment, including adequate physical facilities and resources, conducive classroom conditions, supportive school leadership, positive collegial relationships, and appropriate recognition practices, tend to correspond with reduced occupational strain among teachers. Although the relationship is moderate rather than strong, the result demonstrates that the quality of the school environment is significantly associated with teachers' physical and emotional well-being. However, because the study employed a correlational design, the finding establishes an association and does not independently prove that the school environment directly causes changes in occupational strain. This implies that school administrators and education officials should strengthen the school-based resources that protect teachers from occupational strain. Programs may focus on improving facilities and classroom conditions, providing responsive administrative assistance, ensuring equitable distribution of responsibilities, promoting collaboration among teachers, and consistently recognizing teachers' contributions. Since the relationship is moderate, occupational strain may also be influenced by other factors not covered by the study, such as workload, personal coping strategies, family responsibilities, learner behavior, financial concerns, and work-life balance. Thus, interventions should combine improvements in the school environment with comprehensive teacher wellness and stress-management programs.

The current finding is supported by Collie (2021), who found that autonomy-supportive principal leadership was associated with greater workplace buoyancy, which subsequently predicted lower levels of teachers' somatic burden, stress related to workplace changes, and emotional exhaustion. This indicates that supportive leadership, as an essential component of the school environment, can serve as a workplace resource that protects teachers against physical and emotional strain. The current finding is also supported by Bottiani et al. (2019), who revealed that school-based job resources, particularly teacher self-efficacy and collegial support, were associated with lower levels of teacher stress and burnout. Their findings demonstrated that supportive organizational and interpersonal resources can lessen the adverse effects of demanding workplace conditions. Thus, the findings of these studies affirm the present result that a more supportive and resourceful school environment is significantly associated with lower occupational strain among teachers.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that public school teachers generally perceived their school environment as High, indicating that the schools provide favorable working conditions for teachers. Among the different dimensions, administrative/leadership support emerged as the strongest aspect, suggesting that teachers generally receive clear guidance, professional support, opportunities for participation, and timely feedback from school administrators. Physical facilities and resources, recognition practices, collegial relationships, and classroom conditions were likewise perceived positively, although classroom conditions showed comparatively more room for improvement. On the other hand, the respondents' occupational strain was assessed as Average, with physical strain reported slightly more often than emotional strain, indicating that teachers sometimes experience fatigue, bodily discomfort, worry, stress, and emotional exhaustion as part of their work. The study further established a significant moderate negative relationship between school environment and occupational strain, which means that more favorable school conditions are associated with lower levels of teachers' physical and emotional strain. This suggests that strengthening supportive leadership, maintaining adequate facilities and conducive classrooms, promoting positive collegial relationships, and recognizing teachers' contributions can help create a healthier work environment and may reduce occupational strain among public school teachers.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the public school teachers in Sapang Dalaga District generally experience a favorable school environment characterized by supportive leadership, adequate physical facilities and resources, positive collegial relationships, appropriate recognition practices, and generally conducive classroom conditions. At the same time, teachers experience an average level of

occupational strain, with physical discomfort occurring slightly more often than emotional strain. The significant negative relationship between school environment and occupational strain further indicates that a more supportive and resourceful school environment is associated with lower levels of physical and emotional strain among teachers. Therefore, maintaining and strengthening positive school conditions, particularly administrative and leadership support, classroom facilities, collegial cooperation, and recognition practices, is important in promoting teacher well-being and minimizing occupational strain.

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