IJGGSD
ISSN: 3155-7716
International Journal of Global Goals and Sustainable Development
RESEARCH | INNOVATION | INCLUSION | SUSTAINABLE FUTURES
DOI: https://doi.org/10.65339/ijggsd.V1.I1.130

Balancing Teachers' Instructional Responsibilities and Ancillary Tasks: Basis for Strategic Workload Optimization Framework

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ABSTRACT

This study examined teachers' instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, perceived workload balance, and strategic workload management practices as the basis for developing a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 70 public secondary school teachers from seven selected schools in Basey, Schools Division of Samar, during School Year 2025–2026. Respondents were selected through stratified random sampling, and data were collected using a validated questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics and Pearson product-moment correlation. Results revealed that instructional responsibilities were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.54), while ancillary tasks (M = 3.99) and strategic workload management practices (M = 4.05) were performed to a great extent. Teachers reported high perceived workload balance (M = 4.06). Instructional responsibilities ($r = 0.342$, $p = 0.004$), ancillary tasks ($r = 0.302$, $p = 0.011$), and strategic workload management practices ($r = 0.813$, $p < 0.001$) demonstrated significant positive relationships with perceived workload balance. The study concluded that strategic workload management practices had the strongest association with perceived workload balance, emphasizing the importance of organizational support and equitable task distribution. Schools should strengthen participatory task allocation, appropriate delegation, collegial collaboration, supervisory support, and systematic workload monitoring. The localized sample, self-reported data, and correlational design limit generalizability and causal interpretation. The study provides an empirical foundation for the Strategic Workload Optimization Framework, offering a context-responsive approach to protecting instructional time, promoting teacher welfare, and strengthening school-level workload management.

Keywords: *Ancillary Tasks, Instructional Responsibilities, Public Secondary Teachers, Strategic Workload Management, Teacher Welfare, Workload Balance, Workload Optimization Framework*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond classroom instruction to include lesson preparation, assessment, learner monitoring, administrative functions, and school-related activities. Excessive administrative work remains a significant source of occupational stress (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2025). Longmuir and McKay (2024) emphasized that workload concerns involve both the quantity and density of competing responsibilities. In the Philippines, workload rationalization policies seek to protect instructional time and teacher welfare. This study examined teachers' instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, perceived workload balance, and strategic workload management practices in selected public secondary schools in Basey, Schools Division of Samar, during School Year 2025–2026, as the basis for developing a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework.

Research Problem

The Department of Education mandated the removal of administrative tasks from teachers (Department of Education [DepEd], 2024a) and rationalized workload to prioritize instructional responsibilities (DepEd, 2024c). However, the Second Congressional Commission on Education (IDinsight, 2025) emphasized that teacher workload remains a systemic concern. Algar et al. (2025) identified the adverse effects of ancillary tasks on instructional quality and personal time. Orena and Gamutan (2025) and Somosot et al. (2025) reported excessive responsibilities, time constraints, and limited institutional support. Heavy instructional and administrative workloads were likewise documented (Pamunag & Mosquera, 2025), while Saculles and Batoon (2026) examined workload distribution and teaching performance. Reducing unnecessary ancillary tasks may improve instructional focus and organizational efficiency (Rule & Ducot, 2025). Creagh et al. (2025) associated workload intensification with time poverty, while Longmuir and McKay (2024) emphasized competing professional demands. Hunter and Nguyen (2024) advocated collaborative curriculum planning and shared resources, whereas Mockler and Stacey (2024) cautioned against compromising teachers' professional autonomy. Together with Hunter and Nguyen (2024), these findings support workload optimization that protects essential instructional functions. Philippine studies documented heavy workloads (Pamunag & Mosquera, 2025), the importance of leadership and collegial support as emphasized by Algar et al. (2025), and unequal task distribution as identified by Saculles and Batoon (2026). Villarias and Cacharo (2025) highlighted ancillary task reduction, while Ugtuhan (2025) examined time management and ancillary-service performance. National evidence from IDinsight (2025) further indicated that Filipino teachers worked approximately 52 hours weekly, including 3.6 hours daily on ancillary work. Despite existing research, limited attention has been given to integrating instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, perceived workload balance, and strategic workload management practices within a unified empirical framework. This study addressed this gap through the development of a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that instructional responsibilities and ancillary tasks constitute professional demands associated with teachers' perceived workload balance. Adequate time, equitable task distribution, collegial assistance, and administrative support may facilitate workload manageability. The study tested the null hypotheses that instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, and strategic workload management practices have no significant relationships with perceived workload balance at the 0.05 level of significance.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to examine teachers' workload and strategic workload management practices as the basis for developing a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework. Specifically, it sought

to describe the respondents' demographic and professional profiles, determine the extent of their instructional responsibilities and ancillary tasks, assess their perceived workload balance, and determine the extent of strategic workload management practices. It further aimed to examine the significant relationships of instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, and strategic workload management practices with perceived workload balance and develop a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework based on the findings.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Job Demands–Resources Theory, Role Theory, and Distributed Leadership Theory. Job Demands–Resources Theory, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001) and elaborated by Bakker and Demerouti (2007, 2017), explains how organizational resources facilitate the management of professional demands and reduce associated costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker et al., 2023). Role Theory, advanced by Kahn et al. (1964), explains how excessive or incompatible responsibilities generate role overload and conflict (Kahn et al., 1964; Sawhney et al., 2026), emphasizing the importance of appropriate delegation and workload distribution. Distributed Leadership Theory, advanced by Spillane et al. (2004) and Spillane (2006), emphasizes shared leadership and responsibilities according to organizational needs and expertise (Spillane, 2006). Collectively, Job Demands–Resources Theory (Demerouti et al., 2001), Role Theory (Kahn et al., 1964), and Distributed Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006; Spillane et al., 2004) establish the conceptual relationships among instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, perceived workload balance, and strategic workload management practices. The study was further supported by Republic Act No. 4670 (1966), which protects teachers' working conditions; DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024a), which mandates the removal of administrative tasks; DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024c), which rationalizes teachers' workload; and DepEd Memorandum No. 053, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024b), which emphasizes equitable workload distribution and teacher welfare. These foundations support the development of an equitable, collaborative, and instruction-centered workload optimization framework.

Sustainable Development Goal and Multidisciplinary Sustainability Relevance

The study aligns with SDG 4 – Quality Education by protecting instructional time and supporting effective teaching; SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being by promoting manageable workloads and teacher welfare; SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth by encouraging equitable responsibilities and reasonable working conditions; and SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by strengthening participatory and accountable school management. The proposed Strategic Workload Optimization Framework contributes to educational, occupational, institutional, and governance sustainability through equitable task distribution, collaborative leadership, teacher welfare, and efficient workload management, thereby supporting the continuous delivery of quality basic education.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to describe teachers' workload conditions and determine the relationships of instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, and strategic workload management practices with perceived workload balance without manipulating the variables. The findings, together with the theoretical and policy foundations, served as the basis for developing the Strategic Workload Optimization Framework. Significant relationships were interpreted as associations rather than evidence of causation.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted in seven public secondary schools in Basey Districts I and II, Schools Division of Samar, Department of Education, during School Year 2025–2026. These schools operate under the same DepEd workload policies but vary in enrollment, staffing, school programs, available resources, and organizational demands, providing an appropriate setting for examining teachers' workload and management practices.

Participants or Data Sources

The participants comprised 70 public secondary school teachers selected through stratified random sampling, with ten teachers randomly chosen from each of the seven participating schools. Eligible respondents were currently employed teachers with actual teaching loads and sufficient experience to assess workload conditions and management practices. School heads, nonteaching personnel, teachers on extended leave, and personnel without teaching assignments were excluded. Equal allocation ensured representation across schools, although the findings primarily reflected the sampled teachers' experiences rather than proportionate district-wide estimates.

Research Instruments or Materials

The study utilized a modified and adapted questionnaire consisting of five parts covering respondents' profiles, instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, perceived workload balance, and collaborative workload management practices. The instrument was adapted from relevant teacher workload literature, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST; DepEd, 2017), the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH; DepEd, 2020), Republic Act No. 4670 (1966), DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024a), DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024c), and DepEd Memorandum No. 053, s. 2024 (DepEd, 2024b). Parts II, III, and V employed a five-point scale ranging from Very Slight Extent to Very Great Extent, while Part IV used a five-point scale ranging from Very Low to Very High. The questionnaire underwent expert content validation and pilot testing among teachers excluded from the actual study. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.88, 0.83, 0.86, and 0.85 for Parts II, III, IV, and V, respectively, exceeded the 0.70 threshold, demonstrating good internal consistency and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured approval from the Schools Division Office of Samar and coordinated with the school heads of the participating schools. Eligible teachers were randomly selected and informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and participation requirements. Following informed consent, the validated questionnaire was administered without disrupting instructional and school activities. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, coded, organized, and encoded for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe respondents' categorical profiles, while means and standard deviations summarized applicable quantitative characteristics. Weighted means and standard deviations determined the extent of instructional responsibilities, ancillary tasks, collaborative workload management practices, and perceived workload balance. Mean scores were interpreted using the established ranges of 4.21–5.00, 3.41–4.20, 2.61–3.40, 1.81–2.60, and 1.00–1.80. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was employed to determine the direction, strength, and significance of the relationships between the major independent variables and perceived workload balance, provided that the correlation assumptions were reasonably satisfied. All null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings served as the empirical basis for developing the Strategic Workload Optimization Framework.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, beneficence, non-maleficence, fairness, and research integrity. Respondents were informed of their right to decline or withdraw without adverse consequences. Data were coded, securely stored, and reported in aggregate form in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173, 2012) and applicable institutional requirements. Participation did not affect respondents' employment, performance evaluation, or workload assignments. All information was analyzed objectively and used exclusively for legitimate academic and research purposes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

3.1.1 Demographic and Professional Profile

Among the 70 respondents, 35.7% were aged 30–39, with a mean age of 37 years, while 78.6% were female. Most had bachelor's degrees with master's units (41.4%) or completed master's degrees (37.1%). More than half occupied Teacher III positions (52.9%), while 35.7% had 6–10 years of teaching experience, with an average of 10.5 years. The demographic and professional characteristics generally correspond with the findings of Hervas (2025) regarding age, sex, educational attainment, and teaching experience. These characteristics emphasize the importance of differentiated professional support and equitable task allocation. IDinsight (2025) highlighted the need for effective human resource distribution and evidence-based management of teachers' instructional and noninstructional responsibilities.

3.1.2 Teaching Load and Other Assigned Responsibilities

Most respondents taught multiple grade levels (51.6%), while 37.1% handled two to three subjects. The majority taught six hours daily (72.9%) and handled five to six classes or sections (61.4%). Furthermore, 87.1% performed at least one ancillary task, with 44.3% handling one to two additional assignments. These findings indicate substantial instructional and ancillary demands requiring appropriate workload allocation. IDinsight (2025) emphasized the implications of instructional and noninstructional responsibilities for teachers' time. The findings reinforce the importance of implementing Republic Act No. 4670 and DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024, particularly in protecting instructional time and ensuring appropriate delegation of administrative tasks.

3.2 Extent of Teachers' Instructional Responsibilities

3.2.1 Instructional Planning and Preparation

Instructional planning and preparation were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.61, SD = 0.44). Curriculum-aligned lesson preparation obtained the highest mean (4.76), while modifying instructional plans based on learner performance and classroom circumstances obtained the lowest (4.47). The findings support OECD (2026) regarding the importance of professional knowledge and instructional competence. Similarly, Cevikbas et al. (2024) emphasized curriculum-based instructional planning, while Dell'Anna et al. (2026) highlighted the importance of differentiated instruction responsive to learners' needs.

3.2.2 Classroom Teaching and Learning Facilitation

Classroom teaching and learning facilitation were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.60, SD = 0.40). All indicators received favorable ratings, although some practices involving responsive instruction and feedback obtained comparatively lower scores. The findings are consistent with OECD (2026) regarding instructional competence and Tao and Chen (2024) concerning effective teaching practices. Yao et al. (2024) further emphasized the importance of feedback in improving learning outcomes, highlighting the need for continued instructional support.

3.2.3 Assessment, Recording, and Reporting of Learner Progress

Assessment, recording, and reporting responsibilities were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.55, SD = 0.44). Indicator means ranged from 4.37 to 4.63, reflecting extensive engagement in assessment-related responsibilities. These findings support Yao et al. (2024) regarding the importance of assessment and feedback in learning. Hase and Kuhl (2024) emphasized the utilization of educational data to guide instructional decisions, highlighting the need to ensure that assessment information supports learner improvement.

3.2.4 Learner Monitoring, Remediation, and Enrichment

Learner monitoring, remediation, and enrichment were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.39, SD = 0.45). Using assessment information to identify learning needs obtained the highest mean (4.47), while providing remediation activities obtained the lowest (4.30). The findings are consistent with Hase and Kuhl's (2024) emphasis on data-based instructional decisions. Nickow et al. (2024) demonstrated the effectiveness of targeted instructional interventions, reinforcing the importance of adequate time, resources, and professional support for remediation and enrichment.

3.2.5 Preparation and Management of Instructional Resources and Records

Teachers performed instructional resource and record management responsibilities to a very great extent (M = 4.57, SD = 0.41), with indicator means ranging from 4.46 to 4.71. The findings support OECD (2026) regarding instructional competence and Claro et al. (2024) concerning the importance of teachers' digital competence in supporting instructional practices. Decabooter et al. (2024) further emphasized effective educational data utilization. Overall, instructional responsibilities were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.54, SD = 0.37). Although teachers demonstrated extensive engagement in their primary professional responsibilities, learner monitoring, remediation, and enrichment required comparatively greater attention in workload planning.

3.3 Extent of Teachers' Ancillary Tasks

3.3.1 Administrative and Clerical Tasks

Administrative and clerical tasks were performed to a great extent (M = 3.55, SD = 0.97). Processing school data beyond instructional requirements obtained the highest mean (4.01), while administrative work competing with instructional preparation obtained the lowest (3.04). Malquisto et al. (2023) identified paperwork as an additional demand among teachers. Tiggelaar et al. (2024) associated administrative responsibilities with occupational stress, while Sandmeier et al. (2022) linked work overload and extended working hours with teacher exhaustion. These findings emphasize the importance of appropriate administrative task delegation.

3.3.2 School Program and Project Responsibilities

School program and project responsibilities were performed to a great extent (M = 4.00, SD = 0.86). Attendance at program-related meetings and orientations obtained the highest mean (4.29), while program implementation and monitoring obtained the lowest (3.80). Tiggelaar et al. (2024) emphasized organizational participation in managing additional responsibilities, while Creagh et al. (2025) highlighted the consequences of cumulative workload demands. These findings support effective coordination of school programs without unnecessarily compromising instructional responsibilities.

3.3.3 Committee and Coordination Assignments

Committee and coordination assignments were performed to a great extent (M = 4.12, SD = 0.74), with indicator means ranging from 3.94 to 4.33. The findings support Zheng et al. (2025) regarding the importance of collaborative professional arrangements. Creagh et al. (2025) further emphasized the need to manage competing responsibilities to prevent excessive workload and extended working hours.

3.3.4 Learner Support and Extracurricular Activities

Learner support and extracurricular activities were performed to a great extent (M = 3.98, SD = 0.81), with indicator means ranging from 3.54 to 4.26. The findings are relevant to Emslander et al. (2025), who emphasized the importance of teacher–student relationships and learner engagement. Although these responsibilities support learner development, their allocation requires consideration of teachers' existing instructional commitments.

3.3.5 Community and Stakeholder-Related Activities

Community and stakeholder-related activities were performed to a very great extent (M = 4.27, SD = 0.61), representing the highest-rated ancillary task dimension. Indicator means ranged from 4.06 to 4.47. Jeynes (2024) emphasized the importance of parental involvement in learner development. However, Creagh et al. (2025) highlighted the implications of excessive work demands, reinforcing the need to balance stakeholder engagement with instructional responsibilities. Overall, ancillary tasks were performed to a great extent (M = 3.99, SD = 0.67). Community and stakeholder engagement obtained the highest rating, while administrative and clerical tasks obtained the lowest. These findings emphasize the importance of distinguishing essential teaching-related assignments from administrative responsibilities requiring appropriate delegation.

3.4 Level of Teachers' Perceived Workload Balance

3.4.1 Manageability of Workload

Teachers reported a high level of workload manageability (M = 4.11, SD = 0.67), with indicator means ranging from 3.97 to 4.24. The findings are relevant to Sandmeier et al. (2022), who associated excessive workload with teacher exhaustion. Similarly, Hashino (2025) emphasized the implications of prolonged working hours, highlighting the importance of managing cumulative professional responsibilities.

3.4.2 Adequacy of Time for Instructional Responsibilities

The adequacy of instructional time was rated high (M = 4.12, SD = 0.60), representing the highest-rated dimension of perceived workload balance. Indicator means ranged from 4.04 to 4.19. Creagh et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of managing work demands within reasonable working hours. Nickow et al. (2024) highlighted the effectiveness of targeted instructional interventions, reinforcing the need to protect sufficient time for learner support and remediation.

3.4.3 Compatibility of Instructional and Ancillary Demands

Teachers generally perceived instructional and ancillary responsibilities as compatible, with an overall high rating. However, some indicators obtained comparatively lower ratings, reflecting difficulties in managing competing responsibilities. Sandmeier et al. (2022) associated competing work demands with extended working hours and exhaustion. Tiggelaar et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of organizational conditions in managing administrative responsibilities, highlighting the need to minimize conflicts between instructional and ancillary assignments.

3.4.4 Equitable Distribution of Responsibilities

The equitable distribution of responsibilities was rated high (M = 4.03, SD = 0.78), with indicator means ranging from 3.94 to 4.14. The findings are relevant to Tiggelaar et al. (2024) regarding organizational participation and workload management. Creagh et al. (2025) further emphasized the importance of managing cumulative responsibilities, supporting equitable task allocation based on teachers' existing workloads.

3.4.5 Ability to Accomplish Responsibilities Within Reasonable Working Time

Teachers reported a high ability to accomplish responsibilities within reasonable working time (M = 4.05, SD = 0.57). Completing regular teaching responsibilities within official working hours obtained the highest mean (4.23), while completing ancillary tasks without sacrificing instructional or personal time obtained the lowest (3.90). The findings of Creagh et al. (2025) emphasize the importance of managing cumulative workload demands. Furthermore, Sandmeier et al. (2022) associated prolonged working hours with teacher exhaustion, highlighting the need to protect instructional and personal time. Overall, perceived workload balance was high (M = 4.06, SD = 0.54). Adequacy of instructional time obtained the highest rating (M = 4.12), while compatibility of instructional and ancillary demands obtained the lowest (M = 3.97), indicating opportunities for improved workload coordination.

3.5 Extent of Strategic Workload Management Practices

3.5.1 Participatory Task Allocation

Participatory task allocation was practiced to a great extent (M = 4.03, SD = 0.73). Consideration of teachers' expertise and experience obtained the highest mean (4.16), while consultation before assigning additional responsibilities obtained the lowest (3.93). Tiggelaar et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of organizational participation in managing administrative demands. These findings support greater teacher involvement in decision-making and consultation before workload assignments are finalized.

3.5.2 Equitable Distribution and Delegation of Responsibilities

Equitable distribution and delegation were practiced to a great extent (M = 4.09, SD = 0.62). Consideration of existing teaching loads obtained the highest mean (4.20), while delegation of administrative tasks to appropriate personnel obtained the lowest (3.99). Sandmeier et al. (2022) associated excessive workload with prolonged working hours and exhaustion. The findings emphasize the importance of considering existing teaching responsibilities and strengthening appropriate administrative delegation consistent with DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024.

3.5.3 Collegial Support and Sharing of Tasks

Collegial support and task sharing were practiced to a great extent (M = 4.14, SD = 0.65), representing the highest-rated management dimension. Collaboration and schedule coordination obtained the highest mean (4.21), while structured collaboration among teacher groups obtained the lowest (4.03). Zheng et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of collaborative professional relationships among teachers. These findings reinforce the need to strengthen organizational conditions that facilitate productive collaboration and structured task-sharing arrangements.

3.5.4 Administrative and Supervisory Support

Administrative and supervisory support was practiced to a great extent (M = 4.02, SD = 0.81). Consideration of workload when setting deadlines and assigning responsibilities obtained the highest mean (4.07), while direct assistance and resource provision obtained the lowest (3.96). Collie (2023) emphasized the importance of school leadership and supportive working conditions in promoting teachers' occupational well-being. These findings suggest the need to strengthen practical administrative assistance and resource provision.

3.5.5 Monitoring and Adjustment of Workload

Workload monitoring and adjustment were practiced to a great extent (M = 3.96, SD = 0.78). Adjustments protecting instructional time obtained the highest mean (4.04), while monitoring compliance with workload requirements obtained the lowest (3.89). Collie (2023) emphasized the importance of responsive school leadership, while Sandmeier et al. (2022) demonstrated the relationship between excessive workload, extended working hours, and exhaustion. These findings support systematic workload monitoring and timely adjustments. Overall, strategic workload management practices were implemented to a great extent (M = 4.05, SD = 0.65). Collegial support obtained the highest rating, while workload monitoring and adjustment obtained the lowest, highlighting opportunities for more systematic and responsive management practices.

3.6 Significant Relationships Between the Study Variables

3.6.1 Instructional Responsibilities and Perceived Workload Balance

Instructional responsibilities demonstrated a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived workload balance ($r = 0.342$, $p = 0.004$). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings suggest that extensive engagement in instructional responsibilities may coexist with favorable workload balance. Sandmeier et al. (2022) emphasized that work overload and prolonged working hours contribute to teacher exhaustion. Thus, the positive relationship should be understood in relation to working

conditions rather than interpreted as evidence that increasing instructional responsibilities improves workload balance.

3.6.2 Ancillary Tasks and Perceived Workload Balance

Ancillary tasks demonstrated a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived workload balance ($r = 0.302$, $p = 0.011$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. Tiggelaar et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of organizational conditions and teacher participation in managing administrative responsibilities. The findings suggest that workload balance may be associated with how ancillary responsibilities are organized and supported rather than solely with their quantity. However, the relationship does not establish that increasing ancillary assignments improves workload balance.

3.6.3 Strategic Workload Management Practices and Perceived Workload Balance

Strategic workload management practices demonstrated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived workload balance ($r = 0.813$, $p < 0.001$). This relationship was considerably stronger than those involving instructional responsibilities and ancillary tasks. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings support Collie (2023) regarding the importance of school leadership and supportive working conditions. Similarly, Creagh et al. (2025) emphasized organizational conditions in managing workload demands. The results provide an empirical basis for prioritizing participatory allocation, equitable delegation, collegial support, supervisory assistance, and systematic workload monitoring in the proposed framework. However, these relationships represent statistical associations rather than causal effects and may partly reflect the self-reported nature of the data.

3.7 Basis for the Strategic Workload Optimization Framework

The findings revealed extensive instructional and ancillary responsibilities, high perceived workload balance, and favorable strategic workload management practices. All three independent variables demonstrated significant positive relationships with perceived workload balance, with strategic workload management practices exhibiting the strongest association. These findings provide the empirical foundation for developing a Strategic Workload Optimization Framework emphasizing participatory task allocation, equitable distribution and delegation, collegial support and task sharing, administrative and supervisory support, and systematic workload monitoring and adjustment. The framework seeks to promote manageable and equitable workload arrangements while protecting instructional time and supporting teacher welfare.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study established that public secondary school teachers in selected schools in Basey, Schools Division of Samar, performed extensive instructional responsibilities alongside substantial ancillary tasks while generally maintaining a high level of perceived workload balance. Instructional planning and preparation emerged as the strongest instructional dimension, whereas learner monitoring, remediation, and enrichment required greater attention. Community and stakeholder engagement constituted the most extensive ancillary responsibility, while compatibility between instructional and ancillary demands remained a relative concern. Strategic workload management practices were generally favorable, particularly collegial support and task sharing, although workload monitoring and adjustment required strengthening. Instructional responsibilities and ancillary tasks demonstrated moderate positive and significant

relationships with perceived workload balance, while strategic workload management practices exhibited the strongest significant positive relationship. These findings emphasize the relevance of supportive, equitable, participatory, and responsive school-level management in understanding teachers' perceived workload balance and provide an empirical foundation for developing the Strategic Workload Optimization Framework.

School heads should strengthen systematic workload planning, equitable task allocation, and regular monitoring by considering teachers' existing responsibilities, competencies, and available working time. Consultation procedures and updated workload allocation matrices should be institutionalized to promote transparency, prevent overlapping assignments, and ensure appropriate delegation consistent with DepEd policies. Instructional time should be protected, particularly for learner monitoring, remediation, and enrichment. Schools should sustain collegial collaboration, resource sharing, and coordinated scheduling while strengthening administrative assistance and supervisory support. District supervisors and Schools Division Office personnel should provide technical assistance in workload documentation, policy implementation, and monitoring. The proposed Strategic Workload Optimization Framework should undergo pilot implementation and periodic evaluation, subject to administrative approval, to assess its effectiveness in improving workload management. Teachers should actively participate in workload consultations and provide constructive feedback. Future researchers should examine the framework's effectiveness through broader samples and longitudinal, quasi-experimental, or mixed-methods research designs.

The study was limited to 70 public secondary school teachers from seven selected schools in Basey Districts I and II, Schools Division of Samar, during School Year 2025–2026, restricting the generalizability of findings to other educational settings. The quantitative descriptive-correlational design established statistical associations but did not determine causal relationships. Moreover, reliance on self-reported questionnaire responses may reflect shared perceptions and common-method influences. The proposed Strategic Workload Optimization Framework was developed from the findings, but its effectiveness remains subject to implementation and evaluation. Future studies may address these limitations through larger and more diverse samples, alternative research designs, and additional workload-related variables.

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