

Workplace Bullying and Work Engagement among Public Elementary School Teachers in Bandung, Indonesia: Testing the Moderating Role of Supervisor Support

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Abstract

This study examined how workplace bullying affects work engagement among public elementary school teachers in Bandung, Indonesia, and whether supervisor support acts as a buffer against this negative impact. A total of 366 teachers completed a cross-sectional survey comprising the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9), and a supervisor support subscale. Multiple regression analysis revealed that workplace bullying significantly reduced teacher engagement ($R^2 = .08, p < .001$), supporting the first hypothesis. However, hierarchical moderated regression showed that the interaction between bullying and supervisor support was not statistically significant ($p = .117$). Supervisor support, therefore, failed to moderate the relationship, leaving the second hypothesis unsupported. These results indicate that supportive leadership alone cannot offset the harm caused by workplace bullying, underscoring the need for school administrators to implement direct anti-bullying policies. The findings are discussed through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources model and the high-context, hierarchical culture of Indonesian public schools, offering actionable insights for teacher retention and well-being.

Keywords: Workplace Bullying, Supervisor Support, Work Engagement, Elementary School Teachers, Moderated Regression Analysis

Introduction

The global teaching profession is currently experiencing an unprecedented retention crisis. According to the 2024 Global Report on Teachers, jointly developed by UNESCO, the Teacher Task Force, and the UNESCO-ILO Secretariat, an additional 44 million teachers will be needed by 2030 to achieve universal education targets. Both developed and developing nations face growing challenges in keeping educators motivated and in the workforce. The report highlights working conditions and psychosocial support as critical factors determining

whether teachers remain engaged and stay in the profession. Consequently, teacher work engagement has evolved from a niche organizational psychology concept into an urgent priority for international education policy.

The Indonesian educational system concretely exemplifies this institutional crisis. Bandung Regency alone reports a shortage of nearly 4,900 teachers amid a workforce of roughly 14,000 civil-servant and contract-based educators (Pratama, 2026), prompting national teacher advocacy organizations to actively lobby for structural employment reforms citing unresolved concerns over teacher welfare and job security (Federasi Serikat Guru Indonesia, 2025). Compounding these administrative pressures, institutional monitoring bodies documented a sharp rise in school-based violence across the country (Federasi Serikat Guru Indonesia, 2025). However, the vast majority of existing documentation frames school violence almost exclusively around student victimization (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia, 2024). What remains virtually unexamined is workplace bullying directed at teachers themselves, whether perpetrated by colleagues or supervisory principals. Existing empirical research in Indonesia predominantly treats teachers as perpetrators or bystanders within child-protection discourse (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2023), leaving their own experiences as primary targets of organizational bullying largely unaddressed.

Workplace bullying involves persistent exposure to hostile behaviors from colleagues or supervisors that targets find difficult to defend against (Einarsen et al., 2011). In empirical research, this construct is commonly assessed using the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R; Einarsen et al., 2009). Conversely, work engagement measured in this study via the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) represents a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind defined by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Cross-sectoral studies consistently demonstrate that workplace bullying impairs work engagement while elevating burnout (Javed et al., 2023; Portelada et al., 2025). Consistent with these empirical trends, the present study anticipates a similar negative relationship among Indonesian teachers (H1).

The empirical prevalence of workplace bullying among teachers varies widely depending on the measurement methodologies and regional contexts applied across studies. An analysis of the European Working Conditions Survey grounded in the Job Demands-Resources framework estimated the prevalence of workplace bullying at 4.4% among education sector employees (Ariza-Montes et al., 2016). In contrast, substantially higher rates have been reported in non-Western and developing contexts; for instance, early evidence from Turkey revealed that up to half of surveyed primary school teachers experienced workplace bullying (Cemaloğlu, 2007), while a cross-sectoral survey in Puerto Rico indicated that 51.8% of workers reported exposure to negative workplace behaviors (Workplace Bullying Alliance, 2015, as cited in Rosario-Hernández et al., 2019). More recent evidence indicates that teachers in South Africa are three times more likely to experience workplace bullying than their international peers (Solomon, 2021). Despite variations in exact prevalence rates, the behavioral manifestations of bullying consistently follow established patterns across educational settings, including work-related bullying (e.g., unreasonable workloads, excessive supervision), person-related bullying (e.g., demeaning comments, social isolation), and physically intimidating behaviors (Einarsen et al., 2009). Crucially, structural power dynamics within schools amplify these acts, with principals and school leaders documented using

positional authority to compromise teachers' professional autonomy and job security (Jacobs & de Wet, 2018).

Several studies have examined the complex mechanisms that shape the downstream effects of workplace bullying on teachers. Variables such as job insecurity, job dissatisfaction, and burnout have been identified as primary mediating pathways linking bullying exposure to turnover intention (Hernández & Millán, 2018). Furthermore, the erosion of work engagement itself constitutes a critical component of this process, as sustained exposure to hostile workplace behaviors systematically degrades engagement, which subsequently elevates a teacher's likelihood of leaving the profession (Meriläinen et al., 2019). Social support particularly from supervisors and leaders is the job resource most frequently conceptualized within organizational psychology to interrupt this detrimental chain. However, its empirical record as a protective buffer remains highly inconsistent rather than definitive. A comprehensive systematic review examining 136 tests of social support as a moderator revealed that only 20 tests confirmed the expected buffering effect, whereas 21 tests demonstrated a reverse effect where support paradoxically exacerbated the negative impact of bullying (Farley et al., 2023). In line with these mixed findings, leadership and supervisor support have failed to buffer adverse employee outcomes under specific organizational conditions (Blomberg & Rosander, 2022). This theoretical inconsistency underscores the necessity of re-examining the contextual boundaries of supervisor support within high-demand educational environments.

Both Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) posit that supervisor support, functioning as a vital job resource, should offset the detrimental impact of workplace bullying on work engagement. However, this theoretical prediction relies heavily on an implicit premise: that employees feel sufficiently secure to seek and utilize supervisor support without risking adverse career repercussions. As highlighted in JD-R applications to teacher bullying (Ariza-Montes et al., 2016), this assumption may not apply uniformly across diverse cultural contexts and employment arrangements. Crucially, the vast majority of empirical research testing this buffering mechanism has been conducted in Western, low-power-distance settings, leaving its validity in non-Western, highly hierarchical environments largely unverified.

Bandung City offers a unique and theoretically valuable setting to address this gap. Its population and teaching workforce are predominantly Sundanese, a cultural group guided by relational norms that prioritize hierarchical deference and conflict avoidance to preserve social harmony. These cultural dynamics contrast sharply with the Western, low-power-distance, individualistic contexts in which both workplace bullying research and the JD-R model originated; on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Indonesia scores 78 on power distance and 14 on individualism (Hofstede, 2011). Taken together, three distinct gaps justify the present study. First, empirical evidence on workplace bullying experienced directly by Indonesian teachers—as opposed to students—remains virtually undocumented. Second, the buffering role assigned to supervisor support under JD-R theory has yielded mixed empirical findings and has rarely been evaluated in high-power-distance, collectivist environments. Third, few studies have examined this dynamic specifically among elementary school teachers, whose daily professional dependence on a single supervising principal is more direct and structural than in secondary or higher education contexts. Examining the JD-R buffering

hypothesis under these unique socio-cultural conditions does more than expand its geographical coverage; it tests whether supervisor support can effectively shield teachers' work engagement when seeking such support may itself carry significant social and professional risk. Ultimately, these findings offer critical guidance for institutional policies and targeted interventions aimed at sustaining teacher engagement amidst persistent teacher shortages and employment instability across Indonesia.

Literature Review

Over the past five years, a growing body of research across diverse occupational settings has consistently demonstrated a negative association between workplace bullying and work engagement. For instance, in a study of 312 transport company employees in Norway, exposure to bullying reduced work engagement, though this effect was moderated by the organization's conflict management climate specifically, the negative link manifested only when conflict management was weak (Einarsen et al., 2018). Similar inverse relationships have been observed among early-career bank employees in Pakistan, where workplace bullying decreased work engagement while increasing employee silence (Javed et al., 2023). Likewise, among academic staff in Nigerian public universities, workplace bullying significantly impaired work engagement, which subsequently mediated the link between bullying and turnover intention (Gadi & Kee, 2020).

In Pakistani higher education, workplace bullying triggered job insecurity and counterproductive work behaviors among faculty members, though the moderating role of work engagement yielded mixed results (Ashraf & Khan, 2021). Recent studies expand these findings across diverse organizational processes. For instance, Jayaraman et al. (2025) highlighted the roles of emotional fatigue, employee allegiance, and social support in mitigating the impact of workplace harassment on engagement. Similarly, Tran (2025) found that stress and work engagement mediated the link between workplace bullying and organizational commitment among museum educators in Vietnam. Beyond direct bullying, broader organizational dynamics such as work environment and culture channel the effects of workplace violence onto engagement (Saleem et al., 2020). Even subtle forms of mistreatment, such as workplace incivility, reduce work engagement by eroding employees' perceived insider status, affective commitment, and organizational identification (Guo et al., 2020).

Substantial evidence from the educational sector across various national contexts demonstrates the adverse impact of interpersonal mistreatment on teacher engagement. For instance, a study of 366 teachers in Islamabad, Pakistan, revealed that workplace bullying decreased work engagement through the mediating roles of emotional exhaustion and psychological distress, with emotional intelligence buffering the link between distress and engagement (Hameed et al., 2023). Notably, while Hameed et al. examined a different cultural and organizational context, their study shared the exact sample size ($N = 366$) as the present research. Similarly, a foundational study of 142 full-time teachers in China found that workplace bullying reduced affective commitment, whereas satisfaction with supervisors and peers fostered positive outcomes (McCormack et al., 2006). Although McCormack et al. did not directly evaluate work engagement, their findings highlight the potential protective function of relational support. Beyond bullying, widespread occupational stress has been linked to diminished work capacity and burnout among upper-secondary school teachers in

Czechia (Hlad' et al., 2020), physical and psychological strain among elementary school teachers in Austria (Hoppe et al., 2023), and compromised psychological safety and engagement among novice early childhood educators (Rautamies et al., 2026). Collectively, these findings indicate that educators face complex, systemic threats to their professional well-being that extend far beyond classroom instruction.

Literature in this domain supports the theoretical premise that supervisor and organizational support can safeguard and enhance teacher engagement. This buffering mechanism serves as the foundation for the Job Demands-Resources moderation hypothesis tested in the present study (H2). For example, Abd Kaiyom et al. (2021) demonstrated that workload, supervisor support, and co-worker support each exerted a significant effect on work engagement among 274 boarding school educators in Selangor, Malaysia. Similarly, a study of 438 educators in Turkey revealed that perceived supervisor support was positively associated with teachers' perceptions of school effectiveness, work engagement, and job satisfaction, while negatively associated with organizational cynicism (Gülbahar, 2020). Using a multilevel framework with 796 teachers across 87 schools in Turkey, Uslukaya and Demirtas (2023) found that supervisor support was positively related to work engagement and negatively related to burnout at both the individual and school levels, with work engagement mediating the link between supervisor support and burnout. Expanding on this work, the same authors conducted a multilevel moderated-mediation study that further clarified how supervisor and colleague support influence teacher presenteeism and engagement (Uslukaya & Demirtas, 2024). In other cultural settings, organizational support and workload directly influence teacher work engagement, which subsequently affects psychological well-being (Wang, 2024). Likewise, perceived social support correlates positively with work engagement and downstream job satisfaction among early-career STEM educators (Wang et al., 2024).

The buffering capacity of supervisory and organizational support for work engagement is well documented beyond the educational sector, offering broader empirical support for the Job Demands-Resources framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) applied in the present study. Supportive supervision reduces turnover intentions, a relationship partially explained by enhanced employee engagement and work-life balance (Kaur & Randhawa, 2021). Similarly, perceived organizational support directly predicts employee engagement in public universities with differences observed across gender and academic roles (Mehta & Kaur, 2024) and fosters innovative work behavior through engagement among higher education faculty (Zargar et al., 2025). Moreover, perceived organizational support and employee well-being mediate the adverse effects of a toxic workplace climate on engagement (Rasool et al., 2021), while coworker support moderates the link between extraversion and service performance through work vigor (Hu & Lin, 2021). Individual differences also shape how job resources translate into engagement. For instance, personality traits moderate the interactions among job demands, job resources, work engagement, and psychological well-being (Herr et al., 2023), whereas job satisfaction mediates the relationship between job characteristics, burnout, and engagement among judicial officers (Hagen et al., 2025). Even in complex career transitions such as academic repatriation, support from organizations and peers interacts with individual proactivity to drive engagement (James, 2021). Overall, a systematic review of moderators in the bullying-wellbeing relationship indicates that support-related and individual-difference factors are among the most frequently tested yet inconsistently validated protective mechanisms (Farley et al., 2023). This empirical

inconsistency foreshadows the non-significant moderation effect observed in the present study.

Collectively, these empirical studies encompassing faculty members, banking personnel, transportation workers, judges, repatriated scholars, and educators across Asia, Europe, and Africa demonstrate consistent evidence that workplace bullying impairs work engagement. However, the literature presents far more mixed findings regarding the extent to which supervisory or organizational support can buffer this negative impact. To date, no empirical study has evaluated this moderation model among public elementary school teachers in Indonesia, nor has it considered how high-context, hierarchical cultural dynamics and employment status uncertainties (such as the contract-based government employees contract system) shape these relationships. Addressing this empirical gap, alongside the theoretical and practical considerations outlined above, leads to the following two hypotheses:

H₁: Workplace bullying has a significant negative effect on work engagement among public elementary school teachers.

H₂: Supervisor support significantly moderates the relationship between workplace bullying and work engagement.

Research Methodology

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design involving public elementary school teachers in Bandung, West Java. Sampling was conducted through a two-stage procedure. In the first stage, public elementary schools across Bandung were selected via simple random sampling to ensure representative school selection and minimize geographical bias. In the second stage, teachers within each selected school were recruited using purposive sampling based on their employment status, specifically civil servants and contract-based government employees. This representation was critical to ensure that both employment categories were adequately captured, as employment status constitutes a primary theoretical variable in this study. Following data screening and cleaning, the final analytical sample consisted of 366 teachers ($N = 366$).

Data were collected using structured, self-report questionnaires, all adapted into Indonesian and validated prior to full administration. The survey package comprised three instruments: the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9) to assess work engagement, the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R) to measure workplace bullying, and the Perceived Supervisor Support Scale (PSS) to evaluate supervisor support, all utilizing Likert-type response scales. Data analysis was performed using bivariate correlation and hierarchical moderated regression analysis. Following Aiken and West's (1991) recommendations, the workplace bullying and supervisor support variables were mean-centered prior to constructing the interaction term. Diagnostic tests for regression assumptions confirmed the absence of multicollinearity ($VIF < 10$), non-autocorrelation (Durbin-Watson = 2.03), and linearity (Ramsey RESET $p = .081$). Although tests for normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov $p = .001$) and homoscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan $p = .001$) indicated assumption violations, the large sample size ($N = 366$) mitigates the impact of non-normality on parameter unbiasedness under the Central Limit Theorem (Lumley et al., 2002). Furthermore, re-

estimating the regression models using heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors (HC3) yielded substantive conclusions identical to those of the initial model.

Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Table 1

Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Data	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Female	293	80.05
Male	73	19.95
Age		
Generation Z (born 1997–2012 / 14–29 years)	47	12.84
Millennial Generation (born 1981–1996 / 30–45 years)	199	54.37
Generation X (born 1965–1980 / 46–61 years)	120	32.79
Employment Status		
Civil Servant	155	42.35
Government Employee with Work Agreement	211	57.65
Ethnicity		
Sundanese	326	89.07
Javanese	26	7.10
Florenese	1	0.27
Batak	1	0.27
Other/Mixed	12	3.28
Marital Status		
Married	304	83.06
Single	33	9.02
Widowed	17	4.64
Divorced	12	3.28
Monthly Income		
Below IDR 1 million	1	0.27
IDR 1 – 5 million	294	80.33
IDR 5 – 10 million	56	15.30
Above IDR 10 million	7	1.91
Incomplete/unclassifiable data	8	2.19
Tenure		
Establishment stage (< 2 years)	14	3.83
Advancement stage (2–10 years)	123	33.61

Maintenance stage (> 10 years)	229	62.57
Additional Duties		
With Additional Duties	269	73.50
Without Additional Duties	97	26.50

Results and Discussion

Table 2

Direct Effect of Workplace Bullying on Work Engagement

Model	R ²	Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	.076	(Constant)	56.249	1.363	–	41.265	< .001
		Workplace Bullying	-0.283	0.052	-.276	-5.484	< .001

Workplace bullying accounted for 7.6% of the variance in teacher work engagement ($R^2 = .08$). The regression model revealed that workplace bullying exerted a statistically significant negative effect on work engagement ($p < .001$). Consequently, these empirical findings provide clear support for Hypothesis 1 (H1).

Table 3

Moderated Regression Analysis (Workplace Bullying $\times$ Supervisor Support)

Model	R ²	Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
2	.153	(Constant)	33.074	7.454	–	4.437	< .001
		Workplace Bullying	0.223	0.265	.218	0.840	.402
		Supervisor Support	1.084	0.391	.632	2.776	.006
		WPB $\times$ SS (interaction)	-0.023	0.014	-.441	-1.573	.117

Inclusion of supervisor support and the interaction term increased the proportion of explained variance in work engagement to 15.3% ($R^2 = .15$). However, the interaction between workplace bullying and supervisor support was not statistically significant ($p = .117$). These results indicate that supervisor support does not moderate the relationship between workplace bullying and teacher work engagement, leaving Hypothesis 2 (H2) unsupported.

The confirmation of a significant negative relationship between workplace bullying and work engagement (H1) reinforces the consistency of international empirical literature regarding these constructs (Javed et al., 2023; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012; Portelada et al., 2025). Importantly, this finding extends current knowledge by focusing on public elementary school teachers, a group relatively understudied in organizational research on workplace bullying and employee engagement. In Indonesia, bullying research has historically been framed through a child protection lens (Borualogo, 2025; Bowes et al., 2019). Existing studies have predominantly examined student-on-student bullying or, to a lesser extent, teacher-to-student misconduct. Consequently, teachers have primarily been positioned as perpetrators

or bystanders within school bullying dynamics, leaving their experiences as vulnerable workers subject to workplace bullying largely unaddressed.

The significance of this study lies in positioning Indonesian public elementary school teachers as workers exposed to legitimate occupational health risks (Einarsen et al., 2011; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012), rather than merely framing them as perpetrators or bystanders within child protection discourse (Borualogo, 2025; Bowes et al., 2019). By adopting this organizational perspective, the study highlights a vulnerable group and workplace dynamic historically overlooked in Indonesian education policy. This emphasis aligns directly with global calls to prioritize teacher well-being and working conditions as critical levers for teacher retention (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024). Furthermore, evaluating whether supervisor support can buffer the detrimental impact of workplace bullying on teacher engagement offers practical guidance for school-level interventions and broader policy frameworks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Eisenberger et al., 1986). These insights are particularly vital given the persistent teacher shortages and employment status uncertainties that currently undermine educator engagement in Indonesia (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024).

The urgency of addressing workplace bullying becomes even more pronounced when viewed alongside global projections from UNESCO and the ILO, which estimate a shortfall of 44 million teachers by 2030 (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024). Their joint report explicitly identifies working conditions and psychosocial well-being as primary levers for teacher retention. A workforce already strained by structural deficits, as evidenced by the shortage of nearly 4,900 teaching positions in Bandung Regency alone, cannot absorb further declines in engagement caused by this largely unaddressed occupational hazard. Viewed through this broader lens, workplace bullying among teachers extends beyond an internal climate issue; it directly fuels the global teacher retention crisis that international policy initiatives are urgently working to mitigate (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024).

However, the rejection of Hypothesis 2 (H2) constitutes the most theoretically meaningful finding of this study. The buffering hypothesis derived from Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory largely developed and validated within Western organizational contexts characterized by high employee voice and formal grievance mechanisms was not supported in this sample. Two contextual features specific to this population likely account for this boundary condition. First, the teaching workforce in Bandung is predominantly Sundanese, a cultural group whose relational norms strongly emphasize hierarchical deference and social harmony, thereby discouraging direct confrontation with authority figures. Under these cultural norms, teachers may interpret both supportive and hostile supervisory behaviors through a paternalistic lens. This cultural frame blurs the psychological boundary between genuine protective support and authority-sanctioned behavior, a distinction that Western buffering models assume employees readily make. Second, most public elementary school teachers in Indonesia are employed under the contract-based government employees contract scheme, which subjects them to periodic evaluations by the same supervisory hierarchy expected to provide support. Documented cases of contract-based government employees teachers facing declining welfare and stalled career progression following contract formalization highlight a structural

vulnerability. Given these latent career risks, teachers may hesitate to perceive supervisor support as an authentic buffer against workplace mistreatment.

The respondents' demographic profile provides empirical confirmation for the two primary contextual arguments formulated in this study. First, the predominant representation of Sundanese ethnicity at 89.07% ($n = 326$) grounds the study's cultural framework in sample-level data rather than city-level assumptions. This empirical baseline reinforces the argument that Sundanese norms of hierarchical deference and harmony-preserving conflict avoidance directly explain why supervisor support failed to act as a significant moderator in this population. Second, the employment status distribution indicates that contract-based teachers accounted for a higher proportion of the sample (57.65%, $n = 211$) than permanent civil servant teachers (42.35%, $n = 155$). This distribution confirms that most respondents experienced genuine contractual vulnerability, which underpins the psychological safety mechanism proposed to account for the rejection of Hypothesis 2 (H2), rather than representing a marginal subgroup whose analytical impact could be discounted.

Additional demographic characteristics further enrich the interpretation of these findings. Respondents were predominantly female (80.05%, $n = 293$), reflecting the historical gender composition of the primary education workforce in Indonesia. A majority belonged to the Millennial generation (54.37%, $n = 199$) and possessed over 10 years of teaching tenure (62.57%, $n = 229$). This profile indicates that the results reflect the experiences of established educators rather than novice teachers. Notably, the significant negative impact of workplace bullying (H1) persisted even within a seasoned cohort theoretically expected to possess mature coping mechanisms, rendering this finding particularly concerning. Furthermore, 73.50% of respondents ($n = 269$) held administrative or structural sub-roles such as homeroom teacher or activity coordinator which likely elevated their workload and exposure to school-level hierarchical dynamics, including supervisory or peer mistreatment. Finally, most respondents fell within the IDR 1–5 million monthly income bracket (80.33%, $n = 294$). This income distribution highlights a baseline of economic vulnerability, reinforcing the structural strain argument, particularly for contract-based government teachers whose earnings remain contingent upon periodic performance evaluations.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) buffering mechanism is not a culturally or structurally universal phenomenon. Instead, its efficacy depends on employees' psychological safety, a condition systematically constrained within high-context, hierarchical workplace cultures characterized by employment status uncertainty. Far from contradicting the JD-R framework, these empirical insights extend its theoretical application by demonstrating that psychological safety serves as a necessary boundary condition for supervisor support to function effectively as a protective job resource. Beyond its relevance to Indonesian public education, this theoretical refinement offers critical implications for education systems in other developing nations undergoing public sector employment reforms.

Contribution of The Study

This study underscores the necessity of framing public elementary school teachers as workers entitled to protection against workplace mistreatment, rather than viewing them solely as agents within child protection discourse. Teachers can optimize their work engagement when

operating within environments free from workplace bullying. Consequently, educational institutions should leverage these empirical findings to design targeted anti-bullying policies rather than relying exclusively on promoting supportive supervisory behaviors. As demonstrated in this study, supervisory support alone is insufficient to buffer the detrimental impact of bullying within Indonesia's unique cultural and structural employment landscape. Ultimately, this research provides a useful foundation for future investigations into how local cultural dynamics and employment structures shape teacher well-being.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, data collection was restricted to a single municipality (Bandung), which limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions in Indonesia. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes drawing causal inferences regarding the relationships among workplace bullying, supervisor support, and work engagement. To validate and extend these findings, future research should incorporate geographically diverse teacher samples and employ longitudinal designs.

Conclusion

Public elementary school teachers encounter numerous challenges in fulfilling their daily responsibilities. Navigating these occupational pressures leaves them vulnerable to workplace bullying, which substantially impairs their work engagement. This study demonstrates a significant negative relationship between workplace bullying and teacher engagement, while revealing that supervisor support does not moderate this association. Empirical investigations into workplace mistreatment and occupational well-being among Indonesian educators remain scarce. Given ongoing teacher shortages and the global imperatives highlighted in the UNESCO-ILO Global Report on Teachers, prioritizing the direct prevention of workplace bullying is essential to safeguarding teacher engagement. Educational institutions must shift beyond relying solely on supportive supervisory measures, addressing workplace bullying as both a local policy priority and a broader educational sustainability challenge.

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