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Psychological Dynamics and Resilience of Teachers at SDN 18 Indralaya Utara in Managing Work Stress

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Abstract

This study aims to describe how teachers at Elementary School 18 in North Indralaya implement resilience in dealing with work pressure. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation. Resilience is understood as the ability to regulate emotions, maintain self-confidence, implement constructive coping strategies, and utilize social support. Based on initial assumptions, teachers with stronger resilience tend to be able to suppress the negative impacts of stress even when facing high work demands. Personal factors such as optimism and emotional management, as well as environmental factors such as support from colleagues, contribute to strengthening this resilience. The research results are expected to form the basis for developing programs to improve the well-being of educators.

Keywords: ***Resilience, Work Stress, Elementary School Teachers, Qualitative.***

INTRODUCTION

The workload of teachers has become increasingly demanding in recent years, along with the growing number of tasks and professional expectations. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching, but are also required to complete curriculum administration, conduct evaluations, prepare digital-based reports, and adapt to rapidly changing educational policies. UNESCO (2023) reported increasing emotional exhaustion, heavier workloads, and declining psychological well-being among educators in various countries. In Indonesia, additional administrative responsibilities and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum have further increased work pressure, which may affect teachers' concentration and the quality of their relationships with students.

The increasing demands placed on teachers are reflected in the growing problem of work stress. UNESCO (2023) reported that approximately 69% of teachers in various

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countries experienced increased levels of stress, with 52% identifying administrative workload as the main source. Updated OECD data through TALIS (2023) also showed that 56% of teachers perceived their work as highly mentally demanding, while approximately 22% experienced moderate to high levels of burnout. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology's Learning Environment Survey (2022) indicated that 54% of teachers experienced pressure due to excessive administrative tasks, while 27% showed signs of emotional exhaustion. These findings demonstrate that work stress is not merely an individual problem but has become an important issue affecting teacher well-being and the quality of the learning process.

Teachers have a strategic role in improving the quality of education. According to Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, teachers are professional educators whose main responsibilities include educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students. However, fulfilling these responsibilities is accompanied by various pressures, including administrative demands, curriculum changes, classroom dynamics, and expectations from students and parents. Previous studies have demonstrated the negative consequences of such pressures. Leonardi et al. (2023), for example, found a significant negative relationship between work stress and teachers' psychological well-being. Similarly, Sawal et al. (2022) found that workload positively affected teachers' work stress, while a better work environment was associated with lower stress. Dawam (2020) also found that workload significantly affected teachers' work stress, although the influence of the work environment was not significant when considered separately.

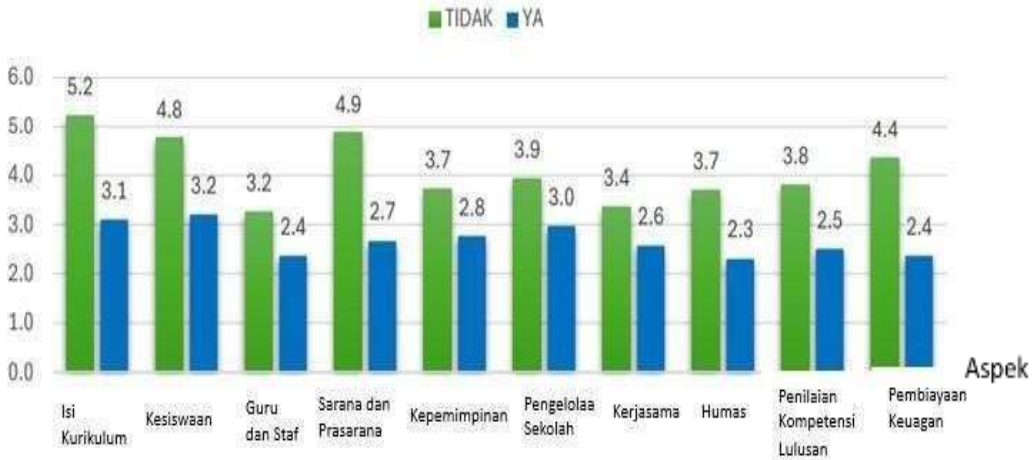


Figure 1. Work Stress Levels Based on School Status

Source: Dawous (2024)

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Figure 2. Hotspot of Stress Based on Educational Level

Source: Dawous (2024)

The findings presented in Figures 1 and 2 further illustrate variations in teachers' work stress according to school status and educational background. Teachers in schools with the "Sekolah Penggerak" status were reported to experience higher levels of stress than teachers in non-"Sekolah Penggerak" schools, with curriculum-related demands representing one of the prominent sources of stress. In addition, teachers with a bachelor's degree were reported to experience higher levels of stress than those with a master's degree. These findings indicate that teachers' work stress may be influenced by differences in professional demands, roles, and educational backgrounds.

Under these conditions, resilience becomes an important capacity for teachers to manage pressure and maintain effective professional functioning. Resilience is understood as a dynamic process through which individuals adapt positively to stressful situations. Masten (2021) describes resilience as "ordinary magic," emphasizing that resilience is not an innate characteristic but develops through the interaction between personal strengths and external support. In the teaching profession, resilience enables teachers to maintain emotional stability and work effectiveness despite administrative pressures, classroom challenges, and increasing professional demands (Day & Hong, 2023). Teachers with strong resilience are also more capable of interpreting pressure constructively, regulating emotions, and maintaining motivation in challenging situations (Kim & Jeon, 2022; Richards, 2023).

Previous research has provided important evidence regarding the role of resilience in managing stress. Platania et al. (2022) found that resilience had a significant negative effect on stress, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress among healthcare workers, indicating that greater resilience is associated with lower levels of psychological stress. In the context of teachers, Mansfield et al. (2021) found through a qualitative study that teacher resilience develops through complex psychological processes, including emotional regulation, cognitive reappraisal, and problem-focused coping. Li et al. (2023)

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further identified psychological dynamics, including primary appraisal, secondary appraisal, and emotion regulation, as significant predictors of teachers' long-term stress management. Teachers who developed cognitive reframing and positive coping strategies showed decreased burnout and increased job satisfaction over a two-year period.

Research conducted specifically in the Indonesian educational context also indicates the importance of resilience in dealing with changes and work demands. Khoiriyah et al. (2024) found that self-efficacy and social support from colleagues played significant roles in developing resilience among elementary school teachers facing the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers with higher self-efficacy were better able to adapt to curriculum changes without experiencing significant increases in work stress. In addition, Farida et al. (2024) found that prosocial behavior modification increased elementary school teachers' understanding of strategies for dealing with work stress and strengthened teaching resilience. Warastri et al. (2022) similarly demonstrated that stress-management training could improve teachers' resilience during distance learning by helping teachers identify stressors and independently practice emotional relaxation techniques. These findings indicate that resilience is closely related to teachers' ability to adapt to various professional pressures.

Resilience is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by psychological and environmental factors. Windle (2020) identifies individual, cognitive, social, environmental, and spiritual factors as important components in the development of resilience. Self-efficacy, emotional regulation, optimism, social support, and a supportive environment can strengthen an individual's capacity to adapt to stressful circumstances. This perspective is consistent with research showing that school leadership and social relationships contribute to teacher resilience. Ranti et al. (2023) found a positive influence of democratic school leadership on teacher resilience, while Reintjes et al. (2025) emphasized that individual resilience and structural support, including school leadership and colleague support, influence teacher work engagement and reduce emotional exhaustion. Thus, resilience cannot be understood solely as an individual capacity but must also be considered within the social and organizational environment in which teachers work.

Despite the growing number of studies concerning teacher stress and resilience, several gaps remain. Existing research has examined the relationship between resilience and stress, factors associated with resilience, and interventions designed to strengthen teachers' resilience. However, many studies have employed quantitative approaches or intervention-based designs that primarily measure changes in resilience, stress, or related variables. Other studies have focused on specific factors, such as workload, leadership, emotional regulation, or curriculum changes. Although Mansfield et al. (2021)

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and Li et al. (2023) have explored teachers' psychological dynamics, there remains limited research that specifically examines how resilience is implemented and experienced by elementary school teachers in their everyday work environment. Moreover, studies such as Khoiriyah et al. (2024) have highlighted the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, but the ways in which teachers actively interpret and respond to multiple simultaneous work pressures remain insufficiently explored.

This gap becomes increasingly relevant in the post-pandemic educational context, where teachers continue to face new demands, including administrative digitalization, curriculum implementation, increasing workloads, and changes in professional expectations. Recent studies have also shown that resilience can be strengthened through interventions. Wirabrata et al. (2024) found a significant increase in the resilience of elementary school teachers after resilience training for dealing with the Merdeka Curriculum, while Tati et al. (2025) found that the "Proactive Educator" training significantly improved teachers' ability to regulate emotions, adapt to work pressures, and develop self-confidence. However, intervention findings do not fully explain how teachers themselves develop and implement resilience in their natural working environments. This distinction is important because resilience is a dynamic process shaped by interactions between personal resources, coping strategies, and environmental conditions.

The psychological processes underlying teachers' responses to work stress can be understood through Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping. This model explains that stress responses arise through the interaction between individuals and their environment, particularly through cognitive appraisal and coping processes. Teachers assess stressful situations, evaluate the resources available to them, regulate their emotional responses, and select strategies to deal with challenges. These processes are also related to self-efficacy, which influences how individuals respond to difficulties and persist when facing challenges (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, understanding resilience requires attention not only to whether teachers are resilient but also to how they interpret stressful situations, regulate their emotions, use coping strategies, and utilize personal and environmental resources.

The context of SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara is particularly relevant for examining this phenomenon. Data from the Ogan Ilir District Education Office (2023) show that there were 3,405 elementary school teachers across 16 districts, consisting of 2,867 teachers in public elementary schools and 538 teachers in private elementary schools. This distribution demonstrates the dominant role of public elementary school teachers within the local education system. Based on preliminary observations, teachers at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara face various pressures, including school accreditation demands, implementation of a new curriculum, administrative responsibilities, and the school's relatively remote location. Teachers experiencing high levels of stress were also found to

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experience concentration difficulties that could affect their daily performance. Work stress may consequently affect not only teachers' psychological well-being but also the quality of learning, including lesson planning, instructional delivery, and evaluation of learning outcomes (Fitriyanti et al., 2025).

Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is the limited understanding of how teachers develop, practice, and maintain resilience when dealing with work stress, particularly through the interaction between personal factors and school environmental conditions. A qualitative approach is important because it allows the study to explore teachers' experiences, meanings, coping strategies, and actual practices of resilience in their daily professional lives. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the implementation of resilience in dealing with work stress among teachers at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara, Ogan Ilir Regency. The findings are expected to provide practical contributions to the development of teacher well-being programs and theoretical contributions to the understanding of resilience and work stress management in educational settings.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the implementation of resilience in dealing with work stress among elementary school teachers. The qualitative approach was used to obtain an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences, perspectives, and strategies in responding to work-related stress within the actual school environment. The research focused on the implementation of resilience among teachers at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara, particularly in relation to work stress, stress-management strategies, and supporting and inhibiting factors. The study was conducted at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara, Indralaya Utara District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province, from October 27 to December 27, 2025.

The data used in this study were qualitative data in the form of descriptive and narrative information concerning teachers' experiences and subjective perspectives. Primary data were obtained directly from the research setting through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation of activities at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara. Teachers served as the main informants because they had direct experience regarding the implementation of resilience in dealing with work stress, while the principal and other parties who understood the dynamics of work within the school served as supporting informants. Secondary data were obtained from available written sources and documents, including school profiles, administrative records, activity reports, internal school policies, books, scientific journals, and previous studies related to resilience and work stress. These secondary data were used to provide additional context, strengthen the analysis, and support triangulation of the primary data.

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The population consisted of all individuals actively involved in teaching and school-related work at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara during the 2025/2026 academic year, totaling 10 individuals, including classroom teachers, subject teachers, the acting principal/classroom teacher, and administrative personnel. The informants were determined using non-probability purposive sampling. Individuals who were directly involved with the phenomenon under investigation and able to provide relevant information regarding resilience and work stress were included as informants. The study included all individuals who met the research criteria to obtain comprehensive information, with data collection continuing until the information obtained was considered adequate and no substantially new findings emerged. According to Sugiyono (2020), saturated sampling is used when the entire population is included as the sample to obtain comprehensive data.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore teachers' experiences of work stress, their understanding and implementation of resilience, strategies for managing stress, emotional responses, and factors that supported or hindered their ability to manage work pressure. Observations were conducted to understand the actual conditions and interactions within the school environment, while documentation was used to complement the interview and observation data through relevant school records, written documents, photographs, and field notes. Data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently, allowing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation to be continuously examined to identify emerging patterns, categories, and themes.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. The researcher focused on data related to the implementation of teacher resilience, manifestations of work stress, stress-management strategies, and supporting and inhibiting factors. The reduced data were then displayed in a structured form, primarily through narrative descriptions, to facilitate the interpretation of events and the identification of relationships among the emerging findings. The final stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions. Initial conclusions were considered tentative and were continuously examined against the available evidence. Conclusions were considered credible when supported by consistent evidence obtained through repeated examination of the data and comparison across data sources.

In this qualitative study, the researcher served as the primary research instrument and was directly involved in collecting, organizing, and interpreting the data. Supporting instruments included interview guidelines, observation guidelines, documentation equipment, field notes, and relevant school documents. These instruments were used to

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ensure that data collection remained aligned with the research objectives and focused on the implementation of resilience in dealing with work stress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of SDN 18 Indralaya Utara

SDN 18 Indralaya Utara is located in Indralaya Utara District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. The school is an elementary educational institution that provides educational services to children in the surrounding area. The school has been established for more than 20 years and is supported by facilities including classrooms, a library, and a sports field. The school has approximately 100–150 students and is supported by teachers with diverse educational and professional backgrounds who continue to participate in training to improve their teaching competencies. In addition to academic activities, the school provides extracurricular activities such as sports, arts, and scouting to support students' character and social development.



Figure 3. SDN 18 Indralaya Utara

Source: Author's Documentation (2026)

The school also conducts activities related to teacher and school leadership performance management. These activities reflect the school's efforts to maintain and improve the quality of educational services.

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Figure 4. Reflection on Teacher and Principal Performance Management
Source: Author's Documentation (2026)

Characteristics of the Participants

The study involved 10 informants consisting of teachers at SDN 18 Indralaya Utara. Their characteristics were considered important for interpreting the findings regarding teachers' psychological dynamics and resilience. The participants had different educational and employment backgrounds, with the majority holding a bachelor's degree.

Table 1. Characteristics of Teachers

No	Educational Background	Employment Status	
		PNS	Non PNS
1	S3/S2	1	-
2	S1	4	4
3	D3	-	-
4	D2/D1/SLTA	1	-
5	**TOTAL**	**6**	**4**

Source: SDN 18 Indralaya Utara Documents

As presented in Table 1, eight teachers held bachelor's degrees, consisting of four civil servants (PNS) and four non-civil servants. One teacher held a master's/doctoral-level qualification and was a civil servant, while one teacher had a D2/D1/high-school-level educational background and was also a civil servant. Overall, the participants consisted of six civil servants and four non-civil servants. This variation provides a diverse context for understanding how teachers experience and respond to work-related demands.

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The interview findings indicate that teachers' professional routines extend beyond classroom teaching. Teachers are responsible for preparing instructional materials, evaluating student learning, providing additional guidance, and managing classroom interactions. One informant stated: “Before teaching, I always prepare the materials, and afterward I pay attention to students who still need additional guidance.” (Informant 1)

This statement illustrates that teachers' responsibilities involve both academic and pedagogical dimensions. Teachers are required to prepare learning activities while simultaneously responding to individual differences among students. Another informant emphasized the importance of reflection: “After the lesson, I usually reflect so that the next lesson can be better.” (Informant 5)

Reflection indicates teachers' efforts to continuously evaluate and improve their instructional practices. In addition, teachers attempt to create a supportive classroom environment, as expressed by another informant: “I try to create a comfortable classroom atmosphere so that students can understand the lesson more easily.” (Informant 6)

These findings demonstrate that teachers' daily work involves instructional preparation, reflection, classroom management, and emotional engagement with students. Therefore, teachers' professional roles require continuous psychological and behavioral adjustment.

Work-Related Stress among Teachers

The findings indicate that work-related stress among teachers primarily arises from administrative demands, limited time, and pedagogical challenges associated with differences in students' characteristics and abilities. One informant explained: “A lot of administrative tasks with limited time often make me feel overwhelmed.” (Informant 3)

Administrative demands can consume time and energy that could otherwise be allocated to instructional preparation or rest. Another informant highlighted the challenge of dealing with students with different abilities: “Dealing with students with different abilities requires a lot of patience and energy.” (Informant 2)

These findings indicate that teachers face not only administrative pressure but also continuous pedagogical demands. The pressure becomes more pronounced when several responsibilities must be completed simultaneously: “Sometimes all the work comes at once, so I feel overwhelmed.” (Informant 5)

The findings are consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's perspective that stress occurs when individuals perceive environmental demands as exceeding their available resources. In this context, teachers perceive administrative, pedagogical, and time-related demands as requiring continuous psychological adaptation.

These findings are also consistent with Sawal et al. (2022), who found that workload positively affects teachers' work stress, while a supportive work environment

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can reduce stress. Similarly, Dawam (2020) found that workload significantly contributes to teachers' work stress. Rahmawati et al. (2021) also reported that changes in the educational system could increase teachers' stress and require them to adapt to new demands. Thus, the present findings reinforce previous evidence that workload and changing work demands are important sources of teacher stress.

The interview findings were further compared with observations and documentation. Teachers who demonstrated better stress management appeared calmer, more organized, and more capable of managing classroom interactions despite high work demands. School documents, including performance reports and administrative records, also indicated substantial administrative responsibilities. The consistency between interviews, observations, and documentation strengthens the credibility of the findings through methodological triangulation.

Factors Influencing Teacher Resilience

The findings indicate that teacher resilience is influenced by both personal and external factors. Personal factors include emotional regulation, positive thinking, self-reflection, physical well-being, and the ability to maintain a balance between work and personal life. Teachers who are able to regulate their emotions and remain patient when dealing with difficult students or administrative pressure demonstrate greater capacity to manage stressful situations.

External factors include social support from colleagues, school leaders, and family. Open communication with colleagues and school leaders provides teachers with emotional and practical resources when facing work-related difficulties. Professional development and stress-management training also contribute to teachers' ability to cope with workplace demands.

These findings are consistent with Masten (2021), who emphasizes that resilience develops through the interaction between individual capacities and external resources. The findings are also supported by Khoiriyah et al. (2024), who found that self-efficacy and social support among colleagues play important roles in strengthening teacher resilience when facing educational changes. Likewise, Ranti et al. (2023) found a positive relationship between democratic school leadership and teacher resilience, indicating that supportive leadership can strengthen teachers' capacity to cope with challenges.

The importance of personal psychological resources is also reflected in Afriyani et al. (2021), who found that self-efficacy had a dominant influence on employee performance. Although the context differs from the present study, the finding supports the role of psychological resources in helping individuals respond effectively to work demands.

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Implementation of Resilience among Teachers

The findings show that teachers at SDN 18 Indralaya Utara implement resilience through several adaptive behaviors, including emotional regulation, time management, reflection, positive thinking, communication, and seeking support from others. These strategies enable teachers to remain focused and productive despite administrative demands, classroom-management problems, and differences in students' abilities.

Resilience is reflected in teachers' ability to remain calm when facing pressure and to adjust their strategies according to the situation. Rather than responding solely through emotional reactions, teachers attempt to identify solutions, manage priorities, communicate with others, and learn from previous experiences. These practices indicate that resilience is not merely an internal characteristic but is expressed through adaptive behaviors in everyday professional activities.

This finding is consistent with Masten (2021), who conceptualizes resilience as the capacity to adapt positively when facing adversity or stressful conditions. It is also supported by Warastri et al. (2022), who found that stress-management training could increase teachers' resilience during distance learning. Their findings demonstrate that resilience can be strengthened through strategies that improve teachers' ability to recognize and manage stress.

Furthermore, Tati et al. (2025) found that proactive educator training significantly improved teacher resilience by strengthening emotional management, adaptability, and confidence in dealing with workplace challenges. Similarly, Wirabrata et al. (2024) reported increased teacher resilience following resilience training in preparation for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. These findings support the present study's observation that resilience can be strengthened through both personal strategies and supportive interventions.

The findings also demonstrate that resilience has implications beyond teachers' ability to cope with stress. Sabaryati et al. (2025) found that resilient teachers can contribute to developing students' learning resilience through contextual learning, emotional support, and acceptance of failure as part of the learning process. Thus, teacher resilience may influence not only teachers' psychological adjustment but also the quality of their interactions with students.

Impact of Teacher Resilience

The implementation of resilience has implications for teachers' psychological, cognitive, and professional functioning. Psychologically, resilience enables teachers to manage pressure more effectively and reduces the likelihood of becoming overwhelmed by work demands. Teachers with stronger resilience tend to maintain greater emotional stability when dealing with administrative responsibilities and classroom challenges.

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Cognitively, resilience supports more positive and solution-oriented thinking. Teachers become better able to evaluate problems objectively, maintain confidence in their abilities, and view difficulties as part of their professional development. This adaptive cognitive process supports more appropriate decision-making and responses to workplace challenges.

Behaviorally and professionally, resilience contributes to teachers' commitment, responsibility, flexibility, and consistency in carrying out their duties. Teachers who are able to manage stress effectively can maintain positive interactions with students and continue performing their responsibilities despite workplace pressures. In the long term, these conditions may support psychological well-being and reduce vulnerability to work-related exhaustion.

These findings are consistent with Sawal et al. (2022), who found that high workload increases teachers' work stress, whereas a supportive work environment can reduce stress. Rahmawati et al. (2021) similarly demonstrated that teachers experienced increased stress when confronted with substantial changes in teaching systems, highlighting the importance of adaptive capacity. In addition, Dawam (2020) found that workload contributes significantly to teacher work stress.

However, the findings differ from Janetiana et al. (2024), who found no significant relationship between emotional regulation and resilience among special education teachers. In the present study, emotional regulation emerged as one of the personal resources supporting teachers' resilience. This difference suggests that the contribution of emotional regulation to resilience may depend on contextual factors, including the type of work demands, organizational environment, and availability of social support. Therefore, resilience should not be understood as the result of a single psychological factor but as a dynamic process involving the interaction of personal capacities and environmental resources.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that teacher resilience functions as an adaptive resource in dealing with work-related stress. The interaction between personal resources, social support, and workplace demands shapes how teachers respond to pressure and maintain their professional functioning.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that teachers at SD Negeri 18 Indralaya Utara experience work-related stress arising from various professional demands, particularly high administrative workloads, student behavioral and disciplinary issues, and differences in students' academic abilities. These demands increase teachers' psychological pressure and require them to continuously adjust their time, energy, and teaching strategies.

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Teacher resilience is shaped by the interaction of internal and external factors. Internal factors include emotional regulation, constructive thinking, self-reflection, and maintaining physical and psychological well-being. Meanwhile, external factors include support from colleagues and school leaders, a supportive work environment, and opportunities for professional development. These resources strengthen teachers' capacity to cope with workplace stress.

The implementation of resilience is reflected in teachers' ability to remain consistent, adaptive, and responsible when performing their professional duties despite work-related pressures. Resilient teachers are able to regulate emotional responses, evaluate situations objectively, and develop effective solutions to workplace challenges. Thus, resilience functions as an adaptive mechanism that helps teachers maintain their professional performance.

Overall, teacher resilience contributes positively to psychological well-being by supporting emotional stability, healthier stress management, motivation, and job satisfaction. Therefore, strengthening both individual resilience and supportive conditions within the school environment is important for maintaining teachers' well-being and sustaining the quality of their professional performance.

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