

Psychological Wellbeing of Kindergarten Teachers: A Quantitative Review

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Abstract. This study aims to explore the Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta, focusing on the factors influencing their psychological health. A quantitative approach was employed with a descriptive design, involving 260 kindergarten teachers selected through random sampling. The measurement of PWB was conducted using the Psychological Well-Being Scale that has been adapted into Indonesian, which includes six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. The analysis revealed that 65.38% of teachers fell into the low category, with autonomy and environmental mastery showing the lowest average scores of 2.5 and 2.4, respectively. Validity and reliability tests confirmed that the instruments used were both valid and reliable. These findings indicate a significant issue regarding the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers, which could adversely impact teaching quality and child development. Therefore, this study recommends the need for interventions aimed at enhancing PWB through psychosocial support and stress management training programs to foster a more positive learning environment that supports early childhood development.

Keywords: Psychological Wellbeing, kindergarten teachers, PWB, early childhood education.

1 Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations heavily rely on psychological wellbeing, particularly concerning mental health development, individual welfare, and inclusive social development. An individual is considered to have psychological wellbeing when they experience emotional balance, have control over their life, and can adapt to daily challenges. Psychological wellbeing consists of six main aspects according to Ryff's theory: self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relationships with others, autonomy, purpose in life, and environmental mastery [1], [2]. Achieving this psychological balance is crucial for improving quality of life. This aligns with SDG Goal 3, which emphasizes mental health and wellbeing to ensure healthy living standards and promote welfare for all age groups [3].

Moreover, psychological wellbeing plays a vital role in achieving Quality Education, especially in the context of inclusive and high-quality education. Educators, students, and educational staff with good psychological wellbeing are likely to contribute positively to the learning process, enhancing learning motivation while reducing stress levels that often hinder educational success [4]. This creates an educational environment conducive to achieving quality educational goals that are inclusive for everyone.

Psychological wellbeing is a subjective experience of positive psychological conditions, such as happiness, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. It represents a holistic approach encompassing various attributes of a person's mental and emotional health, including positive relationships, personal growth and development, self-esteem, positive self-acceptance, and the feeling of having control over one's life [5]. This form of wellbeing reflects a state of feeling content with oneself and one's life, maintaining satisfying relationships, and having the ability to manage life challenges [6]. This psychological condition is a multi-faceted construct that transcends mental illness, encompassing happiness, satisfaction, and overall life fulfillment [7], [8]. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines psychological wellbeing as "a state in which an individual can realize their potential, work productively and creatively, and cope with the normal stresses of life" [9]. This definition highlights the multidimensional nature of psychological wellbeing, encompassing affirmative emotions, psychological functioning, and a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Issues regarding psychological wellbeing also affect teachers engaged in educational settings. The teaching profession is filled with emotional fluctuations, necessitating attention to how this manifests in the classroom. In other words, being an effective teacher often involves implicit rules and assumptions about how they should express their emotions, which in many contexts is more explicitly regulated. For instance, to safeguard themselves from any threats to their wellbeing and promote higher adaptive functioning, teachers are often expected to suppress negative emotions such as frustration, sadness, and anger [10], [11]. In fulfilling their role as educators, teachers must demonstrate positive emotions and manage negative feelings in teacher-student interactions [12]. This condition is believed to be present among all teachers across various levels in Indonesia.

Kindergarten teachers are the first educators in formal settings and play a crucial role in shaping children's cognitive and emotional development [13]. However, they frequently encounter significant challenges, such as high workloads, pressure from parents, and a lack of support for mental wellbeing [14]. Consequently, teaching can be a demanding activity that stimulates psychological distress for teachers, often manifesting as stress, panic, and anxiety regarding the success of the learning process. Additionally, teachers today are faced with numerous duties and responsibilities outlined by government regulations.

Previous research indicates that teachers' psychological wellbeing is influenced by factors such as the work environment, relationships with colleagues and students, as well as support from family and educational institutions [15]. Urban life challenges, including traffic congestion, high living costs, and increasing stress levels, exacerbate teachers' mental wellbeing, particularly in Jakarta [16]. The urban environment in Jakarta, characterized by pressure from traffic, pollution, and a high cost of living, presents unique challenges for the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers compared to other regions [17]. Additionally, the influence of technological advancement and digitalization following the COVID-19 pandemic has

compelled kindergarten teachers to adapt to remote learning, increasing stress levels and emotional demands that have not been adequately addressed in prior research [14]. This study can also delve deeper into how local and institutional policy support in DKI Jakarta impacts kindergarten teachers' mental wellbeing, given the gap between policy and its implementation [18]. Therefore, specific wellbeing interventions tailored for kindergarten teachers in Jakarta are essential, considering the unique social, economic, and cultural contexts of urban living [19]. This research has the potential to provide new insights into designing more relevant and effective support models for kindergarten teachers in Jakarta, an area that has not been extensively explored in existing literature. Hence, further research is needed to understand the factors influencing the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta and how appropriate interventions can enhance their quality of life and performance.

2 Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive quantitative design to measure the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten (TK) teachers in DKI Jakarta. The population of this research includes all kindergarten teachers working in the DKI Jakarta area. The sample for this study consists of 260 kindergarten teachers selected using random sampling techniques. Data collection was conducted using the Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Ryff, which is used to measure six dimensions of psychological wellbeing: self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. This scale consists of 42 items that respondents will complete, using a Likert scale model. The collected data analyzed descript analyzed using SPSS version 25 to perform descriptive statistics, reliability testing, as well descript analyzed persentation the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta.

3 Result and Discussion

The research results on the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten (TK) teachers in DKI Jakarta indicate that the majority of respondents fall into the low category. Out of 260 teachers sampled in the study, approximately 65.38% are classified as having low psychological wellbeing, while only 7.70% demonstrate high psychological wellbeing. To assess mental health, the psychological wellbeing scale consists of six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. The validity test results show that all items have a correlation value of more than 0.30, indicating that this instrument is valid for measuring the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in Jakarta. Furthermore, the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a result of $\alpha = 0.89$, indicating that the instrument has high reliability and consistency in measuring psychological wellbeing. After data analysis, it was found that the majority of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta have a psychological wellbeing level classified as low. This finding is evident from the score distribution, which shows that most respondents scored below the average value of the scale.

Table 1. Distribution of Psychological Wellbeing Teachers in DKI Jakarta

Psychological Wellbeing Category	Number of Teachers (N=260)	Percentage (%)
Low	170	65.38
Moderate	70	26.92
High	20	7.70

Based on the table, it is evident that 65.38% of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta fall into the low category for psychological wellbeing. Only 7.70% of respondents have a high level of psychological wellbeing, while 26.92% are categorized as moderate. Additionally, the analysis by dimension reveals that a significant number of kindergarten teachers feel inadequate in the "autonomy" and "environmental mastery" dimensions, which are significantly lower than the other dimensions. This indicates that many teachers feel they have less control over their work situations and are less capable of managing the demands of their work environment.

Here's the translated table of psychological wellbeing dimensions along with their average scores:

Table 2. Average Scores of Psychological Wellbeing Dimensions

Psychological Wellbeing Dimension	Average Score
Self-Acceptance	2.8
Personal Growth	3.0
Positive Relationships with Others	3.1
Autonomy	2.5
Environmental Mastery	2.4
Purpose in Life	3.2

Based on Table 2, it is evident that the "autonomy" and "environmental mastery" dimensions have the lowest average scores, indicating that kindergarten teachers feel less empowered in making personal decisions and dealing with workplace challenges. The autonomy and environmental mastery dimensions scored the lowest, at 2.5 and 2.4, respectively. This suggests that many teachers feel they lack control over the situations they face and struggle to manage demands in their work environment. Therefore, autonomy is one of the basic needs in motivation theory, and when unmet, it can trigger stress and decrease motivation. This is critical in early childhood education, where the quality of teacher-student interactions is heavily influenced by teachers' mental and emotional state.

Teachers who feel they cannot control their working conditions tend to experience higher levels of stress, which ultimately affects the quality of their teaching and the emotional and educational development of their students [20]. Therefore, these findings emphasize the need to improve the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers, through policy interventions, training, or adequate psychosocial support. According to [14], teachers' wellbeing significantly impacts

their teaching effectiveness, motivation, and the quality of their interactions with students. With low wellbeing, kindergarten teachers in Jakarta are at risk of experiencing burnout and fatigue, which can affect their performance in delivering quality education to young children. In the context of educational development, teachers' psychological wellbeing is not only crucial for them personally but also directly impacts the improvement of early childhood education quality, which serves as a critical foundation for children's future development. Therefore, enhancing the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in Jakarta should be prioritized through more inclusive policies and programs focused on improving their mental health.

Addressing the issue of low PWB among teachers requires systematic efforts to improve the psychological wellbeing of kindergarten teachers in Jakarta. Interventions may include stress coping skill development programs, psychosocial support, and educational policies that are more responsive to teachers' mental health needs. Improving psychological wellbeing will not only benefit the teachers but also greatly support the optimal development of their students, creating a healthier and more productive learning environment. To delve deeper into the low PWB among kindergarten teachers in Jakarta, it is important to consider the contributing factors behind this condition. One key factor is the pressure from heavy work demands, which often outweigh the support they receive. As Hakanen revealed, teachers working in stressful environments are prone to mental and emotional exhaustion, hindering their ability to provide quality education [21]. In Jakarta, this is further exacerbated by inadequate resources and facilities in schools, leading to greater pressure on teachers in performing their duties [22].

Additionally, social factors play an essential role in teachers' psychological wellbeing. A lack of support from colleagues and management can worsen teachers' PWB. Social support from coworkers and supervisors positively affects psychological wellbeing [13], [23]. Minimal collaboration and communication between teachers and management can result in isolation, further worsening their stress levels. Furthermore, the high emotional demands in the teaching profession, particularly in kindergarten, are also concerning. Teachers must manage a range of emotions from both students and parents, which can be an emotional burden in itself [13]. In this context, teachers who lack effective coping strategies for handling negative emotions may experience detrimental effects on their wellbeing. Therefore, designing intervention programs focused on improving kindergarten teachers' PWB is extremely urgent and necessary. These programs could include stress management training, interpersonal skill development activities, and the establishment of support networks in the workplace. As noted by Zins et al., sufficient support can enhance teachers' ability to cope with stress and contribute to the overall improvement of mental health [24], [25]. By understanding and addressing the various factors affecting teachers' PWB, we can create a more supportive working environment that benefits both teachers and the students they teach. Ensuring teachers can provide high-quality education and support the optimal development of young children is essential for achieving long-term educational success.

4 Conclusion

This study indicates that the psychological well-being of kindergarten teachers in DKI Jakarta is concerning, with the majority of respondents falling into the low well-being category. The findings reveal that 65.38% of kindergarten teachers experience low psychological well-being,

highlighting an urgent need to enhance their mental and emotional conditions. The lowest scores in the dimensions of autonomy and environmental mastery suggest that many teachers feel they lack control over their work situations, contributing to stress and decreased motivation in teaching. This condition not only impacts the quality of instruction provided but also affects the social and emotional development of their students. Therefore, appropriate and systematic interventions are necessary, such as psychosocial support programs, stress coping skills training, and educational policies that are responsive to the mental well-being needs of teachers. Improving the psychological well-being of teachers is not only important for them as individuals but also has a direct impact on the quality of education received by young children. Hence, efforts to enhance the psychological well-being of kindergarten teachers in Jakarta are crucial steps toward creating a healthier and more productive educational environment, ultimately supporting optimal child development.

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