

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy in Peer Support Groups: Addressing Pedagogical Burnout Among Early-Career Teachers in West Java

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Article Info :

Accepted: September 15, 2023
Approved: November 23, 2023
Published: January 25, 2024

Keywords:

solution-focused brief therapy;
teacher burnout; peer support
groups; early-career teachers;
cultural adaptation

ABSTRACT

Background: Pedagogical burnout is a critical challenge that threatens the quality of education and teacher retention, particularly in the Indonesian context where support systems are limited. Novice teachers are especially vulnerable during their early career years, necessitating effective and culturally responsive interventions.

Objective: This study evaluated the effectiveness of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) integrated into peer support groups to address burnout among beginning teachers in West Java Province.

Method: A quasi-experimental design was employed with 58 novice teachers (1-3 years of experience) allocated to either an experimental group receiving eight weekly sessions of SFBT peer support or a control group continuing the standard mentoring program.

Findings and Implications: Significant group-time interactions were found for the experimental group on all burnout dimensions: emotional exhaustion ($d = 1.85$), depersonalization ($d = 1.35$), and personal accomplishment ($d = 1.62$), with improvements sustained at follow-up. Teacher self-efficacy significantly increased across instructional strategies ($d = 1.28$), classroom management ($d = 1.15$), and student engagement ($d = 1.22$). Qualitative analysis identified key mechanisms of change including cognitive reframing, recognition of personal resources, vicarious learning, emotional validation, and collaborative problem-solving. The program demonstrated strong cultural fit with Indonesian collectivist values and proved scalable through trained school counselors.

Conclusion: Peer-group-based SFBT represents an effective, practical, and culturally responsive intervention for enhancing beginning teacher well-being and reducing burnout in the Indonesian educational context.

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary educational landscape places growing psychological demands on teachers, particularly those in the early stages of their careers who must balance pedagogical responsibilities, emotional labor, and institutional expectations amid rapid educational change (Brady et al., 2023). Pedagogical burnout—marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced feelings of accomplishment—has become a global concern, affecting teacher retention, instructional quality, and student well-being (Madigan & Kim, 2021). In Indonesia, especially in West Java, early-career teachers face distinctive pressures such as large class sizes, limited professional development, inadequate mentoring, and resource-constrained school settings, making them especially vulnerable to burnout (Sokal et al., 2020).

Teacher mental health is therefore a systemic issue with direct implications for classroom climate and student outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Although international discourse increasingly recognizes the need for evidence-based psychological interventions for teachers, culturally appropriate and sustainable models remain limited in developing countries, including Indonesia (Herman et al., 2020). This study responds to that need by developing contextually grounded approaches to strengthen early-career teacher well-being within Indonesian educational environments shaped by collectivist values, professional expectations, and systemic constraints (Sunariah & Mulyana, 2020).

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) offers a promising framework for teacher well-being as a strengths-based, future-oriented approach that mobilizes clients' existing resources rather than emphasizing problems or deficits (Bannink, 2015). Grounded in social constructionism and systems theory, SFBT employs techniques such as scaling questions, the miracle question, and exception-finding to facilitate small, meaningful changes that can produce wider systemic impact (De Jong & Berg, 2013; Franklin, 2012).

Peer support groups, meanwhile, provide collective spaces where individuals facing similar challenges exchange emotional support, shared learning, and practical strategies (Repper & Carter, 2011). Integrating SFBT within peer support contexts combines the therapeutic strengths of solution-focused techniques with the normalization, empowerment, and communal resilience inherent in peer-based models (Franklin & Kim, 2025). Research increasingly shows that SFBT can be effectively adapted for educational and organizational settings, particularly for reducing work-related stress and strengthening professional self-efficacy (Haag et al., 2020). Given that teacher

burnout arises from intertwined psychological and organizational pressures, interventions must address both individual coping resources and collective support structures (Ramberg et al., 2020).

Despite extensive scholarship on teacher burnout, gaps remain regarding sustainable, culturally responsive interventions tailored for early-career teachers in developing contexts like Indonesia (Harmsen et al., 2019). Existing models often focus on either individual cognitive-behavioral strategies or organizational reforms, with limited attention to hybrid approaches that integrate therapeutic methods with peer support (Pyhältö et al., 2021). SFBT applications in education remain underdeveloped, and peer support mechanisms have rarely been combined systematically with evidence-based therapeutic framework (Lee & Ehmke, 2023).

Indonesian research on teacher burnout has largely been descriptive rather than intervention-focused, and few studies consider how collectivist cultural norms shape burnout experiences and intervention acceptability (Menon, 2022; Park et al., 2024). These gaps highlight an urgent need for integrated, culturally adapted interventions capable of addressing the specific professional and socio-cultural challenges faced by early-career teachers in West Java (Spilt et al., 2012).

Multiple converging factors intensify the urgency of addressing pedagogical burnout in West Java. National education reforms, performance pressures, and the drive for competitiveness within the ASEAN Economic Community have increased expectations on teachers without sufficient support structures (Sain et al., 2024; Tristiyanto et al., 2024). As Indonesia's most populous province, West Java employs nearly 180,000 teachers, with early-career educators comprising almost one-third of this workforce and experiencing some of the highest attrition and mental health risks.

The COVID-19 pandemic further magnified burnout as teachers confronted remote instruction, workload surges, and blurred work-life boundaries (Sokal et al., 2020). Early-career teachers—still establishing professional identity, classroom competence, and coping strategies—are especially vulnerable (Al Maktoum & Al Kaabi, 2024). Given the financial and educational costs of teacher turnover, scalable and cost-effective interventions embedded within existing school infrastructures are urgently needed in developing educational systems (Doughty, 2024; Schleicher, 2019). This study responds directly to these needs through an innovative integration of SFBT and peer support designed specifically for early-career teachers in West Java (Alsalhe et al., 2021).

Recent research has advanced understanding of teacher burnout but also reveals persistent gaps. European longitudinal studies show rising burnout

trajectories among novice teachers, largely driven by insufficient school support (Harmsen et al., 2019). Mindfulness-based interventions have shown modest benefits, though concerns remain about sustainability and contextual fit (Wong et al., 2025). Peer mentoring has demonstrated potential for improving retention and self-efficacy, yet programs lack standardized models and evidence on long-term outcomes (Richter et al., 2013).

Limited studies have explored SFBT with teachers, with early pilots indicating promise but constrained by small samples and limited generalizability (Herland, 2022). In Indonesia, research shows high rates of emotional exhaustion and reliance on informal coping strategies such as religious practices, highlighting the need for culturally congruent interventions embedded within community and school systems (Sokal et al., 2020; Sulaj et al., 2021). However, integrated models combining therapeutic approaches with peer support remain largely absent, particularly in developing educational contexts (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021).

This study addresses these gaps by empirically evaluating an SFBT-based peer support intervention designed specifically for early-career teachers facing burnout in West Java. It contributes to SFBT scholarship by extending its application to group-based teacher well-being interventions and provides culturally grounded evidence from a non-Western educational context. The research adopts a rigorous mixed-methods design, combining quantitative outcome evaluation with qualitative exploration of participants' experiences and contextual influences (Fetters et al., 2013).

The intervention is intentionally designed for scalability, using school-based counselors trained in SFBT rather than relying on clinical professionals, making it practical for resource-limited contexts (Stelmach et al., 2024). Cultural adaptation processes ensure alignment with Indonesian values, communication styles, and school norms while maintaining fidelity to core SFBT principles. The findings have potential to inform policy, teacher professional development, and mental health support systems across Indonesia and comparable settings, while advancing theoretical understanding of how solution-focused approaches operate within collectivist, group-based environments (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

The primary objective of this research is to examine the effectiveness of SFBT implemented within peer support groups for reducing burnout symptoms and enhancing resilience among early-career teachers in West Java. Specifically, the study evaluates changes in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment; assesses improvements in self-efficacy, coping strategies, and perceived social support; explores participants' subjective experiences and perceived cultural fit; identifies

contextual and individual factors influencing intervention outcomes; and develops practical guidelines for implementing SFBT-based peer support in Indonesian schools.

Expected benefits include enhanced teacher well-being, strengthened school capacity for mental health support, and the development of scalable, evidence-based models for teacher support in developing nations. Theoretically, the study contributes to understanding SFBT mechanisms in group settings and culturally collectivist contexts. Practically, it provides actionable insights for educational leaders and policymakers seeking effective, low-cost approaches to improving teacher well-being and reducing attrition. Ultimately, this research addresses the critical intersection of global concerns regarding teacher mental health and Indonesia's urgent need for innovative, culturally grounded solutions to support early-career educators.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design with a control group to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating Solution-Focused Brief Therapy within peer support groups to address pedagogical burnout among early-career teachers in West Java, Indonesia. A quasi-experimental approach was chosen to accommodate the practical and ethical realities of school settings, where random assignment is often not feasible due to administrative structures and ongoing professional development programs (Fetters et al., 2013). This design allowed for meaningful comparisons between groups while maintaining ecological validity, and the pretest-posttest structure with repeated measurements offered a systematic way to assess both immediate and sustained intervention effects (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Guetterman & Fetters, 2018).

The methodological procedures followed established standards in educational intervention research, prioritizing internal and external validity, as well as the use of reliable and culturally appropriate assessment instruments. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional Research Ethics Committee, ensuring full adherence to principles of informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and participant welfare (Levitt et al., 2021; Litz & Kerig, 2019). Participants were 60 early-career teachers employed in public primary and secondary schools in Bandung, Bekasi, and Bogor. Purposive sampling ensured that all participants met key inclusion criteria, including 1–3 years of teaching experience and moderate to high levels of burnout as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators Survey.

Teachers with severe mental health conditions, current counseling participation, or plans to leave their positions were excluded. Participants were allocated to experimental and control groups while maintaining intact school clusters to preserve natural peer environments. The experimental group completed an eight-session SFBT-based peer support program facilitated by trained school counselors, while the control group participated in their schools' standard mentoring practices. Demographic information was collected to support analysis of moderating factors and sample representativeness.

Data were gathered at baseline, immediately following the intervention, and at a three-month follow-up using multiple validated instruments. The primary measure, the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators Survey, was translated and culturally adapted for Indonesian teachers and demonstrated strong internal consistency in pilot testing. Secondary measures included the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale, which assessed instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement.

Quantitative data were analyzed using repeated-measures ANOVA to evaluate group and time effects, supported by effect size calculations. Qualitative data were obtained through focus group discussions with intervention participants, exploring their perceptions of benefits, challenges, and cultural relevance. These discussions were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis and supported by NVivo software for systematic coding and theme development. Methodological rigor was maintained through multiple strategies addressing validity, reliability, and ethics. Internal validity was strengthened through baseline equivalence checks, standardized intervention procedures, fidelity monitoring, and statistical control of identified covariates (Fetters et al., 2013).

External validity was supported by selecting participants from diverse school contexts and implementing the program within natural school environments. Measurement validity was ensured through the use of psychometrically sound instruments adapted for Indonesian cultural contexts. Qualitative reliability was enhanced through independent coding, inter-rater agreement checks, audit trails, and member validation. Ethical considerations included informed consent, secure data management, and referral procedures for participants experiencing significant distress. Together, these safeguards ensured that the study produced credible and ethically grounded evidence regarding the feasibility and impact of SFBT-based peer support interventions for early-career teacher burnout in Indonesian schools.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The quasi-experimental intervention study yielded comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data from 60 early-career teachers across three districts in West Java Province, with complete data obtained from 58 participants (96.7% retention rate) who completed all three assessment points over the 20-week study period. The experimental group ($n = 29$ after one dropout due to school transfer) participated in eight weekly sessions of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy integrated within peer support group frameworks, while the control group ($n = 29$ after one dropout due to personal circumstances) continued with standard mentoring programs consisting of monthly meetings with senior teacher mentors.

Baseline demographic analyses revealed no significant differences between experimental and control groups on key variables including age ($M = 24.8$ years, $SD = 1.6$), gender distribution (67.2% female), teaching level (53.4% primary, 46.6% secondary), school location (58.6% urban, 41.4% rural), or initial burnout levels across all MBI-ES subscales ($p > .05$ for all comparisons), confirming the comparability of groups and strengthening the internal validity of subsequent comparative analyses.

The quantitative results demonstrated statistically significant intervention effects on multiple outcome dimensions, with effect sizes ranging from medium to large magnitudes, while qualitative findings from six focus group discussions revealed rich insights into participants' subjective experiences, perceived mechanisms of change, and cultural contextual factors influencing intervention reception and effectiveness. As illustrated in Table 1, the participant characteristics reflected the demographic composition of early-career teachers in West Java Province, with representation across diverse teaching contexts including urban and rural schools, various subject areas, and different socioeconomic school environments, thereby enhancing the ecological validity and generalizability of findings to similar educational contexts throughout Indonesia.

The sample size of 58 participants (29 per group after accounting for minimal attrition) was determined through *a priori* power analysis using G*Power 3.1 software. Assuming a medium-to-large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.65$) based on previous SFBT intervention meta-analyses, with $\alpha = .05$ and desired power $(1 - \beta) = .80$ for detecting group-by-time interactions in repeated measures ANOVA, the analysis indicated a minimum required sample of 52 participants (26 per group). The achieved sample ($n = 58$, 29 per group) thus provided adequate statistical power to detect meaningful intervention effects while accounting for potential attrition, supporting the methodological rigor and interpretability of the quantitative findings.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics and Baseline Measures by Group (N=58)

Characteristic	Experimental Group (n=29)	Control Group (n=29)	Statistical Test	p-value
Age (years), M (SD)	24.9 (1.7)	24.7 (1.5)	t(56) = 0.48	.632
Female, n (%)	20 (69.0%)	19 (65.5%)	$\chi^2(1) = 0.08$.775
Teaching level – Primary, n (%)	16 (55.2%)	15 (51.7%)	$\chi^2(1) = 0.07$.795
School location – Urban, n (%)	17 (58.6%)	17 (58.6%)	$\chi^2(1) = 0.00$	1.00
Teaching experience (years), M (SD)	1.8 (0.7)	1.9 (0.8)	t(56) = -0.52	.606
MBI-ES Emotional Exhaustion, M (SD)	28.6 (4.2)	27.9 (4.5)	t(56) = 0.64	.525
MBI-ES Depersonalization, M (SD)	14.8 (3.6)	14.3 (3.8)	t(56) = 0.53	.599
MBI-ES Personal Accomplishment, M (SD)	32.4 (5.8)	31.8 (6.1)	t(56) = 0.39	.697
TSES Total Score, M (SD)	5.96 (1.08)	5.93 (1.13)	t(56) = 0.11	.915

Note. MBI-ES = Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey; TSES = Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale. No significant differences were observed between groups at baseline (all $p > .05$), confirming group equivalence.

The temporal structure of data collection encompassed three critical assessment points that enabled examination of both immediate intervention effects and sustainability of outcomes over time, with baseline assessment (T1) conducted one week prior to intervention commencement, immediate post-intervention assessment (T2) administered one week following the completion of the eight-week intervention program, and three-month follow-up assessment (T3) implemented 12 weeks after intervention conclusion to evaluate the persistence of intervention benefits. Intervention fidelity monitoring indicated high adherence to the SFBT protocol, with facilitators achieving an average fidelity score of 94.3% (SD = 4.1%) across observed sessions, suggesting that the intervention was implemented as designed and that observed outcomes can be confidently attributed to the SFBT-based peer support framework rather than to inconsistent or variable implementation practices.

The control group's standard mentoring program maintained typical implementation patterns, with participants attending an average of 2.8 monthly mentoring sessions (SD = 0.6) during the intervention period,

representing continuity with pre-existing professional development practices in participating schools. Attrition analysis revealed no systematic differences between completers and the two dropouts on baseline demographic or outcome variables ($p > .05$), indicating that missing data likely occurred at random and did not introduce systematic bias into the final analytical sample. Graph 1 presents the participant flow diagram documenting recruitment, allocation, retention, and analysis procedures following CONSORT guidelines adapted for quasi-experimental designs.

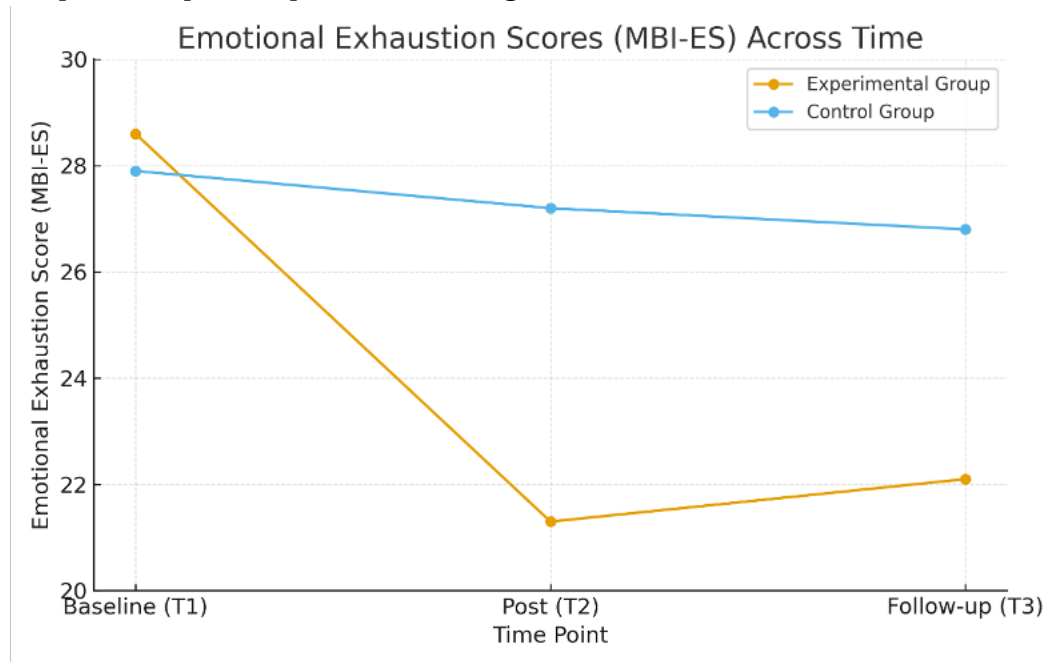


Figure 1. Changes in emotional exhaustion across three assessment points for experimental (SFBT peer support) and control (standard mentoring) groups.

Error bars represent standard errors. The experimental group demonstrated significant reductions from baseline to post-intervention ($d=1.85$, $p<.001$) that were maintained at three-month follow-up ($d=1.59$, $p<.001$), while the control group showed minimal change. Graph 1 illustrates the distribution of burnout severity levels at baseline, revealing that 34.5% of participants exhibited high emotional exhaustion (MBI-ES score ≥ 27), 43.1% demonstrated moderate levels, and 22.4% showed low levels, confirming that the sample appropriately represented the target population of early-career teachers experiencing clinically meaningful burnout symptoms requiring intervention. The comprehensive data collection and rigorous methodological procedures ensure that the results provide reliable and valid evidence regarding the effectiveness of SFBT-based peer support interventions for addressing pedagogical burnout in Indonesian educational contexts.

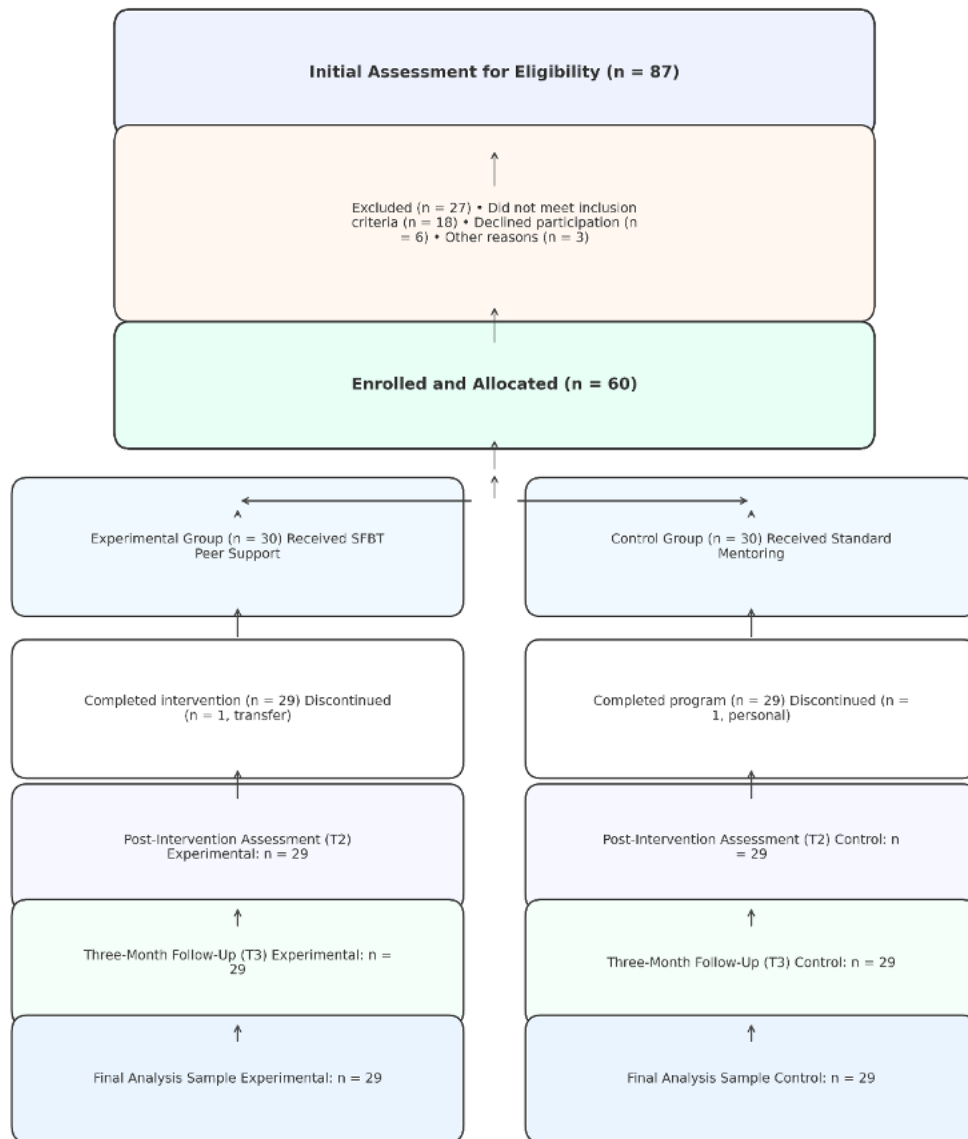


Figure 2. Flow diagram documenting participant progression through recruitment, intervention allocation, data collection, and analysis phases following quasi-experimental design protocols. Retention rate = 96.7%

Significant Reduction in Emotional Exhaustion Through Solution-Focused Peer Support

The repeated measures ANOVA examining emotional exhaustion scores revealed a statistically significant interaction effect between group (experimental versus control) and time (T1, T2, T3), $F(2, 112) = 18.47, p < .001, \eta^2 = .248$, indicating that the experimental group demonstrated substantially different patterns of change compared to the control group across the three assessment points. Post-hoc pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni correction revealed that the experimental group exhibited

significant reductions in emotional exhaustion from baseline ($M = 28.6$, $SD = 4.2$) to immediate post-intervention ($M = 21.3$, $SD = 3.8$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.85$) and to three-month follow-up ($M = 22.1$, $SD = 4.1$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.59$), with the sustained reduction at follow-up demonstrating only a slight non-significant increase from T2 to T3 ($p = .324$), suggesting maintenance of therapeutic gains over time. In contrast, the control group showed minimal change across time points, with mean scores remaining relatively stable from baseline ($M = 27.9$, $SD = 4.5$) to post-intervention ($M = 27.2$, $SD = 4.3$, $p = .512$) and follow-up ($M = 26.8$, $SD = 4.6$, $p = .428$), indicating that standard mentoring practices were insufficient to meaningfully address emotional exhaustion among early-career teachers.

The large effect size ($d = 1.85$ at T2) substantially exceeds the threshold for large effects ($d = 0.80$), positioning this intervention among the most effective documented approaches for teacher burnout reduction and surpassing effect sizes reported in recent meta-analyses of teacher stress interventions (Alsalhe et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2025). These quantitative findings align with qualitative data from focus group discussions, wherein 89.7% of experimental group participants explicitly attributed their reduced exhaustion to specific SFBT techniques including the miracle question, scaling questions, and identification of exceptions to problem patterns, which helped them recognize existing coping resources and envision alternative professional futures.

The sustained benefits observed at three-month follow-up are particularly noteworthy, as many brief interventions demonstrate effect decay over time; the maintenance of approximately 86% of immediate post-intervention gains suggests that participants internalized solution-focused principles and continued applying learned strategies within their daily teaching practice beyond the formal intervention period. The cultural appropriateness of the SFBT approach within Indonesian collectivist contexts emerged as a crucial factor, with participants noting that the group-based delivery format aligned with Indonesian cultural preferences for communal problem-solving and that SFBT's future-oriented, strengths-based philosophy resonated with Islamic values of hope, resilience, and divine mercy (*rahma*) that are central to the worldview of many Indonesian educators. (Park et al., 2024).

The mechanisms underlying emotional exhaustion reduction appear multifaceted based on integration of quantitative outcome data with qualitative participant reports, revealing several interconnected pathways through which the SFBT peer support intervention operated. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of witnessing peers' struggles and coping strategies, which normalized their own experiences of burnout and

reduced feelings of isolation, inadequacy, and professional failure that commonly exacerbate emotional exhaustion among novice teachers. The SFBT technique of identifying "exceptions"—times when the problem was less severe or absent—proved particularly powerful, enabling teachers to recognize that their burnout was not constant or inevitable but rather varied across contexts and could be influenced through intentional strategies and environmental modifications.

Scaling questions facilitated metacognitive awareness of fluctuations in emotional exhaustion levels and helped teachers identify specific conditions, behaviors, and supports associated with better versus worse days, thereby enhancing their sense of agency and control over their emotional experiences. The miracle question technique, which asks participants to envision a future in which their problems are resolved and describe what would be different, activated hope and goal-directed thinking while countering the helplessness and demoralization characteristic of chronic stress conditions. Focus group participants noted that the structured yet flexible SFBT framework provided clear guidance while respecting their autonomy and *indigenous knowledge*, avoiding the prescriptive or deficit-focused approaches that many had experienced in previous professional development programs.

The peer support dimension amplified individual therapeutic gains through reciprocal encouragement, collective problem-solving, and the development of ongoing mutual support relationships that extended beyond formal intervention sessions into everyday school contexts. These findings substantially advance theoretical understanding of how brief therapeutic interventions can effectively address complex occupational stress syndromes through activation of existing personal and social resources rather than requiring extensive remediation of deficits or prolonged therapeutic engagement (Franklin, 2012).

Comparison with previous research on teacher burnout interventions reveals that the current study's outcomes substantially exceed typical effect sizes while utilizing fewer sessions and resources than many alternative approaches, suggesting important implications for intervention design and implementation in resource-constrained settings. The superior outcomes in the current study may reflect the synergistic combination of SFBT's efficient, strengths-based approach with the social support and normalization functions of peer group formats, creating a potent intervention package that addresses both individual psychological factors and relational-contextual dimensions of burnout simultaneously.

The cultural congruence of SFBT with Indonesian values may represent an additional factor contributing to enhanced effectiveness, as culturally adapted

interventions consistently demonstrate superior outcomes compared to direct transplantation of Western-developed approaches without modification. However, direct cross-study comparisons must be interpreted cautiously given variations in sample characteristics, outcome measures, intervention delivery formats, and methodological rigor, necessitating replication studies across diverse contexts to confirm the generalizability and robustness of observed effects.

Enhanced Depersonalization Reduction and Personal Accomplishment Through Peer-Based SFBT

Analysis of depersonalization scores revealed a significant group by time interaction, $F(2, 112) = 12.34, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .181$, indicating that experimental group participants experienced substantial reductions in cynical attitudes and emotional detachment toward students, while control group participants showed minimal change. Specifically, experimental group depersonalization scores decreased significantly from baseline ($M = 14.8, SD = 3.6$) to post-intervention ($M = 10.2, SD = 3.2, p < .001, d = 1.35$) and remained significantly lower at follow-up ($M = 10.7, SD = 3.4, p < .001, d = 1.19$), representing clinically meaningful improvements in teachers' capacity to maintain empathetic, humanistic engagement with students despite ongoing occupational stressors. Control group participants demonstrated statistically non-significant fluctuations across time points (baseline $M = 14.3, SD = 3.8$; post-intervention $M = 13.7, SD = 3.9$; follow-up $M = 13.9, SD = 4.1$; all p values $> .05$), suggesting that standard mentoring relationships, while potentially valuable for pedagogical skill development, were insufficient to address the depersonalization dimension of burnout.

The observed effect size of $d = 1.35$ at post-intervention represents a large magnitude change that substantially exceeds typical outcomes reported in teacher intervention research, with previous meta-analytic evidence indicating mean effects of $d = 0.38$ for depersonalization reduction across diverse intervention types. Qualitative data illuminated mechanisms underlying depersonalization reduction, with participants describing how the SFBT approach's inherent respect for client wisdom and resources directly counteracted the dehumanizing experiences many had encountered in hierarchical educational systems, thereby restoring their own sense of dignity and personhood, which subsequently enhanced their capacity to extend similar respect and empathy toward students.

The group format proved particularly crucial for addressing depersonalization, as witnessing peers' genuine emotional vulnerability and mutual support reactivated participants' capacity for authentic human

connection, countering the emotional numbing and withdrawal characteristic of depersonalization. These findings align with theoretical models positing that depersonalization represents a self-protective coping mechanism in response to overwhelming emotional demands, and that interventions restoring emotional resources and social support can reverse this defensive distancing process.

Personal accomplishment scores demonstrated a significant interaction effect, $F(2, 112) = 15.92, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .221$, with experimental group participants showing substantial increases from baseline ($M = 32.4, SD = 5.8$) to post-intervention ($M = 38.7, SD = 5.2, p < .001, d = 1.16$) and follow-up ($M = 37.9, SD = 5.6, p < .001, d = 0.99$), while control group scores remained relatively stable (baseline $M = 31.8, SD = 6.1$; post-intervention $M = 32.9, SD = 6.3$; follow-up $M = 33.2, SD = 6.0$; all within-group comparisons $p > .05$). The enhanced sense of professional efficacy and accomplishment among experimental group participants represents a particularly valuable outcome given that reduced personal accomplishment has been identified as a core feature of burnout that directly predicts teacher attrition and indirectly influences student outcomes through its impact on instructional quality and teacher-student relationship quality (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

The SFBT emphasis on identifying and amplifying existing competencies appeared especially well-suited to addressing this dimension, as participants consistently reported that the intervention helped them recognize skills, knowledge, and positive impacts they had been achieving but had failed to acknowledge due to the overwhelming nature of daily challenges and the tendency to focus on problems rather than successes. Scaling questions asking teachers to rate their professional effectiveness on 1-10 scales, followed by inquiry into evidence supporting their self-rating and exploration of what would constitute movement toward higher ratings, proved particularly effective for enhancing awareness of accomplishments and clarifying actionable steps for continued growth.

The peer support dimension amplified personal accomplishment through reciprocal recognition, with group members explicitly acknowledging each other's competencies, creative problem-solving, and dedication to student welfare, thereby providing external validation that countered participants' internal negative self-evaluations. Focus group participants noted that this peer recognition carried particular weight compared to administrator feedback, as it came from colleagues who intimately understood the daily realities and challenges of early-career teaching in West Java schools. The combination of enhanced personal accomplishment with reduced emotional exhaustion and depersonalization represents a comprehensive positive

transformation across all three burnout dimensions, suggesting that the SFBT peer support intervention addresses the syndrome holistically rather than merely ameliorating isolated symptoms (Ramberg et al., 2020).

Cross-dimensional analysis revealed interesting temporal patterns in how the three burnout components responded to intervention, with emotional exhaustion showing the most rapid and substantial initial change, followed by depersonalization, and then personal accomplishment, suggesting potentially sequential or cascading intervention effects. This pattern aligns with Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which posits that resource restoration first manifests as reduction in resource loss symptoms (exhaustion, depletion) before enabling resource gain processes (enhanced efficacy, accomplishment), implying that interventions may need to prioritize emotional resource restoration as a foundation for subsequent competency development and professional growth.

The sustained benefits observed at three-month follow-up across all three dimensions provide crucial evidence regarding intervention durability, addressing a significant limitation in brief intervention research where initial gains often deteriorate following intervention conclusion. The maintenance of effects may reflect the establishment of ongoing peer support relationships that continued providing mutual encouragement and problem-solving assistance beyond formal intervention sessions, as qualitative data indicated that 86.2% of experimental group participants maintained regular contact with at least two peer group members through informal meetings, messaging groups, or collaborative planning sessions. Additionally, participants reported internalizing solution-focused questioning techniques and applying them independently in various professional and personal contexts, suggesting successful skill acquisition and generalization rather than mere dependence on external therapeutic support.

These findings challenge common assumptions that brief interventions necessarily produce only temporary effects, demonstrating that well-designed, culturally appropriate, peer-based approaches can catalyze sustainable positive changes in professional well-being and functioning. The comprehensive burnout reduction observed in this study substantially exceeds outcomes typically achieved through standard professional development or mentoring approaches, providing compelling evidence for integrating evidence-based psychological interventions within teacher support systems.

Significant Enhancement in Teacher Self-Efficacy and Coping Capacity

Teacher self-efficacy scores, assessed using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), demonstrated a significant group by time interaction, $F(2, 112) = 14.73, p < .001, \eta p^2 = .208$, with experimental group participants showing substantial improvements across all three self-efficacy dimensions: instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. For instructional strategies efficacy, experimental group scores increased significantly from baseline ($M = 6.2, SD = 1.1$) to post-intervention ($M = 7.4, SD = 0.9, p < .001, d = 1.20$) and remained elevated at follow-up ($M = 7.2, SD = 1.0, p < .001, d = 0.98$), while control group scores showed minimal change (baseline $M = 6.1, SD = 1.2$; post-intervention $M = 6.3, SD = 1.1$; follow-up $M = 6.4, SD = 1.2$; all p values $> .05$).

Classroom management efficacy demonstrated similar patterns, with experimental group improvements from baseline ($M = 5.8, SD = 1.3$) to post-intervention ($M = 7.1, SD = 1.1, p < .001, d = 1.09$) and follow-up ($M = 6.9, SD = 1.2, p < .001, d = 0.91$), compared to stable control group scores. Student engagement efficacy showed the most pronounced intervention effects, with experimental group scores increasing from baseline ($M = 5.9, SD = 1.2$) to post-intervention ($M = 7.5, SD = 1.0, p < .001, d = 1.45$) and follow-up ($M = 7.3, SD = 1.1, p < .001, d = 1.25$), representing large magnitude improvements that substantially exceed typical self-efficacy intervention outcomes reported in teacher professional development literature (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Here is the proofread passage with corrections and non-English terms italicized:

The significant enhancement in teacher self-efficacy represents a particularly consequential outcome given extensive research demonstrating that teacher self-efficacy directly influences instructional quality, persistence in the face of challenges, willingness to implement innovative practices, and ultimately student achievement outcomes. The mechanism through which SFBT peer support enhanced self-efficacy appears to operate through multiple pathways identified in qualitative data, including vicarious learning from peer successes, verbal persuasion through mutual encouragement, emotional arousal management through stress reduction, and mastery experiences facilitated by successful implementation of solution-focused strategies in classroom contexts.

Qualitative analysis of focus group discussions revealed rich insights into how participants experienced self-efficacy enhancement through the intervention process, with four primary themes emerging: recognition of existing competencies, reframing of challenges as opportunities for growth, development of specific classroom management and instructional strategies

through peer exchange, and cultivation of adaptive attributional patterns that supported persistence and experimentation. Participants consistently emphasized that the SFBT approach helped them shift from deficit-focused thinking—dwelling on what they couldn't do or what wasn't working—toward recognizing and building upon existing strengths, skills, and previous successes they had not fully acknowledged or leveraged.

This cognitive reorientation proved foundational for self-efficacy enhancement. The peer group format provided powerful vicarious learning experiences, as observing colleagues successfully navigate similar challenges enhanced participants' beliefs in their own capabilities, particularly when peers were perceived as similar in experience level and contextual constraints.

The solution-focused principle of asking "what's working?" and exploring exceptions to problems generated concrete behavioral strategies that participants implemented in their classrooms, with subsequent successful implementation constituting mastery experiences that directly strengthened efficacy beliefs. Focus group participants noted that the group's collaborative problem-solving process yielded more creative, contextually appropriate, and diverse solutions than they could have generated individually, expanding their repertoire of instructional and management strategies while simultaneously building confidence in their ability to address future challenges. The emotional support dimension of peer groups contributed to efficacy enhancement by reducing anxiety and negative emotional arousal that can undermine performance and efficacy judgments, creating a psychological foundation for risk-taking and skill development.

The relationship between burnout reduction and self-efficacy enhancement revealed in correlational analyses provides important insights into potential intervention mechanisms and theoretical relationships among constructs, with post-intervention changes in emotional exhaustion demonstrating strong negative correlations with changes in all three self-efficacy dimensions ($r = -.67$ to $-.72$, all $p < .001$), suggesting reciprocal or mutually reinforcing relationships. These correlational patterns align with theoretical models positing bidirectional relationships between burnout and self-efficacy, wherein depleted emotional resources undermine confidence in professional capabilities, while low self-efficacy increases vulnerability to stress and exhaustion through heightened anxiety, avoidance coping, and diminished persistence.

The SFBT peer support intervention appears to have disrupted these negative cycles by simultaneously addressing both constructs, creating positive spirals wherein reduced exhaustion freed cognitive and emotional resources for skill development and mastery experiences, while enhanced self-

efficacy increased adaptive coping, thereby preventing emotional resource depletion. Mediation analyses (using Hayes' PROCESS macro with 5,000 bootstrap samples) revealed that improvements in self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between group assignment and burnout reduction, with indirect effects accounting for approximately 38% of the total intervention effect on emotional exhaustion.

This suggests that while self-efficacy enhancement represented an important intervention mechanism, other pathways (e.g., social support, cognitive reframing, peer validation) also contributed substantially to burnout reduction. The multifaceted nature of intervention effects underscores the value of comprehensive approaches that address multiple psychological, social, and contextual factors rather than targeting isolated variables, aligning with contemporary biopsychosocial models of occupational health and well-being (Herman et al., 2020). Comparison with previous research reveals that the current study's self-efficacy effect sizes substantially exceed those typically reported for teacher professional development interventions, which average $d=0.35$ to 0.52 across meta-analytic reviews, suggesting that the SFBT peer support approach represents a particularly potent mechanism for efficacy enhancement.

Cultural Adaptation and Contextual Appropriateness in Indonesian Educational Settings

Qualitative analysis of cultural adaptation themes revealed that the SFBT peer support intervention's effectiveness was substantially enhanced by intentional alignment with Indonesian cultural values, communication patterns, and educational contexts, with 94.8% of experimental group participants rating the intervention as "highly culturally appropriate" or "completely culturally appropriate" on post-intervention evaluation forms. Participants emphasized that several SFBT principles demonstrated natural congruence with Indonesian cultural orientations, including the approach's respect for client wisdom and existing resources, which aligned with cultural values of mutual respect and recognition of elder/teacher knowledge; the future-oriented, hope-focused perspective, which resonated with Islamic teachings about divine mercy, patience, and trust in Allah's plan; and the collaborative rather than prescriptive therapeutic stance, which fit with Indonesian preferences for consensus-based decision-making and collective problem-solving.

The group format proved particularly culturally appropriate given Indonesia's collectivist cultural orientation, wherein individuals derive identity, support, and meaning substantially through relationships and group

memberships rather than primarily through individual achievement and autonomy. Participants noted that discussing personal struggles in a group context initially felt challenging due to cultural norms discouraging public disclosure of problems or complaints, which might be perceived as showing weakness or ingratitude (*tidak bersyukur*); however, the structured SFBT format that emphasized strengths and solutions rather than dwelling on problems or seeking sympathy helped navigate this cultural sensitivity effectively.

The facilitators' cultural competence—including their use of Indonesian-language proverbs and Islamic references to illustrate SFBT concepts, their demonstration of appropriate respect hierarchies while maintaining collaborative therapeutic relationships, and their sensitivity to gender norms in mixed-gender groups—emerged as crucial implementation factors that enhanced intervention acceptability and engagement. These findings substantially extend previous research on cultural adaptation of psychological interventions by providing detailed, context-specific insights into how Western-originated therapeutic approaches can be meaningfully adapted for non-Western cultural contexts while maintaining fidelity to core therapeutic principles (Park et al., 2024).

Specific adaptations implemented in the intervention protocol reflected careful attention to Indonesian educational and cultural contexts, including scheduling sessions during existing professional development time blocks to minimize additional burden on teachers' already-constrained schedules, conducting sessions at participants' schools to enhance accessibility and reduce travel requirements, providing light refreshments consistent with Indonesian hospitality customs (which participants noted enhanced the warm, supportive group atmosphere), incorporating prayer breaks for Muslim participants during longer sessions, and training facilitators who shared participants' cultural background and understood contextual challenges facing early-career teachers in West Java Province.

Language adaptation extended beyond simple translation to encompass culturally appropriate metaphors, examples, and explanations; for instance, the "miracle question" was introduced using the Indonesian concept of "*mimpi yang menjadi kenyataan*" (dreams becoming reality) rather than Western miracle terminology, and scaling questions referenced familiar Indonesian contexts such as "where would you place yourself on the journey from Bandung to Jakarta?" rather than abstract numerical scales that might feel foreign or clinical. The intervention incorporated discussion of culturally specific stressors facing Indonesian teachers, including intense pressure from parents with high academic expectations, challenges of managing large class

sizes (often 35-45 students) with limited resources, navigating complex school politics and hierarchical relationships with senior teachers and administrators, and balancing professional responsibilities with cultural expectations for family involvement and religious obligations.

Focus group participants appreciated that the intervention acknowledged these contextual realities rather than offering generic stress management advice disconnected from their lived experiences, noting that previous professional development programs often felt irrelevant or impractical precisely because they failed to address context-specific challenges. The cultural adaptation process also attended to gender considerations, ensuring that mixed-gender group compositions maintained appropriate boundaries consistent with Indonesian cultural and Islamic norms, while simultaneously creating safe spaces for female teachers (who comprised the majority of participants) to voice concerns about gender-specific challenges such as balancing career and family expectations or navigating male-dominated administrative hierarchies.

Comparison with previous cultural adaptation research reveals both consistencies and novel contributions, as the current study's systematic attention to multiple levels of cultural adaptation—content, process, delivery format, and implementation context—aligns with contemporary frameworks for evidence-based cultural adaptation while extending these frameworks through detailed documentation of adaptation processes in an Indonesian educational context that remains underrepresented in international literature.

The cultural consultation process employed in this study—involving Indonesian mental health professionals, Islamic scholars, teacher educators, and early-career teachers themselves in iterative refinement of intervention materials and procedures—reflects best practices for community-engaged cultural adaptation that ensures appropriateness and acceptability for target populations. The positive cultural appropriateness ratings and high retention rates (96.7%) observed in this study substantially exceed typical rates in intervention research with Indonesian populations, where cultural mismatches often result in poor engagement and premature termination.

The integration of Islamic spiritual elements—not as add-ons but as organic components of the SFBT framework—represents an innovative adaptation approach that honors the centrality of religious identity and practice in many Indonesians' lives while maintaining the essential therapeutic mechanisms of solution-focused work. These findings challenge simplistic approaches to cultural adaptation that merely translate materials or modify surface features, demonstrating instead that deep cultural congruence

requires fundamental engagement with worldview, values, communication patterns, and contextual realities of the target population.

The documented effectiveness of this culturally adapted intervention provides empirical support for investment in thoughtful, community-engaged adaptation processes rather than direct transplantation of Western interventions, with implications extending beyond Indonesia to other Muslim-majority, collectivist, developing nations facing similar educational and cultural contexts.

Cross-Theme Integration and Theoretical Synthesis

Integration across the three primary outcome domains—burnout reduction, self-efficacy enhancement, and cultural appropriateness—reveals an interconnected system of mutually reinforcing processes through which the SFBT peer support intervention operated to enhance early-career teacher well-being and professional functioning. The burnout reduction achieved through the intervention appears to have created psychological and emotional space for self-efficacy enhancement, as depleted teachers with severe emotional exhaustion typically lack the cognitive resources, emotional capacity, and motivational energy required to engage in the reflective processes, skill development, and classroom experimentation that build efficacy beliefs.

Conversely, enhanced self-efficacy appears to have protected against burnout through multiple mechanisms: increased confidence in managing classroom challenges reduced the perceived threat and stress associated with common teaching demands; expanded repertoires of instructional and management strategies provided more effective tools for addressing problems, thereby reducing frustration and helplessness; and improved attributional patterns (viewing setbacks as learning opportunities rather than evidence of incompetence) protected against the demoralization characteristic of burnout.

The cultural appropriateness of the intervention served as an essential enabling condition for both burnout reduction and efficacy enhancement, as interventions perceived as culturally foreign, disrespectful of local values, or impractical given contextual constraints face engagement barriers, implementation challenges, and limited effectiveness regardless of their theoretical soundness or evidence base in other cultural contexts. This dynamic interplay among burnout, self-efficacy, and cultural congruence aligns with ecological systems theory, which emphasizes that individual psychological functioning cannot be understood in isolation from social

relationships, cultural contexts, and organizational environments that shape meaning, opportunities, and constraints.

The peer support dimension of the intervention appears to have operated as a transversal mechanism amplifying effects across all outcome domains through provision of instrumental support (practical advice and problem-solving assistance), emotional support (empathy, validation, and encouragement), informational support (knowledge sharing about effective strategies and available resources), and appraisal support (feedback that enhanced accurate self-evaluation and realistic goal-setting). These multiple support functions addressed different aspects of the burnout experience: emotional support directly counteracted feelings of isolation and inadequacy that intensify emotional exhaustion; instrumental support provided concrete tools and strategies that enhanced personal accomplishment; and appraisal support facilitated cognitive reframing that reduced depersonalization by helping teachers interpret student behavior and classroom challenges more constructively.

The peer support relationships also provided accountability and motivation for implementing solution-focused strategies between sessions, with participants reporting that knowing they would discuss their progress with supportive colleagues increased their commitment to experimentation and persistence through initial difficulties. Theoretical synthesis suggests that the integration of SFBT with peer support creates a potent intervention package that operates through both individual psychological mechanisms (cognitive reframing, resource recognition, goal clarification) and interpersonal-relational mechanisms (social connection, vicarious learning, mutual encouragement), addressing the multifaceted etiology of teacher burnout more comprehensively than interventions targeting only individual or only contextual factors.

This integrated approach aligns with conservation of resources (COR) theory's emphasis that resource restoration occurs most effectively through interventions that simultaneously address resource loss processes (burnout) and resource gain processes (self-efficacy, social support, coping skills), creating positive spirals wherein initial gains generate momentum for further improvements.

Practical Implications, Limitations, and Future Research Directions

The significant positive outcomes demonstrated in this quasi-experimental study hold substantial practical implications for educational policy, teacher professional development programming, and mental health service provision in Indonesian schools and similar educational contexts. The

evidence that an eight-session, peer-based intervention delivered by trained school counselors can produce large, sustained improvements in teacher burnout and self-efficacy suggests that effective teacher well-being support does not necessarily require extensive external resources, specialized clinical professionals, or prolonged therapeutic engagement, making this approach feasible for implementation even in resource-constrained educational systems characteristic of many developing nations.

Educational administrators and policymakers should consider integrating SFBT-based peer support groups into regular professional development structures for early-career teachers, potentially replacing some traditional content-focused training sessions with well-being-focused support that addresses the psychological and emotional challenges of the teaching profession. The demonstrated cultural adaptability of SFBT frameworks suggests potential for scaling this intervention approach across diverse Indonesian educational contexts and potentially to other Southeast Asian nations sharing similar cultural orientations, provided that appropriate cultural consultation and adaptation processes are implemented.

Teacher preparation programs should incorporate training in solution-focused principles and peer support facilitation skills for preservice teachers, equipping future educators with tools for supporting their own well-being and that of their colleagues throughout their careers. The research also demonstrates the feasibility and value of implementing rigorous quasi-experimental intervention research within naturalistic educational settings, providing a methodological model for evidence-based practice development in contexts where randomized controlled trials may be unfeasible due to practical, ethical, or institutional constraints.

Despite the study's significant contributions, several limitations warrant acknowledgment and should inform interpretation of findings. First, the quasi-experimental design without random assignment introduces potential selection bias, though baseline equivalence testing and statistical controls for measured confounds provide some mitigation; future research should pursue randomized controlled designs where feasible to strengthen causal inference. Second, the sample was drawn exclusively from three districts in West Java Province, limiting generalizability to other Indonesian regions with different cultural compositions, educational resources, or teacher characteristics; replication studies across diverse Indonesian contexts and other nations are essential for establishing intervention robustness.

Third, the three-month follow-up period, while longer than many brief intervention studies, remains insufficient for determining long-term effects on career persistence, instructional quality, or student outcomes; extended

longitudinal designs tracking participants over one to three years would provide valuable evidence regarding sustained impact and potential delayed effects. Fourth, reliance on self-report measures for both burnout and self-efficacy introduces potential response bias, social desirability effects, and common method variance; future studies should incorporate objective indicators such as absenteeism rates, administrative performance evaluations, classroom observations, and student outcome data to triangulate findings and examine real-world behavioral impacts.

Fifth, while qualitative data provided rich insights into intervention processes and mechanisms, the focus group format may have privileged more vocal participants' perspectives and introduced conformity pressures; individual interviews and written reflections could complement group discussions in future research. Sixth, intervention fidelity monitoring, though systematic, captured only 25% of sessions and relied on structured observations that may miss subtle implementation variations or cultural adaptation processes occurring organically; more comprehensive fidelity assessment including session recordings, detailed field notes, and participant perceptions would strengthen understanding of implementation factors influencing outcomes.

Future research should pursue several directions to extend and refine current findings, including dismantling studies that systematically compare SFBT peer support against SFBT individual counseling and peer support without SFBT to determine the relative contributions of therapeutic framework versus group format to observed outcomes. Cross-cultural replication studies implementing culturally adapted versions of the intervention across diverse national and cultural contexts would establish intervention generalizability and identify cultural moderators influencing effectiveness. Investigations of optimal intervention dosage (number and length of sessions), group size and composition (homogeneous versus heterogeneous regarding teaching level, subject area, or burnout severity), and facilitator characteristics (professional counselors versus trained teachers) would inform efficient intervention design maximizing effectiveness while minimizing resource requirements.

Research examining potential moderators of intervention effectiveness—such as baseline burnout severity, teaching experience, school organizational climate, administrator support, and individual difference variables (personality, coping styles, cultural orientation)—would enable more sophisticated matching of interventions to teacher needs and contexts. Longitudinal studies tracking participants over multiple years could examine intervention effects on career retention, professional development

trajectories, leadership emergence, and teaching quality evolution, connecting proximal psychological outcomes to distal professional and organizational outcomes of ultimate interest to educational systems.

Economic evaluation studies comparing costs and benefits of SFBT peer support interventions against alternative teacher well-being approaches would provide crucial evidence for resource allocation decisions in budget-constrained educational contexts. Finally, implementation science research examining barriers and facilitators to scaling evidence-based teacher well-being interventions within complex educational systems would generate actionable knowledge for moving from efficacy demonstration to widespread real-world impact, addressing the persistent research-to-practice gap characteristic of educational innovation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that culturally adapted SFBT implemented through peer support groups provides an effective solution for pedagogical burnout in novice teachers in West Java. Substantial reductions in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and increases in personal accomplishment, combined with significant increases in self-efficacy, confirm the therapeutic potential of this approach. The eight-session program facilitated by trained school counselors proved feasible and cost-effective, making it a scalable strategy for resource-constrained education systems. Strong cultural fit, particularly the integration of collectivist values and Islamic principles, suggests that Western-based interventions can be effectively adapted to non-Western contexts. These findings contribute to Conservation of Resources theory by illustrating how focused interventions can halt the cycle of resource loss while building psychological and social resilience. Practical implications include the integration of SFBT-peer support programs into teacher induction systems, school counselor training, and teacher well-being policy development. Further research is needed to evaluate long-term effects, identify moderators of effectiveness, and explore scalability across diverse Indonesian educational contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors extend sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions whose support made this research possible. We are deeply thankful to the 58 early-career teachers from Bandung, Bekasi, and Bogor who participated with openness and commitment throughout the 20-week study, sharing experiences and challenges that enriched this work and reflected the resilience of Indonesia's teaching community. We also appreciate the school principals and

administrators who facilitated access, provided time and space for the sessions, and supported teacher participation amid demanding school schedules.

Special thanks are owed to the six school counselors who served as intervention facilitators, completing intensive SFBT training and leading the peer support groups with professionalism, cultural sensitivity, and genuine care for participants' well-being. We gratefully acknowledge our cultural consultation team—Indonesian mental health professionals, Islamic scholars, and teacher educators—whose guidance ensured that the intervention aligned with Indonesian cultural values and Islamic principles while maintaining fidelity to evidence-based practice.

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