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Work-Family Conflict and Fear of Success among Married Female Teachers: Social Support as Mediator

Srikuntari Mudji Rahayu*[1], Andik Matulessy[2], Amanda Pasca Rini[3]

[1,2,3]*Faculty of Psychology, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya*

Corresponding author:

Sri Kuntari Mudji Rahayu
srikuntarimudjirahayu@gmail.com

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Abstract

Background: Women make up most of Indonesia's teachers, yet their share of school leadership declines at higher school levels, Fear of fsuccess may contribute. Objective this study examined whether social support mediates the association between work–family conflict and fear of success among married female teachers. **Method:** In a cross-sectional survey, 273 married female teachers from eight provinces, recruited through snowball sampling, completed three five-point Likert scales (α = .847–.936). A path model was estimated, and the indirect effect was tested with 5,000 bootstrap resamples. **Results:** Work–family conflict was positively associated with fear of success (direct β = .39) and negatively associated with social support (β = −.67), while social support was negatively associated with fear of success (β = −.46). The indirect effect was significant (β = .31, 95% CI [0.22, 0.41]) and accounted for 44% of the total effect, indicating partial mediation. **Conclusion:** Higher work–family conflict is accompanied by lower social support, which in turn accompanies greater fear of success. Protecting teachers' support relationships is a promising focus for schools, pendings longitudinal confirmation.

Keywords: Fear of success, female teachers, mediation, social support, work–family conflict

Abstrak

Latar Belakang: Perempuan merupakan mayoritas guru di Indonesia, namun proporsi mereka sebagai kepala sekolah menurun pada jenjang yang lebih tinggi, dan fear of success diduga turut berperan. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini menguji apakah dukungan sosial memediasi hubungan antara konflik pekerjaan–keluarga dan fear of success pada guru perempuan yang telah menikah. **Metode:** Dalam survei potong lintang, 273 guru perempuan menikah dari delapan provinsi yang direkrut dengan snowball sampling mengisi tiga skala Likert lima poin (α = 0,847–0,936). Model jalur diestimasi dan efek tidak langsung diuji dengan 5.000 sampel bootstrap. **Hasil:** Konflik pekerjaan–keluarga berhubungan positif dengan fear of success (efek langsung β = 0,39) dan negatif dengan dukungan sosial (β = −0,67), sedangkan dukungan sosial berhubungan negatif dengan fear of success (β = −0,46). Efek tidak langsung signifikan (β = 0,31, dengan 95% CI 0,22 hingga 0,41) dan mencakup 44% efek total, menunjukkan mediasi parsial. **Simpulan:** Konflik pekerjaan keluarga yang tinggi disertai dukungan sosial yang rendah, yang selanjutnya disertai fear of success yang lebih tinggi. Menjaga relasi dukungan guru merupakan fokus yang menjanjikan bagi sekolah, meskipun perlu konfirmasi longitudinal.

Kata Kunci: Dukungan sosial, fear of success, guru perempuan, konflik pekerjaan-keluarga, mediasi

Introduction

Teaching in Indonesia is a numerically feminized profession. Women accounted for 70,. 84% of the approximately 3,3 million teachers in the first semester of the 2022/2023 academic year (Annur, 2022), in line with the broader rise in women's labour-force participation, which reached 55,.41% in February 2024 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Numerical dominance, however, has not translated into leadership. Women hold about 43% of principal posts in primary schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture but only 22% in upper secondary schools, in madrasahs under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the corresponding shares are 31% and 19% (Yarrow & Afkar, 2020). Structural barriers, such as promotion procedures and workload, are part of the explanation, but psychological factors may also contribute. One such factor is fear of success, which was originally conceptualized (Horner, 1972) as a motive to avoid achievement that arises when a woman anticipates negative consequences of succeeding, namely loss of femininity, social rejection, and diminished social esteem, in domains that the surrounding culture codes as competitive and masculine. The present study does not assume that fear of success is the main cause of the leadership gap, Rather, it examines fear of success as one psychological correlate of teachers readiness to pursue advancement.

Indications of this pattern were evident in the population studied here. In preliminary interviews conducted in August 2024 with married female teachers, participants described enjoying their work and being willing to take on additional responsibilities at school, yet expressed reluctance to be considered for principalship. They attributed this reluctance to the prospect of losing time for themselves and their families, to heavier job demands, and to doubts about keeping their professional and domestic roles in balance. Comparable accounts have been reported elsewhere in Indonesia, One study (Febriani et al., 2024) documented a positive association between work–family conflict and fear of success among female vocational school teachers in Padang, and another (Bonitasari & Nurmaya, 2023) found that work–family conflict and social support were jointly associated with fear of success among teachers in Gunungkidul. What these teachers describe is not an absence of competence or ambition but an anticipated cost of advancement.

Leaving fear of success unaddressed has consequences at several levels. For individual teachers, declining opportunities for advancement may lead to career stagnation, and the role strain that accompanies work–family conflict is associated with lower well-being (Allen et al., 2020; Obrenovic et al., 2020). For schools, it narrows the pool from which leaders are drawn. For the education system, the continued under-representation of women in leadership may reproduce the very role expectations that generate the fear, because women remain less likely than men to emerge as leaders where leadership is perceived as incongruent with the female gender role (Badura et al., 2018).

Two contextual variables were selected for this study: work–family conflict as the predictor and social support as the mediator. Work–family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict in which pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible, Its classic formulation (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) distinguishes time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based forms. The teaching profession makes such conflict structurally likely. Under Ministerial Regulation No 25 of 2024 (Permendikbudristek, 2024) teachers carry a face-to-face teaching load of 24 to 40 hours per week, in addition to lesson preparation, assessment, and administration. Although meta-analytic evidence shows only small gender differences in overall work–family conflict (Shockley et al., 2017), married women in Indonesia are still widely expected to remain primarily accountable for the household, and the construct has accordingly been applied widely to Indonesian working mothers (Jatmika, 2021). Social support refers to the emotional, esteem, instrumental, and informational resources a person receives from spouse, family, colleagues, and the institution (House & Kahn, 1985). Two theoretical views describe how support relates to stressors. The stress-buffering hypothesis holds that support weakens the effect of a stressor on strain (Cohen & Wills, 1985), whereas conservation of resources (COR) theory treats support as a resource that can itself be gained or lost under stress (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018), a perspective recently applied to teachers' work–family interface (Bao et al., 2025). Meta-analytic evidence confirms that social support and work–family conflict are robustly and negatively related (French et al., 2018)

Indonesian research has examined these constructs mostly in pairs. One study (Astuti and Soeharto., 2021) related work–family conflict and family social support to fear of success among working women. Another (Bonitasari & Nurmaya, 2023) tested work–family conflict and social support as joint predictors of teachers' fear of success, and a third (Febriani et al., 2024) reported a positive association between work–

family conflict and fear of success among female teacher's, Fear of success also continues to be examined among Indonesian working women more broadly (Wardani & Kusumiati, 2026). A parallel literature has addressed the link between support and conflict, examining social support in relation to work–family conflict and employment-related guilt among working mothers (Dayatri & Mustika, 2021), among married teachers (Nuldela et al., 2024), among female honorary teachers (Frans et al., 2023), and among female teachers during the pandemic (Ningsih et al., 2023)

Taken together, this literature shows that the three constructs covary but leaves the process connecting them unspecified. Three gaps are evident. First, where work–family conflict and social support have been examined together (Astuti & Soeharto, 2021; Bonitasari & Nurmaya, 2023), they have been entered as parallel predictors in an additive models. Such designs show that each variable is associated with fear of success but cannot show whether one operates through the other. Second, social support has usually been cast either as a buffer that moderates the conflict–strain relation (Cohen & Wills, 1985) or as an antecedent that reduces conflict (Dayatri & Mustika, 2021; Nuldela et al., 2024). Both formulations assume that support is available independently of the stressor. The alternative possibility has not been tested, namely that work–family conflict depletes the support a teacher can mobilize, and that this depletion is part of why conflict is associated with fear of success. Third, fear of success has been studied predominantly in Western samples, although the construct is by definition sensitive to cultural gender-role expectations, Married female teachers in Indonesia work in a setting where domestic primacy for women remains a strong norm, which makes this population theoretically informative.

Accordingly, this study examines the association between work–family conflict and fear of success among married female teachers in Indonesia and tests whether social support mediates this association. Its contribution is to position social support not as an independently available buffer but as a resource that is itself vulnerable to depletion by work–family conflict, consistent with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989). The distinction has practical weight: if support merely buffers a fixed effect, adding supportive services would suffice. If conflict erodes support, however, the teachers under the greatest strain will be the least able to access and reciprocate such services.

Hypothesis Development

Work-family conflict and fear of success. For a teacher already experiencing inter-role conflict, advancement is unlikely to be appraised neutrally. A leadership post adds time demands, decision responsibility, and visibility, which are evaluated against a role system that is already strained. Because fear of success is an anticipation of the costs of achievement (Horner, 1972), the more conflict a teacher currently experiences, the more credible those anticipated costs become. Work–family conflict is linked to a broad range of strain outcomes across cultures (Allen et al., 2020), and Indonesian studies have reported a positive association with fear of success among female teachers (Bonitasari & Nurmaya, 2023; Febriani et al., 2024).

H1: Work–family conflict is positively associated with fear of success among married female teachers (direct effect).

Work–family conflict and social support. COR theory holds that stressors deplete resources and that resource loss tends to spiral, because depleted individuals have less capacity to protect what remains (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Work–family conflict consumes the time and emotional capacity that maintaining supportive relationships requires: a teacher pressed by competing demands has fewer opportunities to communicate with her spouse, less capacity to reciprocate colleagues' help, and less energy to sustain the reciprocity on which support networks rest. This resource-drain logic has been applied to teachers' work–family interface (Bao et al, 2025), and meta-analytic evidence shows a consistent negative relationship between work–family conflict and social support (French et al., 2018).

H2: Work-family conflict is negatively associated with social support among married female teachers.

Social support and fear of success. Social support is expected to be associated with lower fear of success through two routes. Instrumentally, assistance with domestic and occupational tasks lowers the practical cost of accepting a more demanding role. Psychologically, emotional and esteem support conveys that achievement is compatible with, rather than a betrayal of, a woman's roles as wife and mother, thereby

countering the anticipated social rejection and loss of femininity that define the construct (Horner, 1972). Support has consistently been associated with lower strain and better coping (Cohen & Wills, 1985; House & Kahn, 1985)and spousal support has been linked to lower work–family conflict among Indonesian female teachers (Frans et al., 2023).

H3: Social support is negatively associated with fear of success among married female teachers.

Social support as a mediator. H2 and H3 jointly imply an indirect pathway: if work–family conflict is associated with lower support, and lower support with greater fear of success, part of the association between conflict and fear of success should be transmitted through support. This is a resource-depletion account rather than a buffering account. Because work–family conflict may also relate to fear of success through routes that do not involve support, such as the direct appraisal of role overload partial rather than full mediation is expected.

H4: Social support mediates the association between work–family conflict and fear of success among married female teachers.

Method

This study used a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional correlational design. Data were collected on a single occasion through a self-report questionnaire. The design permits estimation of the pattern of associations among work–family conflict, social support, and fear of success and allows the mediation hypothesis to be tested with path analysis, but it does not permit causal inference (Hardani et al., 2020; Siroj et al., 2024).

Sample or Population

The target population was married female teachers currently teaching in Indonesia, with or without children. Inclusion criteria were (a) female, (b) currently employed as a teacher at any level from kindergarten to senior secondary or vocational school, and (c) married at the time of data collection. Data were collected online between 2 and 28 November 2024 through a self-administered questionnaire using snowball sampling: each participant was asked to forward the questionnaire to colleagues who met the inclusion criteria. A total of 273 teachers from eight provinces completed the questionnaire, and there were no missing responses. The minimum sample size was determined with the Raosoft sample size calculator With a 5% margin of error, a 90% confidence level, a 50% response distribution, and a population of approximately 3.3 million teachers, the calculator yields a minimum of 271 participants, so the final sample of 273 met this requirement. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Before answering any item, participants read an information page and indicated their consent by selecting “Yes, I agree”, All 273 participants consented. The study was not submitted to a research ethics committee. It involved a minimal-risk online questionnaire completed by adults, participation was voluntary, and responses were treated confidentially. The contact numbers that most participants provided were not used in the analysis, and were removed from the data set before analysis.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants (N=273)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Age (years)	21–30	43	15.8
	31–40	96	35.2
	41–50	85	31.1
	51–60	49	17.9
School level	Kindergarten	21	7.7
	Elementary	39	14.3
	Junior secondary	31	11.4
	Senior secondary/vocational	182	66.7
Province	East Java	191	70.0
	Central Java	24	8.8
	West Nusa Tenggara	24	8.8

	East Kalimantan	13	4.8
	South Sulawesi	10	3.7
	West Java	7	2.6
	West Sumatra	3	1.1
	DKI Jakarta	1	0.4
Children	None	25	9.2
	One	70	25.6
	More than one	178	65.2

Note. Perentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

Data Measurement

All three instruments used a five-point Likert format with the response options strongly does not describe me (sangat tidak sesuai), does not describe me (tidak sesuai), neutral (netral), describes me (sesuai), and strongly describes me (sangat sesuai). Each scale contained favorable and unfavorable items, favorable items were scored from 1 to 5 and unfavorable items were reverse-scored (6 − raw score), so higher scores indicate higher levels of the construct. Item discrimination was evaluated with corrected item–total correlations computed on the present sample (N = 273). Items with a correlation below .25 were removed iteratively. This criterion, rather than the conventional. 30, was adopted so that every dimension remained adequately represented (Azwar, 2012). Internal consistency was estimated with Cronbach's alpha. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Fear of success. Fear of success was measured with an 18-item scale constructed by the authors for this study, because no Indonesian-language instrument grounded directly in Horner's formulation was available. The blueprint followed the three components of Horner;s formulation (Horner, 1972) : loss of femininity, loss of social self-esteem, and social rejection, each represented by six items (8 favorable and 10 unfavorable items in total). A sample item is "As a wife, I am afraid that I will neglect my partner's expectations." All 18 items met the criterion in the first iteration (r = .267–.571), and internal consistency was good (α = .847). Possible scores range from 18 to 90.

Work-family conflict. Work–family conflict was measured with an instrument adapted from Patmawati (2021), grounded in the time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based dimensions of work–family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The original instrument contains 36 items, 29 of which were valid in the original item analysis (Patmawati, 2021) with α = .873. The questionnaire administered in this study contained 24 of the original 36 items. A sample item is "I find it difficult to make time for my family." In the first iteration, items 15, 23, and 35 fell below the criterion (item 23 correlated negatively with the remaining items) and were removed. The remaining 21 items (10 favorable, 11 unfavorable) met the criterion (*r* = .321–.599), and internal consistency was good (α = .874). Possible scores range from 21 to 105.

Social support. Social support was measured with an instrument adapted from an earlier instrument (Patmawati, 2021), and based on four types of support emotional, esteem, instrumental, and informational (House & Kahn, 1985). The 35 items that were valid in the original item analysis (Patmawati, 2021), with α= .929, were administered. A sample item is "My partner comforts me when I am facing a problem." Item 25 fell below the criterion and was removed, The remaining 34 items (17 favorable, 17 unfavorable) met the criterion (r = .303–.704), and internal consistency was excellent (α = .936). Possible scores range from 34 to 170.

Table 2. Item discrimination and reliability of the scales (N=273)

Scale	Iteration	Items analyzed	Items removed (item no.)	Items retained	Corrected item–total r	Cronbach's α
Fear of success	1	18	None	18	.267–.571	.847
Work–family conflict	1	24	3 (15, 23, 35)	21	−.131–.585	.849
	2	21	None	21	.321–.599	.874
Social support	1	35	1 (25)	34	.211–.707	.933
	2	34	None	34	.303–.704	.936

Note. Items with corrected item–total correlations below .25 were removed iteratively. Item numbers refer to the original scale numbering.

Data Analysis

All analyses were conducted in JASP Version 0.19. 1. First, item discrimination and reliability were examined as described above. Second, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations were computed, and empirical means were compared with hypothetical means (number of items × 3, the scale midpoint). Normality of the total scores was examined with the Shapiro–Wilk test and with skewness and kurtosis values. Third, a simple mediation model (work–family conflict → social support → fear of success) was estimated as an observed-variable path model with maximum-likelihood estimation. Unstandardized (*B*) and standardized (β) coefficients are reported for path *a* (H2), path *b* (H3), the direct effect *c*′ (H1), the indirect effect *a* × *b* (H4), and the total effect *c*. Because the sampling distribution of an indirect effect is typically non-normal, its significance was evaluated with 95% percentile bootstrap confidence intervals based on 5,000 resamples, Mediation was supported when the interval excluded zero (Hayes, 2022). Because the model is just-identified, global fit indices are not informative and are not reported. The terms "direct effect" and "indirect effect" are used in their statistical sense and do not imply causality

Result

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 3 reports descriptive statistics and correlations. The empirical means of fear of success (M = 35.12) and work–family conflict (M = 39.72) were below their hypothetical means (54 and 63, respectively), indicating relatively low levels of both variables in this sample. The empirical mean of social support (M = 143.15) exceeded its hypothetical mean (102), indicating relatively high perceived support. All correlations were in the expected directions: work–family conflict correlated positively with fear of success (r = .70) and negatively with social support (r = −.67), and social support correlated negatively with fear of success (r = −.72), all p < .001.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and correlations (N= 273)

Variable	Items	*M*	*SD*	Min–Max	Hypothetical *M*	α	1	2	3
1. Work–family conflict	21	39.72	10.47	21–79	63	.874	—		
2. Social support	34	143.15	16.05	100–170	102	.936	−.67***	—	
3. Fear of success	18	35.12	8.86	18–59	54	.847	.70***	−.72***	—

Note. Hypothetical mean = number of items × 3 (scale midpoint). ***p < .001.

Table 4 reports the normality tests. The Shapiro–Wilk test was significant for all three variables (W = .973–.988, p ≤ .023), which is common in samples of this size, where even trivial deviations reach significance. Skewness (−0.35 to 0.52) and kurtosis (−0.55 to 0.34) were well within ±1, indicating only mild departures from normality. Because the indirect effect was evaluated with bootstrap confidence intervals, the mediation test does not rely on the normality assumption.

Table 4. Normality tests (N=273)

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro–Wilk *W*	*p*
Work–family conflict	0.52	0.34	.975	< .001
Social support	−0.35	−0.20	.973	< .001
Fear of success	0.09	−0.55	.988	.023

Note. Standard error of skewness = 0.15, standard error of kurtosis = 0.29.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5 and Figure 1 present the mediation model. Supporting H1, work–family conflict was positively associated with fear of success after controlling for social support (direct effect c′: B = 0.330, SE = 0.043, β = .39, p < .001). Supporting H2, work–family conflict was negatively associated with social support (path a:

B = −1.032, SE = 0.069, β = −.67, p < .001). Supporting H3, social support was negatively associated with fear of success after controlling for work–family conflict (path b: B = −0.255, SE = 0.028, β = −.46, p < .001).

Supporting H4, the indirect effect of work–family conflict on fear of success through social support was positive and significant (a × b: B = 0.263, 95% bootstrap CI [0.185, 0.352], and β = .31, 95% bootstrap CI [0.222, 0.411]). The total effect was B = 0.593 (β = .70, p < .001), of which approximately 44% was carried by the indirect path. Because the direct effect remained significant and had the same sign as the indirect effect, the pattern represents partial mediation (Hayes, 2022). The indirect effect is positive because it is the product of two negative paths: higher work–family conflict was associated with lower social support, and lower social support was associated with greater fear of success. The model explained 45.3% of the variance in social support and 60.9% of the variance in fear of success.

Table 5. Direct, indirect, and total effects in the mediation model (N=273)

Effect	Path	*B*	*SE*	*z*	*p*	β	95% CI (*B*)
Direct, *c′* (H1)	WFC → FoS	0.330	0.043	7.61	< .001	.39	[0.245, 0.415]
a (H2)	WFC → SS	−1.032	0.069	−15.04	< .001	−.67	[−1.166, −0.897]
b (H3)	SS → FoS	−0.255	0.028	−9.03	< .001	−.46	[−0.311, −0.200]
Indirect, *a* × *b* (H4)	WFC → SS → FoS	0.263	0.034	7.74	< .001	.31	[0.185, 0.352][b]
Total, *c*	WFC → FoS	0.593	0.037	16.25	< .001	.70	[0.508, 0.677][b]

Note. WFC = work–family conflict, SS = social support, FoS = fear of success, B = unstandardized coefficient, β = standardized coefficient. Path CIs are normal-theory (delta method). [b]95% percentile bootstrap CI based on 5,000 resamples. R^2 social support = .453, R^2 fear of success = .609.

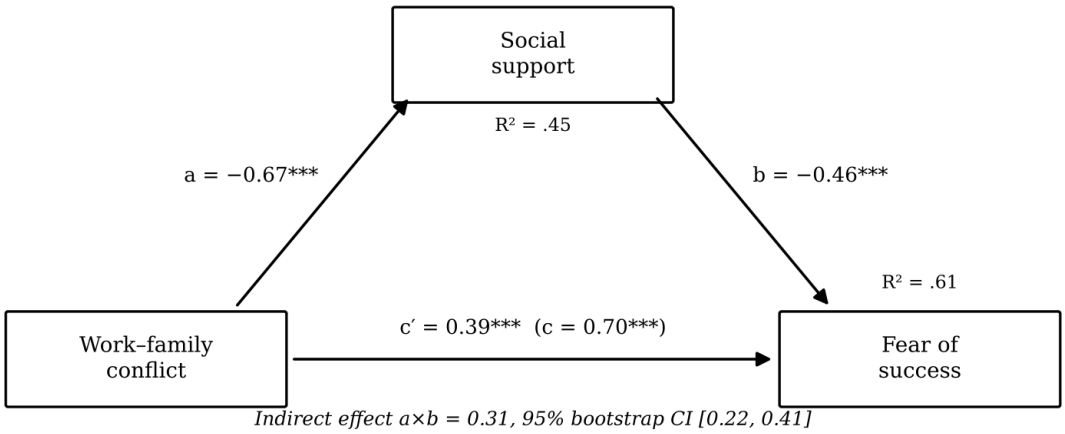


Figure 1. Standardized path coefficients of the mediation model
Note. ***p < .001. c = total effect, c′ = direct effect.

Discussion

This study examined how work–family conflict relates to fear of success among married female teachers in Indonesia, with social support as a mediator. All four hypotheses were supported. Below, each finding is interpreted in turn, with attention to what the mediation pattern adds beyond previous studies.

Consistent with H1, work–family conflict was positively associated with fear of success, and this association remained substantial (β = .39) after social support was taken into account. The result agrees with an earlier study (Febriani et al., 2024), which reported a positive association between the two variables among female vocational teachers, and with a study in Gunungkidul (Bonitasari and Nurmaya, 2023). It also fits an appraisal account: a teacher whose work and family roles already compete is likely to appraise further achievement with its added hours, responsibilities, and visibility as something that would deepen that competition, making the anticipated costs that define fear of success more credible (Horner, 1972). Teaching loads, lesson planning, administrative tasks, and the expectation that women remain primarily answerable for domestic duties plausibly sustain this appraisal, although these specific demands were not measured here.

Consistent with H2, work–family conflict was negatively and strongly associated with social support (β = −.67). This finding deserves particular attention, because much of the Indonesian literature has treated support as an antecedent that reduces conflict (Dayatri & Mustika, 2021; Nuldela et al., 2024). The cross-sectional data cannot establish direction, but the pattern is equally consistent with COR theory's proposition that stressors erode resources (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Competing demands may reduce the time and energy a teacher has for communicating with her spouse or reciprocating colleagues' help, so that the support she perceives declines. The strong negative association is also in line with meta-analytic evidence (French et al., 2018) and with recent applications of COR theory to teachers (Bao et al., 2025).

Consistent with H3, social support was negatively associated with fear of success (β = −.46) when work–family conflict was held constant. Teachers who perceived more emotional, esteem, instrumental, and informational support reported less fear of the consequences of success. This is consistent with the view that support signals that achievement is compatible with a woman's family roles and lowers the practical cost of taking on a more demanding position (Cohen & Wills, 1985; House & Kahn, 1985) and with the finding (Astuti and Soeharto's., 2021) that family support is related to lower fear of success among working women.

Consistent with H4, social support partially mediated the association between work–family conflict and fear of success, accounting for about 44% of the total effect. The indirect effect was positive because both of its component paths were negative. This result should be interpreted carefully. A significant indirect effect does not show that social support weakens, or buffers, the association between work–family conflict and fear of success A buffering role would require a moderation (interaction) test, which was not conducted. Rather, the result indicates that teachers with higher work–family conflict tend to report lower social support, and lower support tends to accompany greater fear of success. Studies that did test support as a moderator have found buffering patterns among female university teachers and professional women (Pan et al., 2022; Su & Jiang, 2023), so the two roles are not mutually exclusive and should be examined together in future work. An earlier study (Bonitasari & Nurmaya, 2023) showed that conflict and support are jointly related to fear of success, and the present study adds that part of the conflict–fear association runs through lower support. The practical implication is that adding support services may not be sufficient, because the teachers under the greatest strain may be the least able to access them, Protecting existing support relationships may be equally important.

Several limitations should be noted. First, the cross-sectional design rules out causal conclusions, the ordering of variables in the model is theoretical, and reverse or reciprocal relations (for example, low support increasing conflict) are equally compatible with the data. Second, all variables were measured by self-report at a single time point, so common-method variance may have inflated the correlations (Podsakoff et al., 2024), the correlations among the three variables were high (|r| = .67–.72), and several items of the work–family conflict and fear-of-success scales refer to family support, which may have increased their overlap with social support. Third, the fear-of-success scale was constructed for this study, its content rested on Horner's components together with item-discrimination and reliability evidence rather than on expert ratings or confirmatory factor analysis, and four items of the adapted scales were removed on the basis of the present sample. Fourth, participants reported relatively low work–family conflict and fear of success and relatively high support, so restriction of range may have affected the estimates. Finally, snowball sampling and the concentration of participants in East Java (70.0%) limit the generalizability of the findings.

Conclusion

Among married female teachers, work–family conflict was positively associated with fear of success, negatively associated with social support, and social support was negatively associated with fear of success. Social support partially mediated the association between work–family conflict and fear of success, accounting for about 44% of the total effect. These results suggest that work–family conflict is linked to fear of success both directly and through lower social support.

Several practical implications follow, although none of them was tested as an intervention in this study. School principals and education offices could monitor teachers' workload and administrative burden, because these demands may erode the support teachers can draw on. Schools could also strengthen collegial support, for example through peer mentoring for female teachers who are considering leadership roles, and could involve spouses and families in information about leadership positions. Future research should use longitudinal

or experimental designs to test the direction of the relationships, examine which forms of support (emotional, esteem, instrumental, or informational) are most strongly related to fear of success, test social support as a moderator alongside its mediating role, and validate the fear-of-success scale through expert judgement and confirmatory factor analysis in more representative samples

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