

Research Article

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When Education Supervision VS Vertical Bullying: How to Support the Growth of Teacher Quality?

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Abstract

Purpose. This study aims to find alternatives that can address the weaknesses of educational supervision in the phenomenon of vertical bullying from senior to junior teachers.

Method. A qualitative approach with phenomenology design using in-depth interview techniques was utilized with 13 informants who were recruited and selected by inclusion and exclusion criteria, consisting of experienced educators and mentors spread across West Java, Indonesia. The interview protocol was assessed by the expert and improved through a pilot project. According to Bingham, The data was analyzed using the qualitative analysis process in five phases.

Results. First, strategies to encourage reflective learning and mutual growth in the supervisory relationship between senior and junior teachers: Balanced supervisory dynamics, and Reflective learning and mutual growth. Second, ways to create a more balanced and supportive supervision framework to reduce the effects of vertical bullying in teacher education: Empathy and support in feedback, a supportive framework to prevent vertical bullying, and trust and collaboration in mentorship.

Conclusion. These two significant results are tabulated as a new theory about the five keys to preventing and/or addressing vertical bullying in the context of educational supervision. Considering that such preventive and remedial approaches have not been achieved by previous relevant research. At the same time, vertical bullying continues to increase in various teacher education contexts in different countries; the results of this study promise a new, highly valuable contribution. Allow for the prevention and resolution of vertical bullying against teachers. Further research with a quasi-experimental approach to prove the effectiveness of this new theory is recommended.

1. Introduction

Educational supervision, unequivocally vital, remains an indisputable pillar of effective educational processes (Collinson et al., 2009; Ezer et al., 2010). With this foundational understanding, upon cognitive examination, it is evident that the discourse surrounding supervision continues to be a focal point of scholarly inquiry, particularly concerning its implications for the K-12 curriculum (Sorensen, 2014; Sorensen et al., 2014). The emphasis on quality assurance in education has spurred significant reforms, primarily driven by critiques of traditional learning models, which have historically dominated the landscape of practicum supervision (Bjørndal et al., 2024).

Previous scholarship has extensively examined the multifaceted challenges inherent in practicum supervision, highlighting key elements such as planning, teaching, observation, supervision preparation, supervision sessions, and post-supervision reflection as critical dimensions of focus (Bjørndal et al., 2024). The indispensable role of supervision within the intricate dynamics of educational systems cannot be overstated, as it fundamentally shapes both pedagogical practices and learner outcomes (Ismail et al., 2018). In today's digital age, a substantial body of literature has explored the evolution of supervisory models and systems, contextualizing them within the framework of contemporary educational demands (Bates, 2015). Furthermore, researchers have employed various terminologies—such as supervising teachers, mentors, and cooperating teachers—to describe educators who oversee teacher candidates in practicum settings (Matengu et al., 2021).

In the realm of teacher education, practicum supervision is typically segmented into five distinct phases: clinical supervision, contextual supervision, differentiated supervision, conceptual supervision, and developmental supervision (Ibrahim, 2013). The roles of cooperating teachers and university supervisors have remained pivotal in guiding novice teachers, a subject that has garnered scholarly attention for over two decades (Alsuhaibani et al., 2023; Ben-Peretz et al., 2003; Ben-Peretz & Rumney, 1991; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Duquette, 1994; Long et al., 2013; Montecinos et al., 2010). Educational supervision, broadly conceived, encompasses the comprehensive oversight of a trainee's developmental trajectory in education. In contexts such as the UK and the US, supervisory processes often integrate Bloom's Taxonomy to structure learning objectives and evaluation criteria, thereby facilitating a more nuanced approach to educational supervision (Krathwohl, 2010; Walwyn & Barrie, 2022).

The practicum serves as a cornerstone of teacher training programs, playing an integral role in the process of learning to teach. A variety of official documents, instructional guides, and established protocols have delineated the objectives of this critical training phase's objectives and the specific roles and responsibilities of key participants, including supervisors, tutors, and student teachers (Fuentes-Abeledo et al., 2020). Research has consistently underscored the importance of effective mentoring behaviors exhibited by senior educators in supervision, concluding that successful mentorship is pivotal to the practicum experience (Giebelhaus & Bowman, 2002). This finding has been echoed in international studies, such as those conducted in Australia (Sinclair, 2006) and the United Arab Emirates (Ibrahim, 2013), both of which emphasize the university's obligation to provide comprehensive supervisory training. The importance of the supervisory component is increasingly recognized in 21st-century teacher education programs, which are specifically designed to cultivate highly qualified educators (Cohan & Honigsfeld, 2013; Gore et al., 2004; Rots et al., 2012, 2014).

As a system, teacher education is tasked with preparing future educators who can effectively meet the evolving demands of the education sector (Gore et al., 2004). Institutions that offer teacher education must, therefore, actively support prospective teachers in mastering the requisite knowledge and skills and the professional dispositions and values essential to the teaching and learning process (Cohan & Honigsfeld, 2013). One of the essential competencies of a qualified teacher, as noted in the literature, is the ability to effectively communicate subject matter content,

ensuring clarity and understanding among students—a skill that remains fundamental to teaching excellence.

Previous studies on practicum supervision, many of which span back to the 1990s, have primarily addressed the general challenges associated with the practicum period, with a particular focus on the numerous activities involved in the supervision process (Clarke et al., 2014; Cohen et al., 2013; Ellis et al., 2020; Hoffman & Rozsnyai, 2015; Hon & Lu, 2016; Lawson et al., 2015; Nesje & Lejonberg, 2022; Ong'ondo & Jwan, 2009). A notable body of research highlights the concerns student teachers face regarding the feedback they receive during their practicum. Many perceive such feedback as brief, superficial, unclear, or incomprehensible, often struggling to recall the specific incidents referenced in the feedback (Agudo, 2016; Badger, 2012; Haji, 2019; Mpewe, 2019). Furthermore, feedback is sometimes viewed as negative and demoralizing (Hobson et al., 2008; Olmstead et al., 2020; Rots et al., 2012, 2014; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010; Valencia et al., 2009), inflexible, unhelpful (Haji, 2019), or even insincere (Olmstead et al., 2020).

A recurring theme in the literature is the perception of isolation among student teachers, many of whom report feeling abandoned in the classroom with minimal mentoring and observation support (Ekiz, 2006; Haji, 2019; Valencia et al., 2009). Even when observers such as mentors or peers are present, this does not always translate into meaningful engagement; one study reveals a gradual reduction in the involvement of mentors and fellow student teachers as observers, with less feedback provided over time (Pennington et al., 2020). In some cases, student teachers express dissatisfaction with overly controlling mentors, who impose constraints on their autonomy and interfere with their teaching practices (Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Olmstead et al., 2020; Pennington et al., 2020). Additionally, research has shown that simply introducing a more structured observation process does not necessarily resolve all challenges related to practicum supervision. In fact, overly rigid and detailed observational frameworks can threaten the quality of supervision by neglecting critical elements of teaching, such as the student teacher's ability to improvise (Genc & Buyukkarci, 2013; Mpewe, 2019).

A stringent structure may limit the scope of observation, potentially overlooking essential aspects of pedagogical practice and failing to capture the nuanced dynamics of the classroom environment. Approximately 37 million, or 27% of adult Americans, reported direct experience with bullying or abusive behaviors at work (Sorrels, 2015). Bullying in the workplace is considered “A severe and pervasive problem with devastating effects, both personally and professionally” (Carbo & Hughes, 2010) with one in ten professionals suffering from workplace bullying (Onorato, 2013). Interest in how the school-built environment impacts bullying behavior has gained momentum in recent years (Francis et al., 2022). Through empirical review, we observed a similar situation occurring in several schools in Indonesia. That is, when educational supervision of teachers is heavily relied upon to improve their performance, vertical bullying in the school environment becomes a challenge that threatens the decline in the quality of teacher development. Considering previous relevant research that has not yet addressed the topic of educational supervision of teachers in the context of vertical bullying, a study is warranted. So that in various situations, educational supervision can continue to improve the quality of teachers.

This led to this paper's goal, which is to promote a theory that can address the weaknesses of educational supervision when facing vertical bullying from senior to junior teachers. Considering that such an approach has not been achieved by previous relevant research, while vertical bullying occurs in various teacher education contexts in different countries around the world, this study will provide a highly valuable contribution to the development of a teacher supervision model that addresses bullying, is more balanced, and supports collaborative learning conditions among teachers for collaborative growth in educational practice. To achieve that aim, research questions are formulated:

- 1) What strategies can be implemented to promote reflective learning and mutual growth in the

supervisory relationships between senior and junior educators? 2) In what ways can a more balanced and supportive supervisory framework mitigate the effects of vertical bullying in teacher education?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Supervision in Education

In the domain of teacher education, the role of senior mentorship, support, and supervision during field placements is paramount in cultivating the professional growth of teacher candidates (Suyatno et al., 2023), ultimately shaping them into reflective practitioners, as outlined by Schon (1987). This process necessitates the deliberate provision of structured opportunities that facilitate reflection both in real-time and retrospectively, integrating lived experiences with theoretical understanding (Darling-Hammond et al., 2013; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Jensen et al., 2019; Larsen Damsgaard & Heggen, 2010; Podolsky et al., 2019). Research suggests that employing empirical analysis to evaluate teacher-student interactions enhances candidates' ability to synthesize theory with practice (Sun & van Es, 2015). Consequently, supervision within schools becomes indispensable in certifying student teachers as they transition into the profession (Collinson et al., 2009; Ezer et al., 2010). The characteristics of supervision vary significantly across different educational contexts globally. Comprehensive reviews of 230 studies reveal that diversity is the most salient feature of these supervisory practices (Cohen et al., 2013; Lawson et al., 2015).

In Western education systems, teacher training programs tend to be predominantly theoretical, with only a small portion devoted to practical experience in schools. Student teachers are typically mentored on an individual basis by a local senior teacher (Bullough, 2016; Bullough et al., 2014; Hagger & Malmberg, 2011). A parallel can be drawn to higher education, where students are expected to produce research within postgraduate, research-based programs. These programs not only contribute to the expansion of academic knowledge but also cultivate leadership in research endeavors (Bradford, 2017). Postgraduate research programs, often referred to as higher degree research (HDR) programs, include both master's and doctoral degrees and center on supervised research projects (Blair et al., 2020). These programs play a critical role in developing future contributors to knowledge. Blass et al. (2012) emphasize that postgraduate students represent a pivotal resource for the advancement of academic knowledge. Effective supervision in HDR programs is key to nurturing research aptitude, characterized by self-confidence, a collaborative spirit in sharing expertise, lifelong learning abilities (Beal & Riley, 2019; Riley & Beal, 2013), and a steadfast commitment to independent research careers (Bøgelund, 2015; Bøgelund & De Graaff, 2015).

Achieving these outcomes necessitates a reciprocal commitment from both students and supervisors, with clear expectations established from the outset and sustained throughout the research journey. Friedrich-Nel & Mackinnon (2013) argue that postgraduate students should be respected as peers, creating an environment conducive to learning, where students feel safe to challenge their supervisors in an equitable power dynamic. This environment fosters intellectual growth and development. Woolderink et al. (2015) further suggest that a successful learning trajectory in HDR supervision hinges on students' and supervisors' personalities, knowledge, skills, communication, and coaching abilities. Despite these insights, concerns about effective postgraduate supervision persist in universities worldwide (Manyike, 2017). Numerous challenges plague the supervision process, often leading to suboptimal outcomes.

For instance, a study conducted in Germany highlighted the inadequacies of both students and supervisors in fulfilling their respective roles, contributing to high attrition rates (Chan et al., 2016). Supervisors are often burdened by institutional pressure to ensure timely thesis completions, which may detract from the holistic development of the student as an independent researcher (Carter & Kumar, 2017). Additionally, ineffective supervision, characterized by inadequate feedback and limited support, has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the delayed or non-completion of

postgraduate studies. Some supervisors tend to prescribe outcomes without offering students the opportunity to discuss and internalize these expectations, creating a disconnect in the supervisory relationship (Friedrich-Nel & Mackinnon, 2013).

Moreover, feedback is sometimes insufficiently critical or fails to address the student's concerns, further complicating the student's progress and demotivating both parties involved (Carter & Kumar, 2017). Nkoane (2013) advises against the objectification of students in the supervisory process, emphasizing that both students and supervisors play crucial roles in the co-construction of new knowledge. Given this theoretical understanding—that postgraduate students should be regarded as peers—it becomes imperative to explore and implement solutions aimed at addressing the challenges currently undermining the supervision process. By doing so, the various shortcomings of the supervisory system can be mitigated, ensuring that both students and supervisors are better equipped to achieve successful research outcomes.

2.2. Vertical Bullying by Seniors in Academic and Education

In the broader discourse of higher education, bullying, despite its varied definitions, is generally understood as a pattern of repetitive inappropriate behaviors aimed at harming or intimidating a victim (Younan, 2019). However, within the unique context of higher education, particularly where students find themselves at vulnerable stages of professional and personal development, even a singular instance of mistreatment by a senior can leave long-lasting and profound psychological scars (Boyle & Wallis, 2016). In recent years, "academic bullying" has emerged as a subject of increasing scholarly interest, particularly due to its detrimental impact on students and educational environments (Iwasaki, 2020; Kowalski et al., 2018; Mahmoudi, 2022; Mahmoudi & Keashly, 2021; Prevost & Hunt, 2018; Smith et al., 2020). To illustrate this, vocational higher education students, such as those in nursing (Fernández-Gutiérrez & Mosteiro-Díaz, 2021) and midwifery (Capper et al., 2021a, 2021b), frequently report experiences of bullying during their clinical placements.

These hostile encounters, often perpetrated by senior practitioners, pose significant threats to the sustainability of these professions. Attrition from academic programs and decisions to abandon professional practice upon graduation are some of the most concerning outcomes (Capper et al., 2021a, 2021b). Vertical bullying, in particular, where individuals in positions of greater authority bully those with less power, has been shown to have both direct and indirect negative impacts on work quality (Farooq et al., 2021). Among the adverse effects commonly cited are increased fear and anxiety (Anusiewicz et al., 2021), more frequent work errors (Gosselin & Ireland, 2020), and heightened staff turnover rates, which in turn exacerbate issues like understaffing and poor client-to-professional ratios (D. N. Jones & Paulhus, 2017; M. P. Jones et al., 2021; T. Jones & Ramsbottom, 2017). These systemic problems contribute to an environment rife with stress, fatigue, and burnout, creating a harmful feedback loop that has severe consequences for both professional well-being and organizational efficacy (Van den Brande et al., 2020).

Despite a growing emphasis on work-life balance across various professions, evidence suggests that these principles do not always extend to workplace interactions, particularly between peers and co-workers. Bullying within the midwifery profession, for instance, has been well-documented since the mid-1990s (Hastie, 1996) and remains a pervasive issue today (Catling & Rossiter, 2020). The ongoing presence of bullying in such fields not only jeopardizes individual well-being but also endangers the long-term viability of these professions (Cayir et al., 2021; Fernández-Gutiérrez et al., 2024; Fernández-Gutiérrez & Mosteiro-Díaz, 2021; Hakojärvi et al., 2014). The consequences of such workplace bullying are extensive, spanning a range of psychological impacts that include heightened anxiety, diminished self-confidence, depression, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (Abdelaziz & Abu-Snieneh, 2022).

These experiences often lead to feelings of alienation, a perceived lack of control within the work environment, and a subsequent erosion of self-esteem (Fernández-Gutiérrez & Mosteiro-Díaz, 2021), sometimes compelling individuals to abandon their chosen career paths (H. H. N. Hashim & Ghani, 2020; N. H. Hashim et al., 2020; McDonald et al., 2022; Walker et al., 2022). The nature of bullying, particularly within professional environments, is inherently subjective. It would be reductive to assert that only "bad" people engage in bullying behaviors. Various factors can precipitate such actions, ranging from unconscious bias to chronic workplace stress or challenges associated with managerial roles. Although this does not excuse bullying behavior, understanding its root causes can inform efforts to mitigate its effects. In some cases, individuals may not even realize they are bullying due to these underlying stressors. However, the psychological damage inflicted by bullying is often not tied to the act itself but rather to its persistent nature and the inherent power imbalances that perpetuate the cycle of harm. Workplace bullying tends to follow a predictable pattern, defined by a triad of "power imbalance, misuse of power, and harm-doing with the intent to humiliate."

More insidious forms of bullying, such as "gaslighting," present a deeper challenge. This form of psychological manipulation, in which the bully convinces the victim that their perception of the bullying is inaccurate or imagined, creates a level of isolation and workplace alienation that is particularly difficult to address. While overt bullying can be easier to identify and confront, the subtlety of gaslighting poses a greater threat to an individual's psychological well-being. Not only does bullying inflict harm on the individual, but it also corrodes the fabric of the organization itself.

When active or passive forms of bullying become embedded within the workplace culture, they begin to amalgamate with organizational values, thereby damaging the reputation of teams, departments, and even entire institutions. As a result, trainees and professionals may seek to avoid certain workplaces or colleagues, further perpetuating a toxic cycle. The literature on workplace violence and bullying underscores the profound impacts these phenomena can have on both individual and organizational outcomes. Fear—particularly the fear of personal attack—is a common consequence of both physical intimidation and bullying. Theoretical models on workplace violence (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Rogers & Kelloway, 1997; Schat & Kelloway, 2003) suggest that exposure to bullying is associated with a wide array of negative consequences, including decreased job satisfaction, increased absenteeism, and psychological distress.

However, much of the existing research remains speculative, drawing on studies of related phenomena to hypothesize outcomes. There remains a critical need for research that specifically operationalizes and examines the construct of physical intimidation and bullying in educational and professional settings. Given the risks of the mentioned issues, future studies must be done. As bullying remains an urgent issue within both education and professional settings, such research will be crucial in developing effective interventions and creating healthier, more supportive learning and work environments.

2.3. The Need for a Comprehensive Education Supervision Model to Counter Vertical Bullying

At its core, supervision remains a fundamental element in the educational landscape, particularly in the formation of professional educators. Mentorship serves as a crucial component in teacher education programs, where mentors' feedback significantly shapes the professional identity of teacher candidates (Agudo, 2016). Supervision, when executed effectively, facilitates not only the development of novices but also the professional growth of seasoned educators through mechanisms such as co-teaching (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; J.-M. Guise et al., 2017; M. Guise et al., 2020; Soslau et al., 2019). However, the potential benefits of such collaborative models are often undermined when senior teachers fail to reflect on their own learning experiences. Senior educators must adopt a dual role, positioning themselves both as teachers and learners, a challenge that is

frequently overlooked due to the rigid structures of traditional classroom dynamics, which often prioritize the senior educator's role as an expert (Soslau et al., 2019).

The difficulty in balancing expertise with reflective learning significantly weakens the learning affordances within the supervision process. For instance, preservice teachers frequently fail to perceive themselves as active agents in their learning journey, relying instead on senior teachers to initiate instructional changes. This passive stance hinders the development of adaptive expertise, which is essential for navigating the complex demands of modern classrooms (Soslau et al., 2019). Similarly, during post-lesson debriefings, senior teachers tend to dominate as the primary reflectors, often pointing out areas for improvement without fostering reciprocal reflection. Consequently, preservice teachers become passive feedback recipients rather than active participants in their professional development.

The vast experience gap between them further exacerbates this imbalance of power between seniors and juniors during the supervisory process. Senior teachers with years of teaching experience and deep content knowledge often unintentionally position their junior counterparts as less knowledgeable (J.-M. (Guise et al., 2017; M. Guise et al., 2020). This hierarchical dynamic contradicts the very premise of effective supervision, which should ideally promote shared learning and mutual growth. A true supervisory relationship requires senior teachers to develop additional skills beyond their classroom expertise, particularly those necessary for fostering trust, reflective dialogue, and empowerment (Raphael, 2004). When nurtured over time, such relationships can create environments where preservice teachers feel supported and empowered to take ownership of their professional growth (B. Kent et al., 2012; D. Kent & Dacin, 2022).

Unfortunately, current supervisory practices often fail to provide this kind of nurturing environment. As Mpewe (2019) noted, the remarks provided by supervisors to student-teachers are frequently brief and vague, rendering them difficult to interpret and incorporate into learner-centered teaching approaches. In many cases, the feedback is not framed to facilitate deep understanding or actionable improvement. While some student-teachers may find value in these remarks and integrate them into their practice, others may disregard them entirely due to the ambiguous nature of the feedback.

3. Methodology

This qualitative review study systematically investigates how artificial intelligence (AI) affects cultural narratives in Eastern animation. The methodology is grounded in a

In educational leadership, developing and implementing a Comprehensive Education Supervision Model is a critical tool for enhancing instructional quality, promoting professional growth, and ensuring accountability. This research employed a qualitative methodology with a phenomenology design, utilizing in-depth interviews (Anastassiou, 2017). The methodology was carefully designed to capture a rich, contextual understanding of how educational supervision is enacted and the challenges and opportunities that arise from such practices.

3.1. Interview Design

The in-depth interview method was chosen to allow for a detailed exploration of participants' experiences and views regarding the current supervision model in educational institutions. This approach aligns with Anastassiou's (2017) statement that qualitative interviews allow researchers to gain deeper insights that are often overlooked in quantitative research. The research questions focused on how principals and senior educators implement the supervision model, with particular attention given to the supervision dynamics between senior and junior teachers. Fourteen structured open-ended questions were used to obtain detailed narratives from the participants. An expert in

educational leadership studies assessed the reliability of the interview protocol as a data collection instrument and tested it through a pilot project with two principals.

After the pilot phase involving two principals, the interview protocol was improved to ensure clarity and effectiveness. As outlined by Rutledge & Hogg (2020), those who advocate for the refinement of interactive interview protocols to enhance data quality. Each interview is recorded with the participants' consent, provided that their identities are kept confidential. This process enables robust dialogue, transcription, and analysis. The structured yet flexible nature of the interviews facilitates deep engagement with the participants, resulting in comprehensive, detailed, and reliable data to understand the complexities of supervision in the educational environment.

3.2. Sampling and Recruitment

Purposive sampling is used to ensure that the selected participants have relevant experience with educational supervision. So the inclusion and exclusion criteria are set according to Table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria of the Sample

Categories	Inclusion	Exclusion
New Principals	1-3 years experience	Not yet 1 year experience
Senior Teachers	Over 10 years of experience	10 years of experience or less
Junior Teachers	1-2 years experience	More then 2 years experience
	Vertical bullying experience	No Vertical bullying experience

The recruitment of informants was conducted virtually through the widespread distribution of a Google Form via email. Those who responded and expressed their willingness to become informants were then selected purposively according to the provisions of Table 1. Thus, 13 sample informants were selected. It includes six men and 7 women, representing various professional backgrounds, each offering a unique perspective on educational supervision practices in different regions. The diversity within this group comprises principals and senior teachers with varying levels of experience from different geographical areas in West Java, Indonesia. Represents a holistic view of current educational supervision practices across various cities. 3 participants are relatively new principals, with 1-3 years of experience from Cirebon, Majalengka, and Sumedang schools. They provided insights into the initial challenges of integrating a comprehensive supervision model. Then, 5 participants are senior teachers with more than 10 years of experience, including educators from Bandung and Indramayu.

Additionally, five junior teacher participants with 1-2 years of experience who have experienced vertical bullying. These various experienced professionals brought a wealth of experience to the discussion, particularly in terms of how supervision models can be adapted to support continuous professional development. This sampling strategy aims to capture the perspectives of both experienced educators and new educators simultaneously, which is crucial for understanding the various impacts of supervision at different stages of professional development (Bingham, 2023; Bingham et al., 2022) in the context of vertical bullying. Thus, the sample size does not represent a specific population as in a quantitative study. On the one hand, this aspect has certain limitations. But at the same time, this purposive sampling promises data that aligns with the topic being studied in the research.

3.3. Informants Description

The diverse backgrounds of the informants promise a multidimensional perspective on educational supervision. The group of 13 informants was divided into those with leadership roles and those with significant teaching experience. Participants from larger urban schools shared their

strategies for managing teacher supervision in environments with higher student populations. At the same time, principals from rural areas discussed the unique challenges they face, including resource limitations and professional isolation.

Importantly, the participants reflect various experiences with supervision models, ranging from traditional hierarchical structures to collaborative and peer-based models. As Mpewe (2019) noted, successful supervision heavily relies on building trust and open communication between the supervisor and the supervisee. Several informants highlighted the need for a supervision model prioritizing reflective dialogue over top-down feedback. This aligns with Raphael's (2004) argument that adequate supervision should integrate elements of mentoring and coaching to support teacher development.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis follows the Qualitative Analysis Process in Five Phases based on Bingham's Model (2023), which can ensure a systematic and thorough examination of the data from in-depth interviews. This model was applied in the NVivo version 12. The first phase is attribute coding. This phase provides a foundation for understanding the demographic and professional backgrounds of the informants, framing their responses within the context of their specific experiences in educational leadership. The second phase is categorizing topics, which involves identifying key themes related to teacher supervision, such as building trust, feedback mechanisms, and the professional development of junior educators. Then, open coding becomes the third phase. This phase allows for a more detailed examination of the data, identifying specific patterns in participants' responses, such as the role of guidance in supervision and the challenge of balancing accountability with support. In the fourth phase, the key findings are distilled into thematic statements. Finally, the fifth phase involves formulating a theoretical framework that connects these findings with broader discussions in the academic literature on educational leadership and supervision. Please see Figure 1.

In the realm of qualitative inquiry, attaining saturation is imperative to ensure the integrity and depth of research findings. Saunders et al. (2018) delineate saturation as the juncture at which no additional data emerge to develop the thematic framework further, signifying a natural cessation of data collection. This concept, initially posited by Glaser & Strauss (2017), serves as a qualitative benchmark to evaluate the adequacy of data collected through a systematic and iterative process.

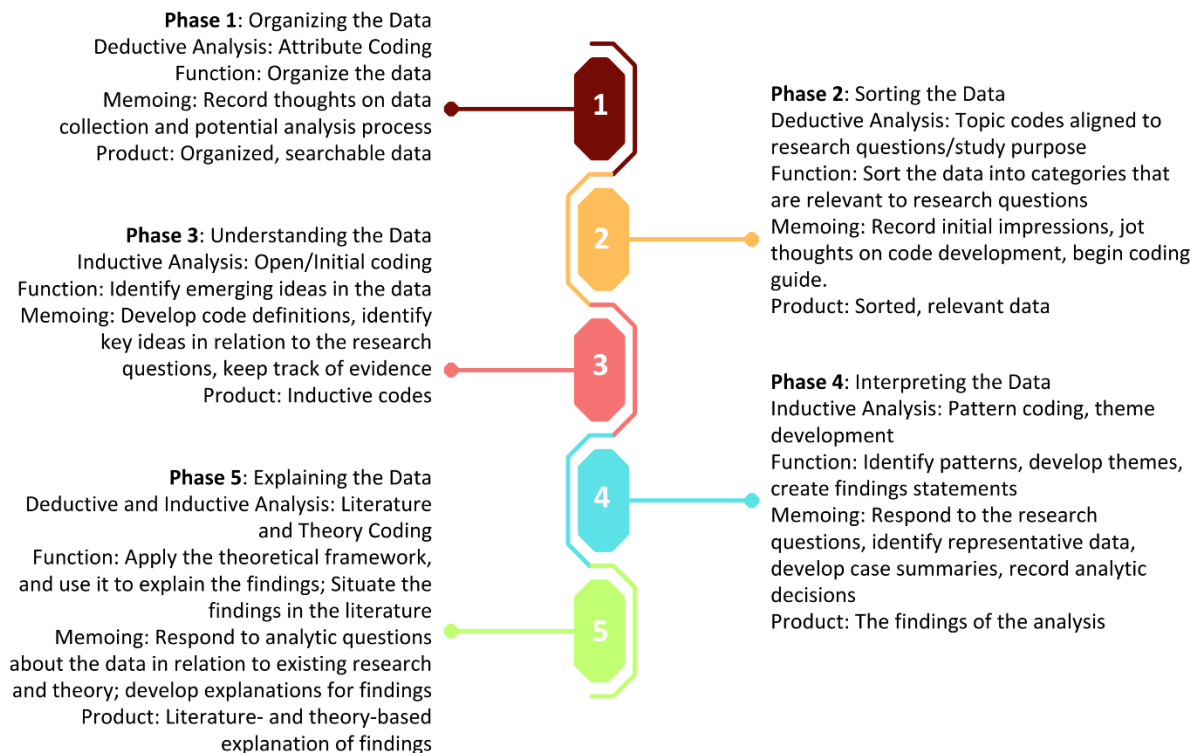


Figure 1. A Five-Phase Qualitative Analysis Process

Source: Adopted from Bingham (2023)

In the investigation under discussion, the realization of both thematic and code saturation with merely 13 informants can be substantiated through the meticulous application of thematic analysis, which adeptly captured the essential dimensions and intricacies of educational supervision practices. The rigorous deployment of thematic analysis ensured the exhaustive exploration and documentation of all pertinent themes and codes, reflecting a comprehensive encapsulation of the studied phenomena. This approach aligns with the insights of Rowlands et al. (2016) and J. Rowlands (2021), who advocate for the precise articulation of saturation to assess research quality effectively. The methodological precision in developing themes and codes, founded on in-depth analytical processes, meets these criteria, affirming that the data collection comprehensively encompassed the array of experiences and insights critical to the objectives of the study. Furthermore, Hennink et al. (2017) challenge the universal applicability of saturation, suggesting that its significance and implementation may vary across different qualitative methodologies; this reinforces the premise that within specific research frameworks, such as the one in question, a relatively limited number of informants can adequately meet the saturation criterion, particularly when the diversity and complexity of the data are thoroughly captured. Consequently, the profound scope and detail of the insights derived from these 13 informants, as evidenced by the intricate exploration of supervisory dynamics and the multifaceted challenges within educational settings, convincingly demonstrate that both thematic and code saturation were aptly achieved, thereby ensuring the validity and robustness of the findings within the qualitative research paradigm.

4. Results

Figure 2 shows the result of the in-depth interview process with 13 research participants, which shows the 5 themes that we can organize to answer the research questions.

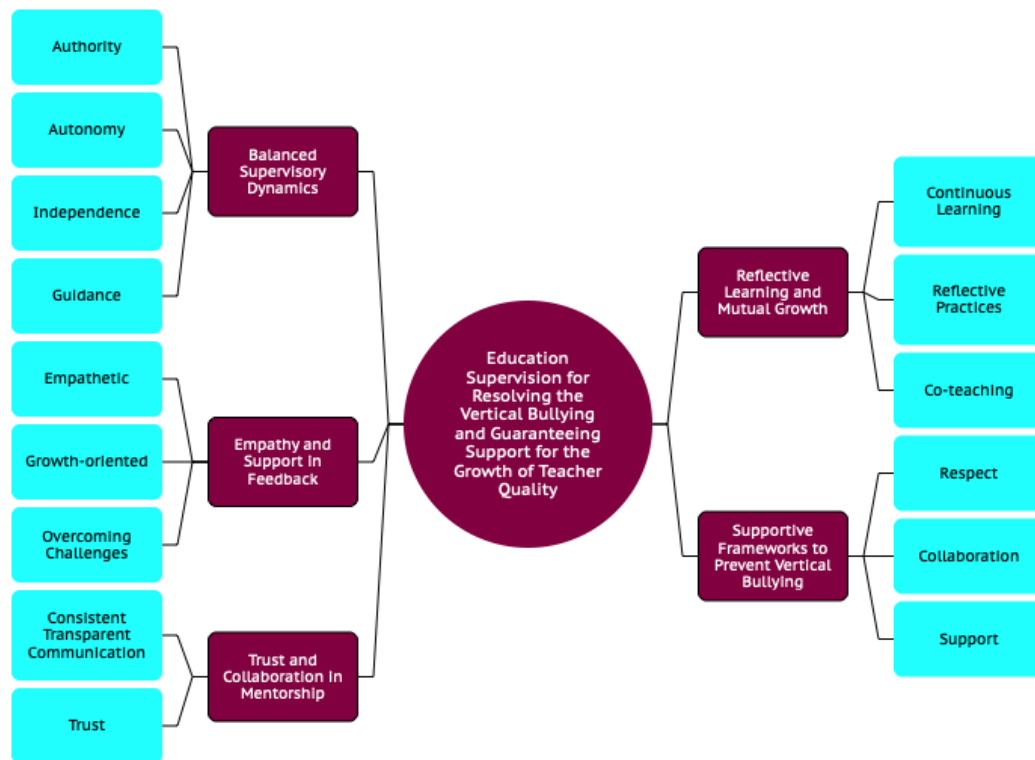


Figure 2. The Mind Map of the in-depth interview results

Source: Data Analysis using NVivo version 12.

4.1. *Balanced Supervisory Dynamics*

As described by Rutledge & Hogg (2020), Balanced supervisory dynamics emphasize the critical balance between authority and autonomy within mentorship relationships. This delicate balance is achieved through a sophisticated interplay of four essential codes—Authority, Autonomy, Independence, and Guidance—each pivotal in shaping effective supervisory relationships that enhance mentors' and mentees' experiences and growth within educational frameworks. Authority involves the mentor's capacity to effectively wield influence and steer the mentoring trajectory, creating a structured environment that supports clarity and security. This authority must be balanced carefully to foster rather than stifle the mentee's creative and professional development. Autonomy is crucial, as highlighted by both Informant 7 and Informant 2. Informant 7 notes, "Balanced mentorship allows for junior teachers' autonomy," underscoring the nurturing environment where mentees are encouraged to develop their decision-making capabilities.

Similarly, Informant 2 emphasizes the importance of mentors guiding while encouraging junior teachers to take ownership of their learning and professional development. This code indicates a mentorship that values self-governance, with the expression of appreciation and empowerment in Informant 7's demeanor suggesting significant enhancement in their engagement and investment in the educational process. Independence focuses on the mentee's ability to operate without constant oversight, promoting self-reliance. Informant 11 reflects this by stating, "I feel empowered to take initiative in my teaching approach." This indicates a supervisory style that encourages mentees to confidently explore and adopt their own educational strategies, enhancing their confidence and professional capacity. Guidance involves the mentor providing supportive and directional feedback, which complements the authoritative aspect by ensuring that influence is constructive. Informant 4's statement, "Mentors here encourage us to make decisions on our own," captures the essence of guidance that empowers rather than controls.

4.2. *Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth*

The theme "Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth" delves into the transformative potential of mentorship, underscored by collaborative and introspective practices within educational settings. This theme is intricately structured around three pivotal codes—Continuous Learning, Reflective Practices, and Co-teaching—collectively contributing to a rich, symbiotic growth environment for mentors and mentees. Continuous Learning, as highlighted by Informant 9, who states, "We learn together through shared reflection sessions," encapsulates the perpetual cycle of growth fundamental in educational environments. This continuous engagement is marked by vibrant dialogues that refresh and deepen the learning atmosphere, as evidenced by the enthusiastic demeanor of the informant. Reflective Practices further enrich this environment, with Informant 5 noting, "Reflecting on teaching methods has deepened our collaboration." This introspection not only enhances individual teaching strategies but also solidifies the collaborative bond between mentors and mentees, fostering mutual insights that benefit all parties involved. Additionally, Co-teaching, described by Informant 2 as improving professional skills through "collaborative teaching," emphasizes the practical application of shared teaching responsibilities.

4.3. Empathy and Support in Feedback

The theme "Empathy and Support in Feedback" explores the essential role of nurturing and empathetic feedback within the context of mentorship. This theme is characterized by three central codes—Empathetic, Growth-oriented, and Overcoming Challenges—that collectively foster both individual and collective development. For instance, Informant 12 exemplifies the Empathetic approach by stating, "Feedback is given constructively, focusing on growth." This highlights the critical role of empathy in feedback processes, where the intention is to support and uplift rather than to diminish, ensuring that the feedback mechanism is profoundly humanistic and supportive of mentee well-being and professional growth. Growth-oriented feedback, as experienced by Informant 6, "I appreciate how feedback is delivered with empathy," underscores the mentor's skill in framing feedback to foster long-term development rather than immediate correction. This approach not only enhances the receptivity of mentees to feedback but also enriches the learning process by making it more effective and nurturing. Moreover, addressing and Overcoming Challenges through supportive feedback, as noted by Informant 8, "Supportive feedback helps me improve my teaching skills," illustrates how empathetic feedback enables mentees to tackle professional hurdles with resilience and adaptability. This not only resolves immediate issues but also builds a foundation for future challenges, enhancing the trust and effectiveness of the mentor-mentee relationship. Integrating these insights with the "Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth in Mentorship," we see a complementary dynamic where mutual growth strategies, such as co-teaching, highlighted by Informant 2, "We promote mutual growth through co-teaching," encourage both mentors and mentees to engage in reflective practices. These practices leverage each other's experiences to enhance professional competencies and educational outcomes. Co-teaching acts as a dynamic platform for collaborative exploration of teaching methods and instructional techniques, facilitating not just skill enhancement but also fostering a community of reflective practitioners committed to continuous improvement and excellence.

4.4. Supportive Framework to Prevent Vertical Bullying

The theme "Supportive Frameworks to Prevent Vertical Bullying" addresses the strategic implementation of structured environments to minimize hierarchical conflicts and enhance a culture of mutual respect and support. These frameworks are delineated through three critical codes—Respect, Collaboration, and Support—which collectively contribute to a safer and more encouraging atmosphere for all participants in educational institutions. Respect is a foundational element in these frameworks, emphasized by Informant 3, who notes, "We adhere to respectful communication guidelines." This approach ensures that by establishing and maintaining clear guidelines that promote

respectful interactions, educational settings can significantly reduce the occurrences of bullying and foster a more inclusive environment. The serious and committed tone of Informant 3 underlines the importance of these guidelines in maintaining a dignified educational experience for everyone involved.

Collaboration is highlighted by Informant 10, who states, "Collaborative teaching has not only improved my skills but also strengthened our team spirit." This underscores the vital role of fostering collaborative relationships among educators to dilute hierarchical tensions and promote a unified team spirit. The enthusiastic and positive expression of Informant 10 illustrates the transformative impact that such collaboration has in combating the dynamics that contribute to vertical bullying. Support, as reflected in the remarks of Informant 5, "Supportive structures help us feel secure and valued," stresses the importance of having institutional support mechanisms that proactively create environments where everyone feels secure and valued. This addresses bullying incidents when they occur and enhances the overall morale and effectiveness of the educational framework.

4.5. Trust and Collaboration in Mentorship

The theme "Trust and Collaboration in Mentorship" concerns several crucial codes—Open Communication, Mutual Respect, Shared Goals, and Trust Building—that collectively forge deep and enduring relationships between mentors and mentees. Each code plays a vital role in establishing a mentorship environment characterized by mutual trust and effective collaboration. Open Communication is emphasized by Informant 13's reflection that "Open channels of communication have made it easier to share ideas and concerns." This practice underscores the importance of transparency and fluid dialogue in mentorship relationships, allowing both parties to express their thoughts without fear of judgment, thus optimizing learning and feedback. The relaxed and candid demeanor described suggests significantly reducing communication barriers, enhancing the mentorship experience. Mutual Respect is captured by Informant 4, who remarks, "Respecting each other's viewpoints has enriched our interactions." This highlights the necessity of valuing diverse perspectives, deepening understanding, and solidifying the relational foundation required for effective collaboration. This statement's appreciative and reflective tone conveys the profound impact of mutual respect on nurturing a supportive and inclusive mentorship environment. Shared Goals are articulated by Informant 8, noting, "Working towards common objectives has aligned our efforts and deepened our bond." This reflects the importance of aligning visions and objectives between mentors and mentees, consolidating efforts towards collective outcomes, and fostering a stronger partnership characterized by enthusiasm and motivation. Trust Building is further elaborated by Informant 2, who shares, "The trust we build through consistent support and reliability has been crucial." This statement is crucial, as trust is the cornerstone of any successful mentorship relationship, enabling both parties to rely on each other and feel secure in their professional growth journey. The confident and reassured manner in which this is discussed highlights the significant role that trust plays in enhancing mentor-mentee interactions and overall relationship satisfaction.

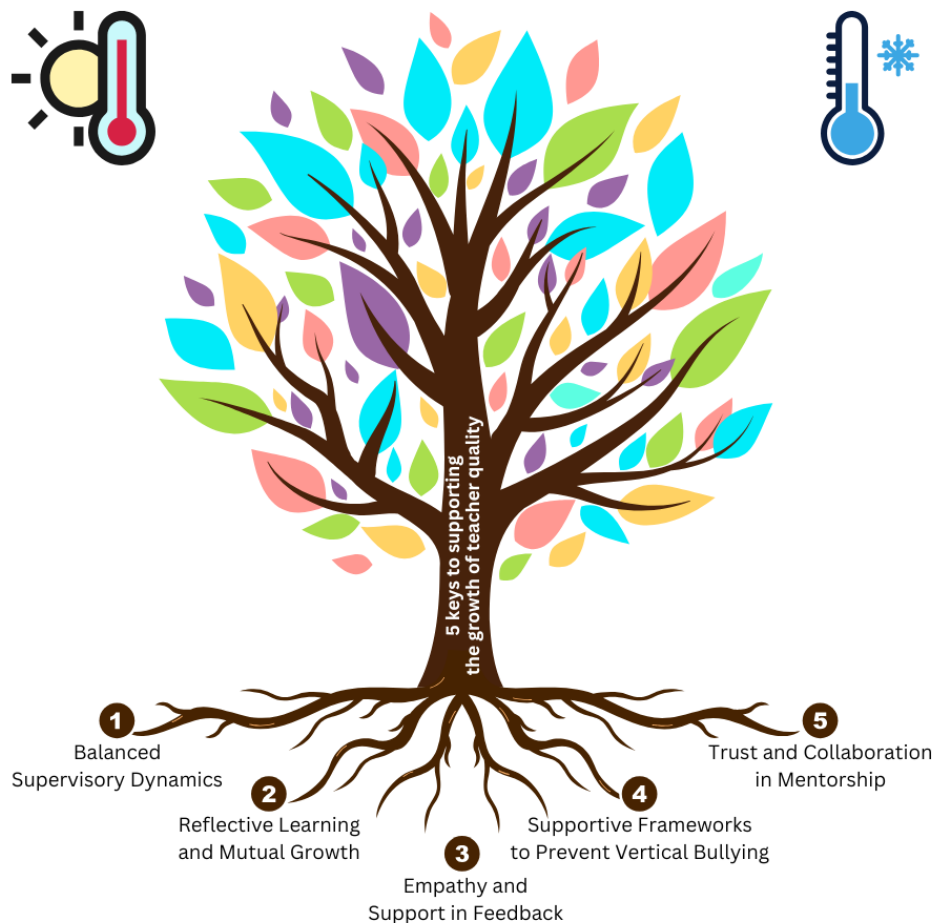


Figure 3. Five Keys of Academic Supervision in Education to Defeating Vertical Bullying and Support the Growth of Teacher Quality

The first and second themes serve as the basis for formulating strategies to promote reflective learning and mutual growth in the supervisory relationship between senior and junior teachers. Meanwhile, the third, fourth, and fifth themes form the basis for formulating ways a more balanced and supportive supervisory framework can mitigate the effects of vertical bullying in teacher education. The categorization of the themes that have been identified is based on the contextual relevance results that emerged in the analysis of the in-depth interview data with the research questions. All of them are discussed in the following section, and comparisons and interpretations are made against the broader literature.

5.1. The Strategies to Promote Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth in the Supervisory Relationship between Senior and Junior Teachers

5.1.1. Balanced Supervisory Dynamics

Balanced Dynamic Supervision encourages guidance that fosters relationships where mentees are motivated to seek advice yet feel free to act independently, enhancing the dynamic where mentors facilitate growth without imposing rigid structures. Together, these codes describe a dynamic mentorship approach that enhances the sense of responsibility among junior teachers and fosters a culture of mutual respect and collaboration within the educational environment. The balanced dynamics of supervision ensure that mentoring respects and develops the personality and potential of junior teachers, ensuring that the mentoring relationship is characterized by openness and reciprocal learning. This approach allows junior teachers to develop professionally and contribute

meaningfully to their educational community, effectively operationalizing theoretical concepts to nurture a group of empowered and self-sufficient educators.

The Balanced Supervision Dynamic encourages mentorship that fosters relationships where mentees are motivated to seek advice yet feel free to act independently, enhancing the dynamic where mentors facilitate growth without imposing rigid structures. Together, these codes depict a dynamic mentorship approach that not only enhances the sense of responsibility among junior teachers but also fosters a culture of mutual respect and collaboration within the educational environment. The balanced dynamics of supervision ensure that mentorship respects and develops the personality and potential of junior teachers, ensuring that the mentorship relationship is characterized by openness and reciprocal learning. This approach allows junior teachers to develop professionally and contribute meaningfully to their educational communities, effectively operationalizing theoretical concepts to nurture a group of empowered and self-sufficient educators.

The findings of the Balanced Supervision Dynamics are relevant to the recommendations of the research by Genc & Buyukkarci (2013) and also by Mpewe (2019), which state that using a structured observation process does not always resolve all challenges related to practical supervision. They agree that, in fact, a framework of observation that is too rigid and detailed can threaten the quality of supervision by neglecting important elements in teaching, such as the teacher's ability to improvise. Moreover, Balanced Dynamic Supervision can also address specific cases, as revealed by research Kosnik & Beck (2009), Olmstead et al. (2020), and also Pennington et al. (2020), in which the practice teachers are dissatisfied due to overly rigid mentor control, which imposes excessively strict limits on their autonomy, even disrupting their teaching practice.

5.1.2. Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth

Reflective learning, which has been found to strengthen participation and is recognized to enhance pedagogical skills, also fosters a cooperative teaching environment where participants' confidence and professional growth significantly increase. Integrating these codes into the theme illustrates a dynamic and enriching, reflective, collaborative mentorship model. The scientific contributions of Agudo (2016) and M. Guise et al. (2020) provide a theoretical background that emphasizes the importance of these practices in promoting professional development and improving educational outcomes. Further integrating these insights with the Supportive and Reflective Supervision Framework, which synthesizes leadership, supervisory dynamics, and empathetic engagement, addresses the complexities of mentoring.

This key is relevant to the works of Agudo (2016), Fry (2016), and also Rutledge & Hogg (2020), who emphasize balanced relationships, reflective learning, and conflict resolution. This simplifies mentoring and leadership development practices, addressing hierarchical structures and reducing vertical bullying in schools. This synthesis not only validates the effectiveness of reflective and collaborative practices but also demonstrates how these practices significantly enhance teaching and learning experiences by fostering professional growth in a structured yet empathetic environment. Together, this combination and framework reflect a deep understanding of the reciprocal nature of learning and growth in an educational environment, demonstrating that through reflection and shared experiences, both mentors and learners can achieve substantial professional and personal development while fostering a supportive and enriching educational community.

The emphasis on reflection and shared experiences between mentors and learners to achieve professional development as teachers shows relevance to several previous studies over the past fourteen years (2005-2019). If we see Darling-Hammond et al. (2013), Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden (2005), Jensen et al. (2019), Larsen Damsgaard & Heggen (2010), and Podolsky et al. (2019), they all emphasize that in quality educational supervision, the provision of intentional, structured opportunities for reflection, both direct and retrospective, is necessary to integrate lived experiences

with theoretical understanding for both mentors and learners. Thus, although educational supervision practices vary greatly across different educational contexts worldwide (Cohen et al., 2013; Lawson et al., 2015), these findings lead us to believe that the aspects of reflection and building shared experiences between mentors and learners must always be present to ensure the sustainable development of teachers' professional growth.

5.2. The Ways for a More Balanced and Supportive Supervisory Framework to Mitigate the Effect of Vertical Bullying in Teacher Education

5.2.1. Empathy and Support in Feedback

Empathy and support in feedback is a sub-theme identified based on the statements of informants 12, 6, 8, and 2. This has become one of the alternatives believed to be a More Balanced and Supportive Supervisory Framework to mitigate the effects of Vertical Bullying in Teacher Education. The reason is that empathy and support in feedback, based on the informants' experiences, have had a transformative impact on the vertical bullying they previously experienced. They describe it as empathetic and collaborative in educational supervision. By fostering a culture where feedback is intertwined with continuously interconnected learning, the educational environment becomes a setting that promotes professional growth, enhances educational outcomes, and builds a resilient community of educators. The synthesis of Empathy and support in feedback illustrates that when feedback is delivered in a mutually enriching manner, because it is based on empathy, thus neither destructive nor makes teacher-learners feel 'judged' by their mentors in educational supervision—the educational experience significantly improves both for mentors and learners.

As mentioned in the research Farooq et al. (2021), vertical bullying has been proven to have both direct and indirect negative impacts on work quality. Because of the increased feelings of fear and anxiety (Anusiewicz et al., 2021), more frequent work errors (Gosselin & Ireland, 2020), stress, work fatigue, and disruption of professional well-being and organizational effectiveness (Van den Brande et al., 2020), which in this case refers to school performance effectiveness. Some of those impacts were experienced by several junior teacher participants due to the intimidation they received from senior teachers. Then, in stressful situations due to vertical bullying, they obtained empathy and support in feedback from the principal and other teachers. Thus, the fear, anxiety, and stress they experienced gradually diminished. This will trigger the reconstruction of their self-confidence and encourage the recovery and development of their performance quality as teachers.

Previously, Haji's (2019) research explained that many learner teachers feel that the feedback they receive in educational supervision does not help in the development of their quality. There is also sharp criticism of certain educational supervision because it is considered to contain insincere feedback (Olmstead et al., 2020). But neither Haji (2019) nor Olmstead et al. (2020), they offered solutions to the limitations in that educational supervision. Thus, these findings serve as a renewal of guidance. When a learning teacher experiences bullying or destructive or unhelpful feedback, empathy and support in feedback from superiors or other teachers can mitigate the impact of vertical bullying and encourage the re-development of teacher quality. Becoming the educational experience is significantly uplifted, fostering a proactive and dynamic learning environment, as explained by Soslau et al. (2019).

5.2.2. Supportive Frameworks to Prevent Vertical Bullying

The next identified sub-theme is the support framework to prevent vertical bullying. Statement from Informant 2, "Support frameworks reduce vertical bullying," is directly related to this narrative. Considering that vertical bullying has many negative impacts, including forcing individuals to leave their career paths (H. H. N. Hashim & Ghani, 2020; N. H. Hashim et al., 2020; McDonald et al., 2022;

Walker et al., 2022) of teachers, while there is currently a significant shortage of teachers in Indonesia (Rahyasih et al., 2025), this threat must be prevented.

Preventing vertical bullying through the support framework we found is related to the theoretical contributions of Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury (2016), J.-M. Guise et al. (2017), and M. Guise et al. (2020). They emphasize the urgency of a structured and supportive environment as an important condition for reducing the risk of vertical bullying. The support framework we mean is part of a structured work environment. Another argument that strengthens our findings is that the support framework can prevent vertical bullying, referring to the scope of the support framework, which includes respect, collaboration, and support. Besides "respect" and "support," which are related to the previous sub-theme findings, namely "Empathy and support in feedback," the aspect of collaboration means encouraging equality between senior teachers and junior teachers. This equality is very much opposed to one of the factors causing vertical bullying, which is often prioritizing the role of senior teachers as experts, while junior teachers tend to be considered non-experts in traditional classroom dynamics (Soslau et al., 2019). In other words, the equality that emerges in the collaboration between senior teachers and junior teachers serves as a support framework that can prevent instances of vertical bullying among them.

Although there is continuity between the findings of this sub-theme and the theoretical contributions of Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury (2016), J.-M. Guise et al. (2017), and M. Guise et al. (2020), our findings successfully promote a more specific explanation. In a structured environment, as mentioned in the context of preventing vertical bullying, the support framework, which includes "respect", "collaboration", and "support", actually consists of three dimensions that need to be nurtured within it. Together, these insights demonstrate how the support framework not only enhances effective mentoring experiences. But also contribute to a healthier organizational culture, as the dimension of respect makes teacher individuals feel valued, along with the dimensions of collaboration and support that make them feel empowered.

Informant 3, who is known as the new principal at a young age, acknowledged that the professional growth he experienced was inseparable from the presence of a support framework at the school where he had previously worked as a teacher. By proactively preventing vertical bullying issues, this framework ensures that mentoring relationships are characterized by professionalism, respect, and mutual growth, which ultimately fosters a highly inclusive educational culture and supports the universal growth of teacher quality. Such relationships, when nurtured over time, can create an environment that makes junior teachers feel supported and empowered to take ownership of their professional growth (D. Kent & Dacin, 2022) and avoid the vertical bullying experienced by junior teachers elsewhere, where such a positive support framework is absent.

5.2.3. Trust and Collaboration in Mentorship

The last theme we found is trust and collaboration in mentorship in educational supervision to prevent or address vertical bullying that occurs in schools. This theme emerged and centered around several key codes, namely open communication, mutual respect, shared goals, and building trust. Collectively, they all contribute to forming a deep and lasting relationship between mentor and mentee. These findings are relevant to the theoretical contributions of Eller et al. (2014), Zohar (2012), and Zohar & Marshall (2004) that emphasize that trust and collaboration are the foundations of effective mentorship. Another study that emphasizes the urgency of trust as one of the main pillars for building effective mentorship is Raphael's (2004) research. He argues that consistency in actions and transparency in communication are crucial in building trust, which serves as the foundation for open dialogue and reciprocal learning. This collaborative approach not only encourages mentors and junior teachers to work together more effectively in achieving common goals but also creates a supportive mentorship environment where both parties can thrive.

Together, these elements illustrate the multifaceted approach needed to develop meaningful and effective mentorship. By emphasizing open communication, mutual respect, shared goals, and building trust, mentorship programs create a strong environment for personal and professional development. This theme emphasizes the importance of a collaborative and trusting environment as the foundation for the success and effectiveness of mentorship programs in the educational context, as it enables positive and proactive mentorship experiences. These findings are related to Olmstead et al.'s (2020) statement regarding junior teachers who complained about insincere feedback in the educational supervision they experienced. The assessment that feedback is perceived as insincere by junior teachers, as experienced by informant 7, is related to their trust in the mentor. Because low trust in mentor advice can reduce their willingness to accept guidance (Wang & Du, 2018). Thus, it allows junior teachers to become defensive and overlook the quality growth opportunities present in the mentors' suggestions. Thus, the dimension of trust, as stated by Informant 2, is that "The trust we (Informant 2 and mentor) build through consistent support and reliability has become very important." Becoming the foundation of a successful mentorship relationship allows both parties to rely on each other and feel secure in their professional growth as teachers.

6. Conclusion

Through in-depth interviews that present multidimensional perspectives from senior and junior teachers spread across West Java, Indonesia, this study promotes 2 significant outcomes. First, strategies to encourage reflective learning and mutual growth in the supervisory relationship between senior and junior teachers, through balanced supervisory dynamics and reflective learning and mutual growth. Second, ways to create a more balanced and supportive supervision framework to reduce the effects of vertical bullying in teacher education can be achieved through: empathy and support in feedback; a supportive framework to prevent vertical bullying; and trust and collaboration in mentorship. These two significant results are tabulated as a new theory about the five keys to preventing and/or addressing vertical bullying in the context of educational supervision at any level of educational institution.

Considering that such preventive and remedial approaches have not been achieved by previous relevant research, while vertical bullying continues to occur and increase in various teacher education contexts in different countries around the world, the results of this study promise a highly valuable contribution. Because it can serve as a guide to address the issue. In fact, instead of letting junior teachers who are disturbed by bullying that can erode their quality, the implementation of these 5 keys can prevent vertical bullying and rebuild the continuity of teacher quality growth after experiencing vertical bullying. Thus, the results of this study can serve as a strategic alternative for developing educational supervision strategies that can support the growth of teacher quality in various educational institutions worldwide.

Considering previous relevant research that explains the harmful impacts that vertical bullying can cause in the workplace, the implications of this study allow for the prevention and resolution of vertical bullying against teachers. Fear, stress, work errors due to panic, or even teacher retention that can be caused by vertical bullying, all of these can be reduced in the future through the use of a new theory, namely the 5 keys to educational supervision that we promote.

7. Suggestion

The authors suggest implementing the five key alternatives for developing education supervision strategies that can support the growth of teacher quality in various educational institutions around the world. Especially when vertical bullying still exists in educational institutions. Then, further research with a quasi-experimental approach to prove the effectiveness of this new theory, which is promoted, is recommended.

Declarations

Author Contributions. M.D.C.R.: conceptualization, methodology, visualization, review, and editing original manuscript preparation. R.S.N.: writing original manuscript, methodology. N.H.: data collection, resources. Y.R.: data analysis. S.L.C.: investigation. M.F.A.G.: methodology, validation. All authors have read and approved the published on the final version of the article.

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Approval. The use of human subjects (informants) in this research has been conducted in accordance with all relevant national regulations and institutional policies.

Data Availability Statement. The data supporting this study's findings are available on request from the corresponding author [M.D.C.R]. The data, which contains information that could compromise the privacy of research participants, is not publicly available due to certain restrictions.

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Appendix I.

Coding and Themes Based on The Result of In-Depth Interview

Themes	Codes	Aligning Theory	Quotes from Informants
Balanced Supervisory Dynamics	• Authority • Autonomy, • Independence • Guidance	Rutledge & Hogg (2020) highlight the significance of balancing hierarchical power in supervisory relationships to allow autonomy and foster trust between mentors and mentees.	"Balanced mentorship allows for junior teachers' autonomy." "Mentors here encourage us to make decisions on our own." "I feel empowered to take initiative in my teaching approach." "We learn together through shared reflection sessions."
Reflective Learning and Mutual Growth	• Continuous learning • Reflective practices • Co-teaching,	Agudo (2016), M. Guise et al. (2020) emphasize the role of reflective learning and mutual growth in mentorship relationships, where both parties benefit through collaboration and ongoing feedback.	"Collaborative teaching has improved my professional skills." "Reflecting on teaching methods has deepened our collaboration." "Feedback is given constructively, focusing on growth."
Empathy and Support in Feedback	• Empathetic • Growth-oriented, • Overcoming challenges.	Soslau et al. (2019) highlight the importance of empathy in feedback delivery, suggesting that compassionate feedback fosters mentee development and enhances trust.	"I appreciate how feedback is delivered with empathy."

Supportive Frameworks to Prevent Vertical Bullying	• Respect • Collaboration • Support.	Gallo-Fox Scantlebury (2016), J.-M. Guise et al. (2017), M. Guise et al. (2020) underline the need for structured, supportive environments to reduce the risk of vertical bullying within mentorship relationships.	"Supportive feedback helps me improve my teaching skills." "We adhere to respectful communication guidelines."
Trust and Collaboration in Mentorship	• Consistent transparent communication • Trust	Eller et al. (2014), Zohar (2012), Zohar & Marshall (2004) focus on the importance of trust and collaboration as key drivers for successful mentorship, highlighting how trust fosters mutual respect and better professional relationships.	"Supportive structures promote a positive mentorship culture." "Vertical bullying is addressed promptly through mentorship." "Trust is earned through honesty and mutual respect." "Collaboration is central to our mentorship approach." "Open communication enhances our mentor-mentee relationship."
