

Teachers' Efforts to Stay Resilient during the Emergency Remote Teaching

Daniel Ginting

daniel.ginting@machung.ac.id

Universitas Ma Chung

ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed at filling in the research gap by presenting critical observation of *guru penggeraks*' resilience in adapting to emergency remote teaching and factors affecting their teaching performance during the pandemic. This paper is a case study that aims to explore the meaning of the resilience phenomenon of the *guru penggerak*. This research involved six teachers joining *guru penggerak* of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia program. Although they had gone through their ERT quite well, they admitted that their teaching needed improvement. Some of their best teaching practices are presented as follows: enhancing professional development through trainings, establishing collaborative atmosphere through mentorship, taking initiatives to design learning materials independently, promoting commitment through favorable communication, and delivering materials in a measurable and scheduled manner. This paper provides several practical teaching pedagogic implications to enhance teachers' professional development during the new normal.

Key words: Resilient; Emergency Remote Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Following the closure of schools in response to the pandemic, education worldwide faces challenges: shifting to distance learning to ensure that all students benefit from the learning and teaching process. During this crisis, the government, society, and stakeholders view this current situation as critical; however, they must keep education available to students to continue their studies and graduate. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, online instruction has gradually grown in popularity (König et al., 2020).

Schools gave compensations for this transition online by accepting a lower standard of student achievement while altering or omitting planned assessments (Lederman, 2020). In Indonesia, for example, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia Republic, for example, issued the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 719/P/2020, allowing schools to simplify the curriculum independently (Ginting et al., 2021). The emergency curriculum (under special conditions) prepared by the Ministry of Education and Culture simplifies the national curriculum. In such a modified curriculum, certain competencies of the school subjects are rationalized to allow

teachers and students to focus on essential competencies and prerequisite competencies for continuing learning at the next level. The ministry also provides learning modules for early childhood education and primary schools, which are expected to assist the learning process from home by covering activity-based learning descriptions for teachers, parents, and students. The learning process occurs when children play and carry out daily activities. Meanwhile, the learning module includes a lesson plan for elementary school education that can be easily carried out independently by a companion, both parents and guardians. These modules are expected to help teachers monitor students' learning progress while aiding parents to guide their children to learn from home.

Pandemic has taught teachers to become tough educators. Their resilience has been tested; how much they provide the quality education services to their students. Teaching online, especially in the context of ERT, is very different from teaching students in traditional face-to-face classrooms. The online programs are generally built upon well prepared course design, content, peer personalities, with the instructor's ability guiding and facilitating the participants with the online course. This online approach requires teachers to respond to students' flexibility in altering content and shifting instructional strategies (Rogers, 2000). Teachers must become adaptable using technology and student-centered practices to ensure students maintain active engagement with the content, other learners, and themselves (Knowlton, 2000).

Several studies on teacher response to online learning were discovered in the literature review of the present study. Teacher self-efficacy was highlighted as an essential factor in determining teacher success in embracing new technologies and influencing student engagement (Andreassen & Braten, 2013; Cervera & Cantabrana, 2015; Motudal et al., 2019). Teachers needed ongoing ICT training to improve their skills technology knowledge (Poling & Lo Schiavo, 2014; Tay et al., 2017). Diekema and Olsen (2014) mention that educators must maintain their ICT training and build their information-finding preferences and essential criteria for educational resource selection. With the increased availability of digital resources, teachers should continuously identify their appropriate resources and incorporate them into their lessons.

Much discussion and research have been done to examine the ongoing questions about what elements are necessary today to embody high-quality online courses from teachers and student perspectives. The debate about strategies and best practices for student learning, persistence, and overall student satisfaction continues to evolve. However, few studies comprehensively confirm the extent of the efforts made by teachers to overcome the challenges in carrying out ERT. Thus, this paper is aimed at filling in the research gap by presenting critical observation of *guru penggerak*'s resilience in adapting to emergency remote teaching and factors affecting their teaching performance during the pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term "emergency remote teaching" (ERT) was coined to distinguish between a quick shift from a traditional classroom to an online platform and high-quality online education. ERT is defined as the contrast of planned and online experiences from the beginning to a temporary shift in instructional delivery to an alternate teaching and learning delivery owing to crises (Hodges et al., 2020). The teachers were exposed to ERT with a variety of responses (Ginting et al., 2021). For example, they wanted to replicate the classroom experience and retain the same amount of classroom time online as they did in class or on campus. Teachers often teach like they were taught (Kugel, 1993). They use a variety of app-based video conferencing technologies, including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, WebEx, and others. They believe that by using this way of teaching, the benefits of nonverbal cues, tone, and rhythm of voice and engagement can be preserved.

Problems with teaching online are ubiquitous. Many teachers complained about how difficult it was to keep track of their student's attendance in online classes when many of them switched off the camera. Not all students were present at the scheduled lesson hour. Students were posed with various issues, such as Zoom fatigue, audio lags, cuts, and interruptions from noisy speakers (Cytowic, 2020). Other students were reported to have technical problems, such as sharing their gadgets or having no device at all. Admittedly, they also did not have access to Wi-Fi at home. Thus, they had to go to the places where the internet connections were available (Lederman, 2020).

To keep students from being affected by the "learning lost potential," the ministry appealed to teachers to carry out diagnostic assessments. These assessments are planned to be regularly implemented in all classes, diagnosing students' cognitive and non-cognitive conditions due to distance learning. Non-cognitive assessment is intended to measure students' psychological aspects and emotional conditions, such as psychological and social-emotional well-being of students, students' enjoyment of studying from home, and the condition of students' families. Cognitive assessment is aimed at testing students' learning abilities and achievements. The assessment results are used as the basis for selecting learning strategies and providing remedial or additional lessons for students who are the most lagging behind. The government also has relaxed regulations for teachers to support successful learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Teachers are no longer required to meet the workload of twenty-four hours face-to-face in one week, so teachers can provide interactive lessons to students without worrying about completing all meeting hours.

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METHOD

This paper is a case study that aims to explore the meaning of the resilience phenomenon of the *guru penggerak*. This research involved six teachers joining *guru penggerak* of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia program. The informed consent protocol was carried out by providing them with an explanation of all research activities (Ginting, 2022). They were given the freedom to accept or even reject this research offer. To protect their privacy, their names have been withheld. They were all qualified key informants with more than ten-year-teaching experience. Coming from various primary and secondary schools in Indonesia, they could explain their teaching practice activities very well, including current government's education policy issues.

The author conveyed several open-ended questions to all participants through interview techniques for data analysis. The author consulted several experts to ensure the quality of all interview questions before carrying out data mining. Beginning with an agreement with the participants, the author scheduled an interview with Google Meet. The data analysis technique of this research began with the data processing stage. During this stage, the writer checked the data following the research problem. The writer marked the data with symbols (coding) as analysis material. After coding, the writer prepared tabulations to simplify data to make data interpretation easy to do. The interpretation of the results led to conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Enhancing professional development through trainings

The participants of this present study admitted that they had difficulty designing materials and teaching online classes because they had no experience with such remote classes. However, they showed their persistence in adapting to the relatively new online class organization for them. They are looking for a way to attend training, webinars, and workshops related to online classes.

[Excerpt 1]

In 2016 I participated in Indonesia Digital Learning in Jakarta. ...There are many methods. Indonesia Digital Learning activities in 2016 were different from other seminars or training that I have attended. In Indonesia Digital Learning in 2016 I discovered something new in the teaching and learning process. ...I re-

learn some of the teaching and learning process techniques using the internet through ..., studying through YouTube and google.

(Teacher 1)

[Excerpt 2]

Interacting with other people who have a challenge that I've ever done was when I did a Google Workspace for Education Training with 11 trainers. This activity has been carried out on June 29-30 and July 2-3, 2021..... The Education Office and Branch Offices play a role in making circulars informing this activity so that teachers know information about this training and can take part in it.

(Teacher 2)

Understandably, changes to teaching online classes during the pandemic have made teachers face the anxiety in designing and teaching online courses related to the technical skills required to do so (Johnson et al., 2012). Ragan and Schroeder (2014) mention that many teachers members do not have any formal education or training in education theory to draw upon in their face-to-face or online courses. Instead, they drew upon how they were taught as a point of reference.

However, this study found that participating in workshops, webinars, and training is one of the teacher's efforts to adapt to teaching online classes during the pandemic. Vannatta and Nancy (2004) say that a teachers' dedication to the time commitment in teaching and openness to change must be combined with the technical training necessary to be effective. From this training, teachers learn essential principles in online teaching (Palloff & Pratt, 2003): establish a presence in the online class, be highly motivated and a motivator, build an online community, promote interactivity and collaboration in the course, open, flexible, active, and responsive. This training brings teachers to the difference between face-to-face and online teaching. Therefore, they are committed to the online form of teaching when in that modality. Technology training and openness to change by teachers were the predictors of successful technology adaptation (Marcinkiewicz, 1994).

Participating in training requires commitment. Although administrators encourage teachers to participate in these pieces of training and teach online, it has traditionally been common to see resistance in their participation for various reasons. Beliefs that their course content cannot be translated online and fear of losing connection to their students are barriers to online teaching expressed by teachers (Gratz & Looney, 2020).

Attending training is a form of professional development. Johnson (2015) emphasized that participants who completed professional development in online course design positively impacted their course development, and that guidance and support were required to develop a new use of increased use of technology tools. Professional development has been ineffective when offered impromptu, sporadically, and unconnected to any plan for change (Mohr & Shelton, 2017). With the urgency to transform emergency remote teaching to quality online education during the summer months when teachers are typically off-contract, it is

necessary to study what constitutes effective professional development in online teaching and learning and resistance in online education. Mandated training may not be helpful if teachers are not interested in attending the training or refuse to attend. However, if teachers decide the types of training they would attend and allow flexibility according to their experience and backgrounds, the training will be more successful (Gregory & Martindale, 2016).

Establishing collaborative atmosphere through mentorships

Teachers' professional development can be carried out by learning from others. Mentoring can be accomplished in both formal and informal settings. In a traditional setting, teachers are matched by the institution based on identified criteria. Mentors are provided training and monitored and recognized by the institution. Informal mentoring occurs naturally between mentor and mentee without the institution's involvement other than the initial introduction. While the interaction by the two colleagues is informal, both parties are free to share and exchange knowledge that enables co-learning to occur (Thompson, 2006).

[Excerpt 3]

I re-learn some of the teaching and learning process techniques using the internet through discussions/questions and answers to fellow teachers who teach computers, studying through YouTube and google. I feel very different from teaching habits since 2003. ... I uploaded materials into google classroom and the questions in the form of a google form are shared via the link.

(Teacher 3)

[Excerpt 4]

Colleagues are the parties I invite to work together because exchanging ideas with colleagues will make it easier for each school administration arrangement. But not all colleagues understand IT because some colleagues are old, and some cannot look at the laptop for a long time.

(Teacher 4)

[Excerpt 5]

While studying Microsoft Excel, I didn't really understand how to use Excel, so I learned a lot from my colleagues in understanding Microsoft Excel. I got a lot of input, such as understanding the toolbars in Excel and how to use them. ...I am happy when I work, my colleagues are very enthusiastic about teaching other colleagues about technology updates.

(Teacher 5)

[Excerpt 6]

Initially, 2-3 people asked me to teach somehow how to use the application and how to make use of it. Then I posted on the school's WhatsApp group for those who wish to join and study with me, I am willing to take the time.It turned out that the teacher's enthusiasm for gaining new knowledge was very enthusiastic and it encouraged my enthusiasm to share knowledge.

(Teacher 6)

When teachers taught or prepared to teach online courses, they were likely/very likely to seek help from their colleagues (Kyei-Blankson, 2010). The collaborative environment fostered by mentorship promoted a transfer of learning that aided new online teachers in generating high-quality online courses while also changing their perceptions, abilities, and approaches that could be applied to their growing online pedagogy (Buckenmeyer et al., 2013).

When establishing a mentorship, potential problems must be recognized and handled. Individuals chosen to be mentors should have exceptional personalities and professional traits. Mentors should be positive, sympathetic, and provide mentees detailed feedback (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). Mentors must carve out and devote important time to the process, which their administration may never even notice. Mentoring can lead to greater professional skill, reflection on their practice, renewal, and collegial interactions (Huling & Resta, 2001).

Taking initiatives to design learning materials independently

This study has found that the teachers began to develop their teaching materials independently. Most of the participants mentioned that they managed to create their instructional videos using different kinds of app they had learnt from the training. To enhance their emotional ties with their students, they did their best to show up their face in the videos. The teachers found YouTube channels useful and convenient to share their links with their students.

Teaching videos and sessions that show a teacher's face tend to be more effective and interactive than those that simply are narrated using slideshows (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Remote teaching is sometimes isolating in nature, and the lack of teachers' faces may make it lonelier than it has already been to the students (Loton et al., 2020). To offset this isolation or the isolating effects of remote classes, teachers should be able to regularly communicate with their students and interact with them (Kawasaki et al., 2021). This interaction between the teachers and the students will show the students that the teacher is invested and interested personally in their academic well-being (Xie & Rice, 2021). Hence, subsequently allowing the students to develop interests in that online course, which will boost a teacher's chances of improving or enhancing quality remote teaching (Carrillo & Flores, 2020)

[Excerpt 7]

In designing mixed learning, I prepared a module to help students study independently because the face-to-face time allocation was reduced during the pandemic. In contrast, during PJJ, I prepared a learning video that students could watch at home. I did my best to show my face in the videos. I hope that way helps my students to recognize me as their teacher. ...I think it really supports the learning process and creates independent learning for students.

(Teacher 1)

[Excerpt 8]

After using video learning media and modules when delivering material, students' enthusiasm, and motivation to learn increases because students feel there are new things and changes in the learning atmosphere. In principle, making learning media that is fun and new things done by the teacher will make students more excited to find out the information they want to learn and indirectly affect learning outcomes.

(Teacher 2)

As reported by Mac Mahon et al. (2019), there are various ways that the teacher can establish a human connection with his or her students in these online courses. For example, a teacher can decide to record himself or herself doing informal greetings in the morning and share them on online platforms such as SeeSaw to allow the students to respond at their convenience (Xie & Rice, 2021). This connection builds some level of good relations between the students and the teachers. Physical teaching allows the teacher to know and identify how a student is doing something that is difficult in remote teaching. Therefore, just the presence and the face of the teacher can help with this type of problem (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). A teacher who is present or showing his or her face is all about building the right relationship with his or her students. If the students can see a teacher's face, they are able to trust that teacher easily and subsequently believe that the teacher is always there for them (Mahmood, 2021). During lonely times such as the pandemic period, some students do suffer or struggle emotionally and academically. That situation can be tormenting and isolating (Ferdig et al., 2020).

A common concern raised by researchers is that students tend to feel disconnected and isolated in remote teaching (Ferdig et al., 2020). The learners should not feel as if they are always engaging or interacting with a machine or a computer. They should always see the face of the teacher or the instructor to build some level of trust. When students can trust their teachers, the quality of remote teaching will be improved because students will be interested in what the teacher is delivering (Carrillo & Flores, 2020).

Promoting commitment through favorable communication

According to the participants of this present study, all parties, including parents and schools, must cooperate and help each other to make online learning successful. They found communication very crucial that bridged the teachers' online teaching delivery with the students' needs to learn. However, establishing favorable communication was not always easy to do because many parents were also busy. Even if the teachers planned to do home visit, the parents were not at home. However, these teachers managed to tackle this communication issue patiently. They kept contacting the parents to make agreement about how to help their children with their learning progress.

When teachers or instructors are in remote settings or environments where they are required to teach, they may feel the pressure of being online all the time

(Jeffery et al., 2020). This pressure emanates from the fact that teachers always want to assist the students, for example, constantly being available to them. Since they are not able to meet them physically, they tend to be online (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). When students realize that their teachers are always available anytime they want them or when they are online, they tend to develop some bad habits and unrealistic expectations (Jeffery et al., 2020). The students may decide not to do an assignment because they are waiting for the reply of the teacher. The response time of the teacher may determine when that assignment is submitted (Maher& Prescott, 2017).

[Excerpt 9]

The challenges that I face when designing and implementing distance learning are the lack of students who do not have cellphones, packages, data, living conditions, the boredom of parents and students, and parents' economic factors. In addition, the difficulty of conducting a distance learning assessment also impacts the quality of learning. ..This is what makes it a bit difficult for me to invite discussion.

(Teacher 3)

[Excerpt 10]

I need support from parents or guardians of students to carry out this online learning. Some of the challenges I faced in carrying out this online learning were: 1. Networks in unfriendly villages. 2. Not all students have the tools to carry out online learning. 3. Internet quota for online learning 4. Working parents cannot always accompany students to study online at home in the morning 5. Students and parents do not all understand the application for online learning that I will use.

(Teacher 4)

[Excerpt 11]

To achieve a common goal requires a shared commitment through intensive (frequent) communication. In fact, building effective one-way communication is not as easy as one might think. it takes a common approach and understanding related to certain goals. Difficulties in building communication and work, including those that I experienced myself. ...Many senior teachers and even parents have difficulty with gadgets (mobile phones or laptops).

(Teacher 5)

According to Olivier et al. (2021), some teachers have parent volunteers that have been organized to assist them in remote teaching. They should make use of these helpers to ensure that they deliver relevant and appropriate content to their students. Classroom aids can help them with grading activities and can also assist them in creating worksheets (Kaupet al., 2020). Moreover, they should allow parent volunteers to create fun and interactive activities for remote students. Consequently, teachers can connect or coordinate with their colleagues to seek creative ways and ideas on how to handle a specific lesson remotely (Olivier et

al., 2021). There are normally very many people or individuals who are ready to assist students and teachers to succeed; hence by allowing them to contribute, the quality of remote teaching will ultimately improve (Hodges et al., 2020).

Remote teaching gives teachers the pressure of managing a class that is usually on (Jeffery et al., 2020). But teachers should always have the freedom to step away and relax. This freedom will allow them not to be always available to the students. The teacher can decide to set up some specific hours when he or she can be available on those learning platforms (Hilli & Åkerfeldt, 2020). Through this, he or she can access the teaching platforms at the specified or appointed time and deliver his or her content. Teachers may also use these hours to interact with their students efficiently (Jeffery et al., 2020). The focus of the teacher should be to check if there are some issues affecting the students and then provide them with social support. This can be a very efficient mode of remote teaching and can enhance the collection of quality feedback (Hilli & Åkerfeldt, 2020). Online meetings between the teachers and the students should always be relaxed and optional.

Delivering materials in a measurable and scheduled manner

When a teacher tells his or her students to watch online content that runs or takes more than 15 minutes, the students may become bored and eventually fail to attend these sections (Hilli & Åkerfeldt, 2020). This apathy will not only discourage the teacher but also lower the quality standards of remote teaching. Instead, the teacher should give specific instructions to the students (Stenman & Pettersson, 2020). For example, the teacher can tell them to access only parts 12.23 to 17.89 of the recordings. This specificity will not only make it easier for the students to access, but the students will also be curious to know the contents of those recordings (Hilli & Åkerfeldt, 2020)

[Excerpt 12]

To overcome this condition, I communicate and discuss with parents or guardians of students to find the best solution. Based on my experience, I did first to do a simulation of online, offline, and combination activities. ...Then, I began to study the use of technology in learning, for example, the use of applications, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Quizizz, wonder share Filmora, google forms and google drive to deliver materials and assignments for students.

(Teacher 6)

In any learning or teaching environment, schedules and boundaries are always crucial. Therefore, remote teaching is not different. A teacher should set up or allocate specific time or hours for him or her to establish some boundaries between the students and him or her (Kaupet al., 2020). When teachers communicate with the students about what time of day, they are expected to submit their assignments and when that teacher will be available, they can prepare adequately. The teacher should review the calendar and block out those hours they

are not available and let the students know the activities they will be taking during those hours (Stenman & Pettersson, 2020). This classroom management strategy will allow the teacher to take only specific questions during that time and respond accordingly to the questions asked. The teacher should also be able to allocate specific times when general class questions can be asked (Kaup et al., 2020).

According to König et al. (2020), the teacher should also allocate boundaries and schedules with students' parents. He or she should tell the parents of their students when they are available. If teachers are not available on a specific day or date, they should also communicate the time they will hear from them (Kaup et al., 2020). Setting or allocating these boundaries and schedules allows the parents to know the exact time they can inquire about their children's progress, thus limiting instances of parents disrupting teaching sessions to acquire about the progress of their children (Kaup et al., 2020).

Moreover, for quality remote teaching, teachers should always be fresh to deliver content in a proper way (König et al., 2020). Teachers should always allocate personal boundaries between them and their students to help protect their time. To do this, teachers are supposed to go offline for certain periods of time so that they prevent scenarios where they find themselves teaching throughout the day without rest. Moreover, things like emails from students can distract a teacher during remote teaching. Preferably, teachers should use software applications that provide online education services. This will not only allow the teacher to spend their time delivering content to his or her students, but it will also give them ample time to relax before checking messages from their students (Kaup et al., 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

Some people can adapt to stressful situations better than others or recover from challenging experiences when others cannot. Resilience deals with the ability to handle problems through adaptation. This paper has found that teachers have been resilient to deal with remote teaching during the pandemic. This study discovered that teachers could adapt to challenging situations. They have adapted to remote teaching by learning for the task-at-hand. They focus on learning problem-centered, task oriented, and life-focused. This is a 'natural' process of learning. In short, they could reach their self-direction. Being self-directed learners, they accept their self-responsibility and personal professional growth. As a result, they take the initiative in establishing a prospective learning opportunity through training. In addition, they learn technology knowledge effectively by exchanging distinctive and complex skills with others.

This research was carried out in the situation of a global pandemic with no apparent ending, which could necessitate continual pivoting between schools-based education and emergency remote online teaching. The value of research on

how teachers responded to the crisis is the analysis of information and tools for planning for the future, including the current study's findings. This research will contribute to the increasing body of knowledge about excellent practices in emergency remote online teaching and learning.

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