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Pedagogical challenges and resilience of Islamic schools' english teachers

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Abstract

This study determines the difference and correlation between pedagogical challenges and resilience in elementary, junior, and senior school English teachers using a quantitative approach. Quantitative methods were used to collect and analyze data from 57 pedagogical challenges and 39 resilience questionnaires. A total of 84 samples, including 11, 52, and 21 elementary, junior and senior high schools' teachers respectively. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic, t-test significance, and Pearson correlation techniques. According to the results, there is no significant difference in pedagogical challenges and resilience between elementary, junior, and senior Islamic school teachers. Furthermore, there is no correlation between teachers' pedagogical challenges and resilience.

Keywords: Pedagogy, challenge, resilience, English teacher.

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Introduction

Teaching is a complex activity that includes plan, design, administration, implementation, management, and evaluation. Lesson plans cover details on teaching materials, media, method, assessment, and evaluations to be developed through design. After lesson plans have been designed, they are implemented through organizing media, material and method in classrooms. Teachers in administration keep records on students' achievement and behavior while management establishes and maintains classroom arrangement and classroom interaction. Evaluation covers measures and assesses the effectiveness of the teaching process. Teachers are responsible for teaching materials delivery and classroom management and evaluation. Conclusively, teachers work as educators, designers, managers, counselors, assessors, and researchers. For teachers to achieve student's education goals their roles have to be concurrently performed.

Pedagogy is the science of teaching which caters for method and practice (Watkins & Mortimore, 1999). Pedagogical knowledge includes the instructional process, learning process, and assessment (Sonmark et al., 2017). The implementation of pedagogical knowledge in English classrooms for foreign students is a challenge to teachers. These challenges cover preparation, teaching approach curriculum, textbook, culture, language assessment, and evaluation (Akbari 2015; Fareh, 2010). Moreover, many English teachers lack enough training on technological upgrades, teaching methods, and knowledge about the language (Songbatumis, 2017).

Teachers should endure pedagogical challenges to achieve their career successes. However, extreme challenges can affect teachers' physical and mental health. Factors that lead to teachers resigning from work include stress over extreme workloads, school situations, low salaries, and personal circumstances (Smithers & Robinson, 2003). Contrastingly, teachers are resilient when they have a good personality and

are supported by their families, institutions, and colleagues (Rizqi, 2017). According to Smith et al. (2008), resilience is the ability to resist, recover, adapt and thrive from stress or illness. Moreover, resilience is outcome of a dynamic relationship between individual risk (motive and self-efficacy) and protective factors such as school administration, colleagues, and pupils (Beltman et al., 2011). Teachers differ in levels of resilience because of differences in motive and self-efficacy, and environmental treatment and experience.

Ajatappareng is a Bugis tribal area with many Islamic private schools and 1 or 2 public schools in every district. Funds to build school infrastructure and pay teachers in public schools come from the state while private schools are financed by student's fees. However, most of private Islamic school students are from lower middle-class families hence schools in Bugis area face financial problems. This condition affects teachers' competence, creativity, and resilience in facing pedagogical challenges.

Teachers should adhere to the consistently changing government policies about education. For instance, curriculum and information technology policy in teaching and testing has changed several times. In 78 years, the curriculums changes, include 1947,1952,1964,1968,1975,1984,1994, 2004/competency based, 2006/education unit level curriculum/KTSP, and 2013/K13 (Muhammedi, 2016). Government policy requires teachers to develop ability to design lesson plan, teaching material, method, media, assessment, and evaluation. However, schools need financial support to conduct teacher training and prepare facilities such as language laboratories and computers. According to Boudersa (2016), trainings influences professional development which impacts the quality of student learning. Moreover, teachers need training in designing lesson plans, operating language laboratory, and using technology. If schools have low financial power, teachers work with low salaries and limited teaching facilities to achieve objectives.

Considering schools' and teachers' condition, the research determined (1) the difference of pedagogical challenges between elementary, junior, and senior Islamic school teachers, (2) the difference of resilience between elementary, junior, and senior Islamic school teachers, and (3) the correlation between teachers' pedagogical challenges and teachers' resilience.

Diverse aged learners have differences in the learning process because they differ in cognitive and psychological abilities (Zhao & Morgan, 2004). According to McDonough (2013), adults have more experience and knowledge, hence are responsible and self-directing in learning than children. Moreover, Bastable & Dart (2008), teachers have to consider the differences students physic, cognitive, and psychology maturation level age to avoid confusion, stress, and bored. Therefore, it is difficult for English teachers to accommodate students of different ages and levels.

Method

This study used a quantitative method to collect and analyze data from 57 pedagogical challenges and 39 resilience questionnaires. The samples used were English teachers in 142 Islamic schools in Ajatappareng area in South Sulawesi. Moreover, samples were taken from 51 elementary, 60 juniors high, and 31 senior high schools. Samples were 84 English teachers from 11 elementary schools, 52 junior high schools, and 21 senior high schools. Teachers rated themselves 5-point Likert scale.

Data was analyzed by using descriptive mean score form and inferential statistical analysis. Pedagogical challenges were divided into 3 categories, including low (57 – 133), medium (134 – 209), (high 210 – 285) while resilience had 39 – 92 (low), 92 – 143 (medium), 144 – 195 (high).

Inferential statistic measured research hypothesis while the T-test significance analyzed the differences in pedagogical challenges and resilience between English teachers' groups. If t value is more than 0.05, the H0 is accepted. Pearson correlation analyzed the connection between pedagogical challenge and resilience, and if p value was more than 0.05, H0 was accepted. Positive and negative correlation was stated with -1 to 1 or $-1 \leq r \leq 1$. The strength of correlation was divided into 5 categories, including 0,00 – 0.199 (very low), 0.20 – 0.399 (low), 0.40 – 0.599 (medium), 0.60 – 0.799 (high), 0.80 – 1.000 (very high).

Results and Discussions

Results showed the differences and the correlation between pedagogical challenges and resilience. Pedagogical challenges data covered challenges in lesson plan design, development and teaching materials mastery, methods and media, use of technology, evaluation and assessment, and classroom management. Resilience data covered teacher's ability to deal with unpleasant feelings in facing pedagogical challenges.

Table 1. Mean score of pedagogical challenge and resilience

Variables	Group of teachers	Mean score	Category
Pedagogical challenge	Elementary	164	Medium
	Junior	156	Medium
	Senior	147	Medium
Resilience	Elementary	136	Medium
	Junior	148	High
	Senior	142	Medium

As shown in Table 1 above, the pedagogical challenges of elementary, junior, and senior high school teachers are medium. The mean score indicates that teachers' groups experience similar pedagogical challenges. Comparably, the mean score of resilience shows that elementary and senior high school teachers' resilience is medium while in the junior school is high. Therefore, elementary and senior high school teachers' resilience differs from junior high. The significant difference between the three groups is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Difference of pedagogical challenge between two groups of teachers

Teachers group	Significance level (t value)
Elementary and Junior	0.134
Elementary and Senior	0.136
Junior and Senior	0.717

The table shows that t value is more than 0.05 which indicates that H0 is accepted. Seemingly, there is no pedagogical challenges difference between elementary, junior, and senior Islamic school teachers.

Table 3. Difference of resilience between two groups of teachers

Teachers group	Significance level (t value)
Elementary and Junior	0.147
Elementary and Senior	0.323
Junior and Senior	0.330

The table shows that t value is more than 0.05. It indicates that H0 is accepted. It means that there is no resilience difference between elementary, junior, and senior Islamic school teachers. Table 3 shows that p value 0.395 is more than 0.05, which indicates that H0 is accepted. Therefore, there is no correlation between teachers' pedagogical challenge and resilience. The r value is -0.030 indicating that pedagogical challenge correlate negatively with resilience. The relationship between pedagogical challenges and resilience is indirect such that an increase in one causes a decrease in the other characteristic.

Generally, teachers have similar responsibilities, including designing lesson plan, mastering and preparing teaching materials, media and method, using technology, evaluation and assessment, and managing classrooms. However, they manage students in different age level which implicates diverse language learning characteristics. Children and adults differ in memory, motor skill, social situation,

motivation, and attitude (Suryantari, 2018). According to Hu (2016), children acquire language naturally and effectively while adults learn language faster and efficiently. Moreover, teaching different ages is challenging due to difficulties in classroom management. The findings showed that when teaching English as a foreign language there are similar pedagogical challenges and resilience. Therefore, students' different age levels do not affect teachers' pedagogical challenge and resilience.

Table 3. Correlation between pedagogical challenge and resilience

		Pedagogical challenge	Resilience
Pedagogical challenge	7 Pearson correlation	1	-,030
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.395
	N	83	83
Resilience	Pearson correlation	-,030	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.395	
	N	83	83

Teachers need school facilities, such as textbook, laboratory, computer and media as well as funds to support them achieve objectives. According to Mahmood & Iqbal (2018), the greatest challenge faced by teachers is poor physical facilities. However, if schools lack enough facilities, creative teachers can use all surrounding potency to develop learning. Moreover, there are different perceptions towards facilities and resources in schools (Kolber, 2019). This implies that the importance of school facilities to English teachers in Islamic schools at Ajatappareng area is only perception and not a challenge.

According to the results, pedagogical challenges do not affect resilience because teachers perceive their job as easy. The ability to overcome problems in teaching is affected by qualification, training, experience, and psychology (Khan, 2011). Ghavifekr et al., (2016), established that lack of training and competency is a significant teaching challenge. Also, inexperienced teachers stress over class organization which demands for extra support to face these problems (Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017; Harmsen et al., 2018). Therefore, pedagogical challenge can be successfully handled by teachers with good knowledge, skill, and behavior. Ansari & Pianta (2019) stated that qualification and experience help teachers to student interaction in different age groups. To overcome adversity, individuals need to have a positive view of the nobility and human value of their work. Hong (2012) and Keye & Pidgeon (2013), stated that teachers' resilience is significantly affected by value, self-efficacy, mindfulness and belief.

This study implied that Islamic schools English teachers at Ajatappareng area in South Sulawesi have similar competencies and perceptions. However, ability to apply educational activities is different based on knowledge and experience (Wahono & Chang 2019). Furthermore, experience causes perception differences in professional self and development activities (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015; Basargekar & Singhavi, 2017; Chong & Lu, 2019). According to the study results, similar environmental aspects may cause related perceptions towards challenge. University teachers may have positive perception toward ICT in ELT but different in motivations in using them (Silviyanti & Yusuf, 2015). Haji et al. (2017) established that urban and rural area teachers have different perceptions toward ICT. Conclusively, perception and attitude diversity toward pedagogical challenge is caused by knowledge, teaching experience, and environment.

Teacher relationships formed by schools' status such as state, private, public, or Islamic affects pedagogical challenges and resilience similarities. Statuses cause similarities in policy, curriculum, students' motivation, facilities, salary, teaching conditions and attitude towards shared challenges. Mansfield et al. (2016) stated that relationship contributes to teachers' resilience because groups and communities provide moral and mental support. Moreover, Webb (2018) stated that colleague relationships influence teaching persistence even though it is affected by unrealistic demands. The relationship also improves work success and facing pedagogical changes (Wolgast & Fischer, 2017; Kunnari et al. 2018).

Further research can be developed by using respondents with different experiences in teaching all school levels. However, identifying the differences might be difficult if the individuals teach different levels

simultaneously because that presents different situations, characters, and abilities. Moreover, different research methods need to analyze differences between teachers' pedagogical challenge and resilience.

Conclusions

Different schools' levels have similar strategies for teaching English as a foreign language. However, other researchers showed that student ages affect learning processes and strategies which causes different teaching challenges. According to the results of this research, different age level does not affect teachers' pedagogical challenge and resilience. For instance, the inability to prepare support facilities and funds does not affect teaching objectives. Moreover, a teacher's resilience is affected by value, self-efficacy, belief but not pedagogical challenges.

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