

Training for Elementary School Teachers: Real Steps to Improve Education Quality Based on Mental Resilience

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ABSTRACT

This training aimed to improve the mental resilience of primary school teachers at State Primary School 050661 Kwala Bingai. This activity involved 23 participants, all of whom were teachers at the school. The training consisted of three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The results showed that the training had a positive impact in improving teachers' mental resilience and strengthening the overall quality of education. The participants gained a deeper understanding of resilience, developed practical stress management skills and formed a supportive community that promotes emotional well-being among teachers. The evaluation highlighted that the training provided significant benefits, proving that it is an effective initiative to improve education quality through mental resilience. Given its success, the program deserves to be scaled up and implemented in more primary schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the important pillars in building the future of the nation. In the midst of various increasingly complex global challenges, the quality of education in Indonesia continues to be in the spotlight. Not only in the academic aspect, the quality of education must also include the ability to build character and mental resilience for students (Iksal et al., 2024). One of the keys in realizing quality education is teachers who are able to manage various dynamics in the world of education wisely, professionally, and of course have qualified mental resilience (Aguilar, 2018). In this context, *resilience* is an indispensable competency for a teacher.

Resilience is the ability to survive, recover, and adapt in the face of pressure, stress, and changes that occur in life (Falk et al., 2022). Teachers, as figures who play an important role in shaping children's character and competence, must also have strong mental resilience (Syakhrani & Aslan, 2024). This is because it is not uncommon for a teacher to face various challenges both in the teaching and learning process, dealing with diverse student behavior, and dealing with external pressures such as demands from parents and changing education policies. Without good resilience, a teacher can feel depressed and unable to function optimally (Gregersen et al., 2021).

Resilience training for elementary school teachers is one of the concrete steps that can be taken to strengthen the mental and resilience of educators (Lee & Hancock, 2023). In this training, teachers will be given various strategies and skills to deal with stress, manage emotions, and build a positive mindset in facing every challenge that arises. The ultimate goal is for teachers to be more resilient, flexible and stay focused on educational goals despite stressful situations.

In addition, resilience is also closely related to emotional intelligence. Teachers who have good emotional intelligence are not only able to manage their own feelings, but are also able to read and respond to students' feelings and emotional needs wisely (Gonzales, 2022). Thus, resilience training can help teachers to better understand the emotional dynamics that occur in the classroom, so as to create a more positive and conducive learning environment for student development.

The training also provides an understanding that resilience is not an ability that comes naturally, but something that can be trained and improved over time. Teachers who have good mental resilience are not only able to overcome problems individually, but can also be an example for students to build the same attitude (Shengyao et al., 2024). Through this training, it is hoped that teachers can become figures who inspire students not to give up easily, stay enthusiastic about learning, and overcome challenges in their lives in a healthy and productive way (Nasution & Situmorang, 2024).

In the ever-evolving world of education, teachers are required to be more than just teachers, but they also function as facilitators, guides, and motivators for students (Edge et al., 2017). Therefore,

the ability to remain calm and resilient in the face of various challenges is a much-needed quality. Resilience training is particularly relevant, as it can help teachers manage stress and cope with feelings of distress that may arise due to the high demands of the job (Li, 2023). With a strong mentality, a teacher will more easily face various challenges in carrying out their duties (Yu, 2023).

The importance of resilience training is also reflected in its impact on the overall quality of education. When teachers feel more prepared and able to cope with stress, they can focus more on providing the best education for students (Kim, 2024). In the long run, this will contribute to improving the quality of education in primary schools, where the foundations of student learning and character building begin (Kilag et al., 2023).

As such, resilience training for primary school teachers is not just about self-development but also an important investment in creating a better educational environment. Teachers who have strong mental resilience will be able to have a positive impact on students and society as a whole. In an effort to build a generation that is smart, characterized and resilient in facing challenges, teachers as the frontline in education play a very vital role.

METHODOLOGY

This training was held at SD Negeri 050661 Kwala Bingai. The training activities were held on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, which started at 08.00-16.00 WIB. The participants who participated in this training activity amounted to 23 people who were teachers at SD Negeri 050661 Kwala Bingai. The method of training activities adopts an interactive approach, based on theory and practice, and focuses on strengthening the ability of teachers to build and develop mental resilience. The steps in this training activity are: preparation stage, implementation stage, and evaluation stage.

This training was conducted to equip teachers with resilience skills that not only benefit themselves but also improve the quality of education in primary schools (Manalu et al., 2024). Through an approach based on theory, practice and ongoing support, it is hoped that teachers can be better prepared to face challenges in education and provide quality teaching for future generations.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Resilience Training for Elementary School Teachers: Real Steps in Improving the Quality of Education Based on Mental Resilience" was carried out with the aim of increasing the capacity of teachers in dealing with the emotional and mental challenges they face in managing the classroom and interacting with students. This activity was attended by 23 teachers from SD Negeri 050661 Kwala Bingai. The following steps in the service activity are as follows:

1. Preparation Stage

a. Identify Training Needs

In the preparation stage, the team identified training needs through surveys and interviews with principals and teachers in the target schools. Based on the survey results, the majority of teachers experience stress and fatigue due to high workloads, challenges in managing classes, and pressure to achieve academic targets. In addition, many teachers admitted that they did not have specific skills in managing stress and developing mental resilience.

Based on these findings, this community service training was designed to meet the urgent needs of teachers in terms of stress management and strengthening mental resilience. The training aims to equip teachers with skills that can increase their emotional resilience in the face of pressure, as well as provide them with tools to maintain work-life balance.

b. Preparation of Training Materials and Modules

The training materials are organized based on the principles of positive psychology, with a focus on the concept of resilience and stress management skills. The training modules include:

- 1) An introduction to resilience and its importance in the teaching profession.
- 2) Stress management techniques, including mindfulness, breathing, and cognitive behavioral techniques (CBT).
- 3) Creation of a personal stress management plan for teachers.
- 4) Establishment of a social support network among teachers.

c. Facilitator and Logistics Preparation

The training facilitators are psychologists and educators with experience in mental well-being and character education. Facilitators were also trained on appropriate approaches to engage teachers in interactive discussions, as well as the use of hands-on experiential methods. In addition, training logistics such as venue, equipment (such as stationery and presentation materials), and timing were also carefully prepared to ensure smooth implementation.

The preparation stage of the training is crucial as it ensures that the materials are relevant to teachers' needs and applicable in the context of primary school education. Teachers' need for resilience and stress management skills is clear and careful preparation of materials and selection of facilitators has a major impact on the success of the training.

2. Implementation Stage

a. Training Implementation

This training was held at SD Negeri 050661 Kwala Bingai. Training activities were carried out on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, which began at 08.00-16.00 WIB. There were 23 participants who

participated in this training activity. The activity began with an introduction to the concept of resilience and the importance of mental health in the teaching profession. Furthermore, participants were invited to practice relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness and breathing exercises. In addition, cognitive behavioral techniques (CBT) were introduced to help teachers recognize and replace negative thought patterns that can cause stress.

In the next session, participants were divided into small groups to discuss and share experiences about the challenges they face in their daily work as teachers. Each group was asked to create a personal stress management plan that they can apply in their daily lives.



Figure 1. Participants Again Discussing with Group Teams

b. Interaction and Reinforcement Between Participants

As part of this activity, participants were also given the opportunity to share their experiences and support each other. Group discussions were held to discuss the various challenges teachers face in the classroom and ways they can help each other to overcome these challenges. The formation of these support groups aims to create a social network that can provide emotional and professional support between teachers, even after the training is over.



Figure 2. Group Representative Presenting Reinforcement for Other Participants

c. Feedback from Participants

During the training, the facilitators provided opportunities for participants to provide feedback on the materials taught. Most participants expressed that they found the stress management techniques helpful and felt calmer and more confident in facing the challenges of their profession. They also felt that the community of support that was formed could help them in maintaining their mental well-being at work.

The implementation phase of the training showed very positive results, with participants actively participating in each session. Interactive methods involving hands-on experience and group discussions proved effective in motivating teachers to apply resilience techniques in their lives. The interaction and formation of a community of support among teachers reinforced the idea that teachers' mental wellbeing is not only an individual responsibility, but also part of a larger work culture in the school.

3. Evaluation Stage

a. Evaluation of Knowledge and Application of Techniques

To evaluate the impact of the training, a pre-test was conducted before the training began and a post-test after the training was completed. The evaluation results showed a significant increase in participants' understanding of resilience and stress management techniques. Before the training, 60% of the participants claimed to be unfamiliar with the concept of resilience, while after the training, 90% of the participants felt they understood and were able to identify techniques that could help them maintain mental resilience.

b. Skills Evaluation

Through observation and feedback from the facilitators, it can be seen that most participants have started to apply the techniques learned, such as deep breathing and self-reflection, to manage their daily stress. However, some participants still need further support to be more consistent in applying the techniques.

c. Long-term Evaluation

To ensure the sustainability of the training impact, we conducted a follow-up two months after the training. The *follow-up* results showed that many teachers felt better at managing stress and more able to deal with daily challenges. Some of them also reported an improvement in the quality of their teaching as they felt calmer and more focused in class.

The evaluation phase showed that the training had a significant positive impact, both in terms of increased knowledge and application of skills by participants. The long-term evaluation also confirmed the importance of continued support from the participants to maintain the effectiveness of

the training in the long term. Therefore, this training program can serve as a model for further development on a wider scale.

CONCLUSIONS

The Resilience Training for Elementary School Teachers has had a positive impact on improving teachers' mental resilience and strengthening the quality of education. The training has improved participants' understanding of the concept of resilience, provided them with practical skills to manage stress and established a community of support among teachers that can help maintain their emotional well-being. The evaluation shows that the training provides significant benefits and can be implemented as a concrete step in improving the quality of education based on mental resilience. Therefore, the training is worth expanding and implementing in more primary schools.

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