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Emotion regulation and support mechanism in pre-service English teachers' school-based practicum

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ABSTRACT

The school-based practicum constitutes a critical component of teacher education, affording pre-service teachers authentic pedagogical experiences within actual classroom environments. Notwithstanding the established implementation of the Teaching Practice Program (PLP) in Indonesia, scholarly inquiry into emotion regulation and support mechanisms within this context remains limited. This study therefore seeks to investigate the emotional challenges encountered by pre-service English teachers during their practicum, the strategies they employ to regulate these emotions, and the support mechanisms that facilitate this process. Guided by the following research questions: (1) How do pre-service English teachers regulate their emotions in response to the affective challenges encountered during the school practicum? and (2) What support mechanisms contribute to their emotional management and professional development? the research is theoretically framed by emotion regulation theory, emotional labor theory, and communities of practice theory. A qualitative phenomenological methodology was employed, utilizing semi-structured interviews for data collection. Findings indicate that pre-service teachers frequently experience negative affective states, including anxiety, self-doubt, stress, and frustration. In response, they deploy an array of regulation strategies, such as meticulous planning, cognitive reappraisal, attentional deployment, and situational suppression. The study further highlights the essential function of

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structured support systems, which provide crucial emotional and instrumental assistance through mentorship, constructive feedback, and collaborative engagement.

Keywords: *Emotion regulation; Pre-service English teacher; School-based practicum; Support mechanism*

1. Introduction

School-based practicum is a fundamental and compulsory step of teacher education. This program allows the pre-service teachers to apply pedagogical knowledge and develop specific skills that are relevant to the profession (Song et al., 2025). Practicum provides a real class setting environment for pre-service teachers, which is essential for developing students' knowledge (Wang & Oliver, 2023). School-based practicum has been implemented for several years in Indonesia and is commonly known as PLP (*Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan*) or PPL (*Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan*). While a school-based practicum is designed to prepare pre-service teachers for the real challenges in the classroom, the study has claimed that many enter the field feeling unprepared for the emotional demands of teaching (Antoni & Mustafa, 2024; Aziz et al., 2024; Sajid et al., 2024).

Teaching is one of the most emotionally demanding professions (Huang & Zhou, 2024). However, pre-service teachers are rarely trained to manage the emotional challenges they will inevitably face. Emotions are seen as positive or negative responses to events that people consider to what they are currently working with (Koole et al., 2011).

The ability to regulate emotions is crucial for teachers. Teachers who can manage and maintain their emotions effectively are more likely to have higher job satisfaction, perform better in their teaching, and have healthier psychological well-being (Liu et al., 2024). On the other hand, teachers who cannot regulate their emotions will have a series of issues, such as burnout, dissatisfaction, or ineffective classroom management (McDonald, 1999). Understanding how teachers regulate their emotions can lead to better professional development and identity as a teacher.

This study aims to explore the emotional challenges faced by pre-service English teachers during school practicum, examine their emotion regulation strategies, and identify their support mechanisms. This research addresses the gap from previous research that rarely discusses emotion regulation and support mechanisms in school practice in Indonesia, even though this program has been implemented for many years. Therefore, two research questions were raised: 1) How do pre-service English teachers regulate their emotions in response to the emotional challenges they face during school practicum? 2) What support mechanisms help pre-service English teachers manage their emotions, which can enhance their professional development during the school

practicum? The researchers implement a qualitative study, particularly phenomenology. The participants are pre-service English teachers from Sanata Dharma University.

2. Literature review

2.1. Pre-service English teachers and school-based practicum

Pre-service English teachers are students who are still in the process of acquiring pedagogical knowledge, developing teaching techniques, and gaining practical experience in real classroom settings. During this stage, they tried to balance theoretical understanding with the classroom realities. The school-based practicum is a stage where pre-service teachers implement their pedagogical knowledge and their professional identities through real teaching experiences. Wenger (1988) stated that learning occurs through participation in social communities where individuals engage, share, and reflect on practice. Within the school practicum, pre-service teachers become part of these professional communities, learning the values and emotional expectations of the teaching profession. This shows the crucial role of school-based practicum as a space for the integration of knowledge, emotion, and identity.

2.2. Emotion regulation

Emotion regulation refers to the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience or express these emotions (Gross, 1998). It is very relevant to the educational context, particularly for teachers, because they continuously manage their emotions to maintain effective teaching and positive classroom climates. Hochschild (2012) stated that teachers often perform emotional regulation as part of their professional roles, consciously displaying emotion that aligns with the expectations of the institution they are working for. To explain what kind of emotions teachers experienced, Ekman (1999) explained that there are several basic emotions, such as joy, anger, fear, and sadness, which can shape behavioral response in teaching interactions. Emotion regulation is extremely important, particularly for pre-service teachers in their first teaching experience. There are several previous studies that discuss emotion regulation, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

2.2.1. Emotion regulation in school-based practicum

Several previous studies have discussed teachers' emotion regulation (Taxer & Gross, 2018; Lavy & Eshet, 2018; Chang & Taxer, 2021; Fathi et al., 2021) and students' emotion regulation (Morrish et al., 2018; Pedrini et al., 2022). Although the research in that topic received considerable attention, the amount of research in pre-service teachers, particularly English teachers' emotion regulation, remains limited. Previous studies mostly involved teachers who were already in service, thereby underrepresenting pre-service teachers. In fact, pre-service teachers, due to their lack of systematic learning and

experience in conducting research, may have different or even more complex emotions than teachers who are already in service. Therefore, this research tried to enrich this particular topic.

In previous research, Lestari (2020) Conducted research related to pre-service teachers' emotions during school-based practicum. The result of the study was that there is a shift from negative to positive emotions. However, this study only researched the first stage of the school-based practicum, which is the observation stage (PLP-LS). The author suggested future research to explore the students' emotions on the second stage of the school-based practicum, which is the teaching practicum (PLP-PP). Heng et al. (2024) conducted similar research about pre-service EFL teachers' emotional experiences and regulation in China. The results found that there are a lot of emotional experiences faced by participants, and most of them could not handle really well. However, this research suggested that future studies should also consider the different backgrounds of participants to explore more diverse and in-depth emotional narratives.

Despite the growing body of research on teachers' and students' emotion regulation, studies focusing on pre-service English teachers' emotional regulation during school-based practicum remain limited, particularly in the teaching practicum stage (PLP-PP) and among participants with diverse backgrounds. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring pre-service English teachers' emotion regulation during the teaching practicum stage.

2.3. Support mechanism

Not only does emotion regulation play an important role, but support mechanisms also play a significant role in teachers' professional development, particularly during the school practicum. A support mechanism is any measure that can support teachers' performance in teaching. These mechanisms can be formal or informal and come from various sources. These may include mentoring from supervising/mentor teachers (guru pamong), peer collaboration, emotional support from fellow student teachers, feedback sessions, and institutional support. Such a mechanism helps pre-service teachers navigate emotional and pedagogical challenges during their practicum by providing guidance, affirmation, and opportunities for reflection.

2.3.1. Support mechanism in school-based practicum

Many researchers have explored the area and shown a positive impact on students in their practicum (Rif'attullah & Ciptaningrum, 2024; Abdullah et al., 2020; Wibawanti et al., 2024). The support mechanism is closely related to emotion regulation. It can help pre-service teachers to determine how they cope, learn, and develop their teacher identity in authentic classroom settings. In other similar research, Abdullah et al. (2020) investigated the support mechanism. The main findings of this study revealed three

general themes of mentoring support: cognitive, affective, and social support. These supports cumulatively increase the competence of prospective teachers as future teachers. There is also plenty of research that discusses support mechanisms in education (Abdullah et al., 2020; Shah et al., 2020).

Marav (2022) carefully explored the teaching practicum experiences of pre-service English teachers in Mongolian secondary school. The result showed that the lack of a mentor and support from the school and teachers was considered the crucial problem faced by students. Therefore, only a few studies have deeply examined how support mechanisms and mentor practices affect pre-service English teachers. Kourieos (2019) also conducted similar research about school-based mentoring for pre-service primary English language teachers. The findings showed there are several problems faced by pre-service teacher during their practicum. However, this research suggested the exploration of how and to what extent they support students' participation during teaching practicum. This research tried to fill the gap by exploring the support mechanism and in what way mentors play an important role for pre-service English teachers during their teaching practicum. This topic is also rarely conducted in Indonesia, while the school practicum has become a mandatory subject to finish. This research can give new insight and fill the gap.

3. Method

3.1. Research design

This research implemented qualitative research. Creswell and Creswell (2017) explained that qualitative research is interpretative and naturalistic, meaning the researcher studies people in their natural environment and tries to understand the phenomenon based on the participants' experiences. A phenomenology method was used to get a deeper insight. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), phenomenology is the study that focuses on people's experience of certain phenomena. It focuses on understanding people's lived experiences. This method aims to uncover deep issues affecting students' well-being, allowing researchers to interpret and analyze participants' perspectives, and ultimately enhancing educational practices and addressing challenges faced by students (Bayram et al., 2024).

3.2. Research participants

The research participants were five students from the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) at Sanata Dharma University. The criteria of the participants were first; they had already finished the micro-teaching class and school practicum program. Second, they have actively taught classes (minimum 3 meetings), not just observed or assisted in administrative tasks. To maintain the richness of the data, the researchers decided that the participants should come from different schools to

provide varied perspectives. In this research, informed consent was obtained in written form through the questionnaire and verbally during the interview. To facilitate and ensure the participants' privacy, the researcher decided not to show the participants' names. Instead, the researchers used numerical pseudonyms such as "participant 1 to participant 5."

Table 1
Demography of research participants.

Participant	Age	Gender	School/Institution	Major/Class
Participant 1	20	Male	Private senior high school	x/-
Participant 2	20	Male	Private senior high school	x/IPA & IPS
Participant 3	20	Male	Private junior high school	VII
Participant 4	22	Male	Private senior high school	XI/-
Participant 5	21	Male	Private senior high school	XII/IPS

3.3. Research sampling techniques

From the previous criteria, the researcher employed purposive sampling to choose which students to interview. In purposive sampling, the researcher only interviewed respondents who were most likely to yield relevant experience or information and were willing to share it (Kelly, 2010). This sampling technique was considered appropriate because not all participants possessed sufficient reflection or experience related to the topic of emotion regulation during the teaching practicum. By selecting participants who met specific criteria, the researcher ensured that the data collected would be rich, detailed, and directly aligned with the research focus.

3.3. Data collection

The instruments used to collect the data were questionnaires, interviews, and self-reflection. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to explore the data. The first instrument used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire aims to see the demographics and profile, and then to dig a bit about the participants' experience through open-ended questions. For the interview, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview. This interview promotes flexible conversation, allowing researchers to explore participants' experiences more deeply while still following a structured data approach (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021). To make the interview understandable for participants, the interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. Next, to guide the interviews, the researcher developed a blueprint based on four main theoretical frameworks. Each theory informed specific questions designed to explore participants' experiences in a structured yet flexible manner. Table 2 below presents a simplified version of the interview blueprint.

Table 2
Blueprint of the interview question.

Theoretical basis	Sample question focus	Question number
Ekman's basic human emotions theory (1992)	Identifying core emotional experiences during practicum	1
Gross' emotion regulation theory (1998)	How participants manage their emotions in teaching context	2,3,4,5
Hochschild's emotional labor theory (1983)	How participants display or hide emotions while teaching	4,5
Wenger's communities of practice theory (1988)	Peer collaboration and shared learning in teaching practicum	6,7

3.4. Data analysis

The researcher applied thematic analysis following Creswell and David Creswell (2017) step-by-step procedure. The process began with transcribing the interview recordings into text, aided by Transcribe.ai. After transcription assisted by AI, the author carefully checks to ensure that all verbal nuances, pauses, and emotional tones are accurately recorded, as these elements can provide valuable insights into the emotional experiences of the participants. Subsequently, member checking was conducted by sending the transcripts to the respective participants for confirmation, which aimed to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the transcribed data. After validation, the researcher conducted open coding, categorized the codes into themes, and interpreted the findings using a qualitative analysis tool (QDA Miner Lite). Each emerging theme was then reviewed and refined to ensure internal consistency and alignment with the research questions, allowing the researcher to construct a coherent narrative that reflected the participants' lived experiences and emotional regulation processes.

3.5. Triangulation

Morgan (2024) explained that triangulation helps strengthen the trustworthiness of qualitative research by using multiple methods, allowing researchers to confirm their findings, reduce bias, and improve the study's credibility. This aligns with Noble and Heale (2019), who stated that the combination of two methods, theories, or observers in research can minimize the biases arising. In this research, the researchers decided to use author triangulation to reduce the bias from the authors. Two researchers analyzed and coded the data, then compared and discussed until an agreement was reached.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Emotional experiences

4.1.1. Types of emotions experienced

During the school-based practicum, pre-service English teachers encountered various emotions as they experienced the complexities of a real classroom setting for the first time. The emotions ranged from positive feelings, such as excitement, to negative feelings, which are more dominant, such as nervousness, frustration, stress, self-doubt, and anxiety. Understanding these emotional responses is very crucial. It is an opening gate to the discussion of emotion regulation.

4.1.1.1. Nervousness

From the basic emotion theory by Ekman (1999), participants were found to experience negative emotions such as anger, fear, and sadness. Nervousness is rooted in fear, and it was reported as the most prominent feeling that students experienced during practicum, as all of the participants shared that feeling. It was triggered by various causes, but most likely it is because of the sense of unfamiliarity of standing in front of a real class and being the center of attention. The students reported that such a feeling has an impact on their teaching performance. "When in class, I take longer to prepare the tools. I also stuttered a lot in my introductions; I literally looked so clumsy on the first day." (Participant 2)

The nervousness expressed by participants aligns with previous research highlighting anxiety as a common early emotion among pre-service teachers (Novitasari & Murtafi'ah, 2022; Purwanto et al., 2024) pre-service teachers might experience confusion about their dual identity of being both a student and a teacher, which might cause nervousness and anxiety as they want to make a good impression (Purwanto et al., 2024). Interestingly, the nervousness that they experienced came with excitement as Participant 1 mentioned: "I cannot deny the nervousness, everyone feels that. But I am a bit excited too because it is my first time teaching." (Participant 1)

Despite this, nervousness often diminished over time, as participants became more familiar with the classroom environment and gained confidence through repeated teaching experiences.

4.1.1.2. Self-doubt

Self-doubt is the second emotional feeling that participants feel the most. It came hand in hand with nervousness. This feeling happened when students experienced the reality that managing a classroom was harder than they expected. Challenges in classroom management, lesson planning, and implementation contribute to the feeling of inferiority and self-doubt (Bibi & Aziz, 2024). After that, some of them began to question their own competence and readiness. Participant 2 shared his experience in self-doubt: "I wasn't

afraid of dealing with the students, but I was more afraid that I might not be capable of teaching them. It made me feel less confident about myself." (Participant 2) In line with the Participant 2, Participant 5 shared: "I doubted myself, especially because I was assigned to teach a special class, which is the athletes' class." (Participant 5)

According to Hochschild's (2012) emotional labor theory, this emotional mismatch can lead to exhaustion or emotional strain if not regulated. However, as time went by, some participants began to regulate and reframe their self-doubt as part of the learning process, using it as a motivation to reflect and grow.

4.1.1.3. Stress

Another inevitable emotion that they experienced during the school practicum is stress. Chaplain (2008) stated that the teaching practicum was rated as the most stressful task for pre-service teachers. It is a kind of feeling when students feel burdened with their work. It was caused by various things; most of the participants stated that high expectations, report load, or an unsuitable work environment caused high pressure for them (Maundeni & Kahaka, 2022; Purwanto et al., 2024). It is aligned with Chaplain (2008) who stated that there were three stressors during teaching practicum such as workload, behaviour management, and lack of support. One participant mentioned: "I had to adjust to the school's culture, and I was also expected to embody certain characteristics as a teacher; it gave me a huge burden." (Participant 1) Similarly, Participant 2 highlighted the same point: "Teachers there had high expectations of us; we were told to do this and that, and it made me feel stressed" (Participant 2) Some participants admitted that they were aware of how stress would arise in the teaching practicum, but some of them still struggled to cope with it.

4.1.1.4. Frustration

In addition to stress, many participants also experienced frustration during their school-based practicum. This feeling is rooted in one of the basic emotions by Ekman (1999), which is anger. From the interview, frustration was caused when their expectations or efforts were not met with the desired responses. Besides, the lack of support from the school mentor resulted in pre-service teachers' doubt and frustration (Maundeni & Kahaka, 2022; Purwanto et al., 2024). As participant 1 recalled: "One moment I felt pissed off, I got ignored by my students! I have instructed them, but they just stayed silent" (Participant 1) Having similar experience of frustration, participant 4 added: "I've asked for help from my teacher, but there's been no response! How am I supposed to do the work without her help?" (Participant 4)

Frustration, in this context, often derives from loss of control and unattained goals, which Gross (1998) categorizes as triggers for emotional responses that need regulation.

4.1.2. Emotion regulation strategies

4.1.2.1. Thoughtful planning and preparation as preventive measures

Even though the participants inevitably experienced negative emotional feelings during the practicum, it does not mean that they came unprepared. To minimize their negative emotions, such as nervousness, self-doubt, or stress, they made a very detailed and thoughtful teaching plan. Most of the participants even argued that they are not only prepared for one or two plans, but even three plans to prepare if something goes unexpectedly. Some of the previous studies also believed that careful planning is needed to achieve success in teaching (Emiliasari, 2019; Atkinson & Bregazzi, 2022). Some participants explained about their experiences: "Before my teaching, I already had some plans for certain situations, and I planned it thoughtfully. Even if the situation still does not go as I expected, I have to be ready to make some improvements" (Participant 1) Similarly, Participant 5 highlighted the same point: "I'm a type of professional person, I already have a plan of what I want to do before I do anything, including teaching, and it helps calm my turmoil." (Participant 5)

This strategy is closely related to Gross's (1998) situation modification. Situation modification is an active attempt to change a situation, to alter its emotional impact (Gross, 1998). Students' active efforts to make plans before class can prevent them from possible chaos that can lead to negative emotions. All the participants reported that they shared a similar strategy before starting teaching, using situation modification. Interestingly, this form of regulation extended beyond lesson planning. Besides planning the lesson plan, one of the participants also designed a classroom contract to proactively manage student behavior and minimize potential emotional triggers for him. One of the participants shared his unique way:

> I made a kind of "classroom agreement" so all the class citizens, including me, must obey it. Agreements such as staying silent when other students are speaking, respecting other students' opinions, and many more. It helps me to prevent unnecessary things that can lead to unnecessary emotions. (Participant 4)

Again, even though these strategies did not fully remove negative emotions, they were consistently reported as useful in reducing emotional intensity and building a sense of preparedness, which contributed positively to participants' emotional well-being and classroom confidence.

4.1.2.2. Reframing the stressful moments and negative emotions

Since negative emotion is inevitable and somehow difficult to prevent, some of the participants have their own way of overcoming that emotion. One of the participants stated that changing his way of thinking can help him stabilize his emotions:

> For me, both teachers and students are human beings who have their own responsibilities. Students can also feel nervous when in class. So, it's better to just take care of yourself and not to think too much about how others see you. In this way, you don't get nervous. (Participant 1)

He changed his way of thinking, emphasizing that students may feel nervous, too. He believed that he was not the only one who felt nervous, and that was perfectly fine since both teachers and students were human beings. By doing so, he reduces his internal pressure, and his nervousness is reduced not by suppressing emotions, but by reinterpreting the situation. This strategy is related to Gross's cognitive reappraisal, which involves changing how a person thinks about potentially emotion-eliciting situations to change their emotional impact (Gross, 1998). This strategy is considered an antecedent-focused strategy that is done before the emotion fully arises, by changing the way of thinking about the situation so that the impact of the emotion is reduced (Gross, 1998). For pre-service teachers, such cognitive flexibility allows them to navigate discomfort without denying their emotional reality. It shows that professional self-control can be maintained not only by hiding emotions but also by understanding and accepting them differently.

4.1.2.3. Diverting attention away from emotional triggers

To minimize the negative emotions, most of the participants reported ignoring the source of negative emotions. Similar to the previous strategy, this strategy is considered an antecedent-focused strategy (Gross, 1998). So, the participants implemented this strategy before the negative emotion fully arose. Two participants, for example, shared how ignoring the source of negative emotions helped them regulate their nervousness: “There were some problematic students who were always interrupting my teaching, and they even answered my question randomly. However, I tried to ignore what they were saying, so I didn't have to think about what they said.” (Participant 2) Participant 4 added: “My lecturer scolded me before my teaching assessment during practicum. After that, I tried to minimize contact with her, not only verbal communication but also eye contact. I ignored her.” (Participant 4)

This is one of the emotion regulation strategies by Gross (1998) called attentional deployment. Attentional deployment refers to how individuals distract themselves from the negative emotion to influence their emotions (Gross, 1998). Participant 3 shared: “But when I see that there are some students who still want to pay attention and still want to do the assignment at least, my anger will immediately go.” (Participant 3)

These examples show how participants employed distraction, a subcategory of attentional deployment that shifts attention from aspects of the situation that trigger negative emotions to something more neutral or positive. This can reduce or calm the

participants temporarily and let them reset their emotions. Even though this strategy may not resolve the source of conflict, it was perceived as an effective short-term method for maintaining emotional control and professional composure during practicum.

4.1.2.4. Suppressing emotional expression after emotional arousal

The previous strategies were more preventive, which means they can be done before the negative emotion fully arises. Therefore, sometimes participants feel that negative emotions have overtaken them. When this happens, almost all the participants use the same strategy, which is to suppress their emotions. According to Gross (1998). This can be classified as a response-focused strategy, particularly response modulation. It is when people try to manage emotional expressions or reactions. Participants 1 explained: "I tried my best to control my emotions so they would not explode. I tried to keep smiling and continue the teaching." (Participant 1) Having a similar point of view, Participant 2 added: "When my anger is at an all-time high, I try to sit down, take a deep breath, smile, and then continue the lesson." (Participant 2)

For example, they choose to hold back their expressions or hide their feelings to maintain a professional impression in front of students, mentors, or supervisors. They are knowingly and consciously holding back their emotions, even though it's not good for their mental health. It is also closely related to surface acting by Hochschild (2012) refers to the deliberate display of socially expected emotions that differ from one's internal state. Some of the participants were showing expressions of emotion that did not match what they felt whether stress, anger, or disappointment, by keeping a smile. Participant 1 recalled: "Yes, as a teacher, you have to try to be professional; teachers are role models, like it or not, you must cover your emotions. If I get angry, how can I be a good example for my students?" (Participant 1)

However, some participants admitted that these efforts were not always successful. There were moments when emotions leaked through, such as unintentionally raising their voice or showing less friendly facial expressions. This highlights the emotional strain and internal dissonance involved in suppressing genuine feelings, particularly for novice teachers who are still learning how to manage their emotions in complex social settings.

4.2. Support mechanism

4.2.1. Sources and functions of support

4.2.1.1. Peer support

The most prominent support that all the participants mentioned was peers. Peers act as a confidant or peer listener. Having a peer listener helped participants to release their emotional tension after expressing their negative emotions. They can share the burden together. Having someone to talk to who can relate to the experience can reduce

students' stress and negative emotions. Besides, participants believe that teamwork is also a part of the teaching practicum. Learning is not merely the result of individual cognition but emerges through social interaction (Dillenbourg, 1999). Participant 2 emphasized the important role of peers' interaction: "After class, I always talk with my peers from the same group. We evaluate each other's teaching and give suggestions" (Participant 2)

Beyond emotional support, peers also played an essential role in managing the workload. Participants viewed the teaching practicum not as an individual task, but as a collaborative effort. Working together to complete lesson plans, write reports, and fulfill administrative requirements contributed to a sense of mutual reliance and reduced pressure. These findings reflect Wenger's (1998) concept of Communities of Practice, in which peers form a learning community through shared engagement, goals, and mutual support. This is related to collaborative learning, where two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together (Dillenbourg, 1999). One of the participants added: "We divide the tasks because many things must be done outside of teaching, such as daily pickets, looking after empty classes, and so on." (Participant 1)

Peer support, therefore, functioned on multiple levels, emotionally as a form of regulation through shared empathy, and instrumentally through cooperation and division of labor. It reflects how support mechanisms can indirectly facilitate emotion regulation by lowering emotional strain and fostering a sense of belonging and competence within the practicum setting.

4.2.1.2. Mentor teacher support

Another important source of support identified by participants was the mentor teacher, who is often referred to as *guru pamong*. Based on the interview with the participants, most of them appreciated the presence of mentor teachers as someone who could guide them professionally, emotionally, and contextually through the teaching practicum. In the concept of ZPD, the teacher can be seen as a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) who has a better understanding or higher ability level than the learners (Vygotsky, 1980). Besides peers, the participants argued that a mentor teacher is the person with whom they often interact. Mentor teachers hold a crucial role in reducing anxiety and building participants' confidence during teaching. As participant 4 recalled: "She gave me a lot of constructive feedback, and it really helped me to improve my teaching practice." (Participant 4)

The most important support from a mentor teacher is providing feedback and advice. However, mentor teachers are not only providing pedagogical feedback but also offering emotional reassurance to the participants. This kind of affirmation helped participants to reframe their self-doubt and regulate emotional reactions such as frustration, nervousness, or insecurity. In Gross (1998) cognitive reappraisal, this kind of external affirmation can reinterpret challenging moments as part of development rather

than failure. Participant 4 added: "My mentor teacher told me that it's okay to make mistakes during teaching. That made me feel calmer and not too hard on myself." (Participant 4)

From the interview, it can be concluded that the support of mentor teachers thus served a dual function: practical scaffolding in teaching tasks and emotional anchoring in moments of vulnerability.

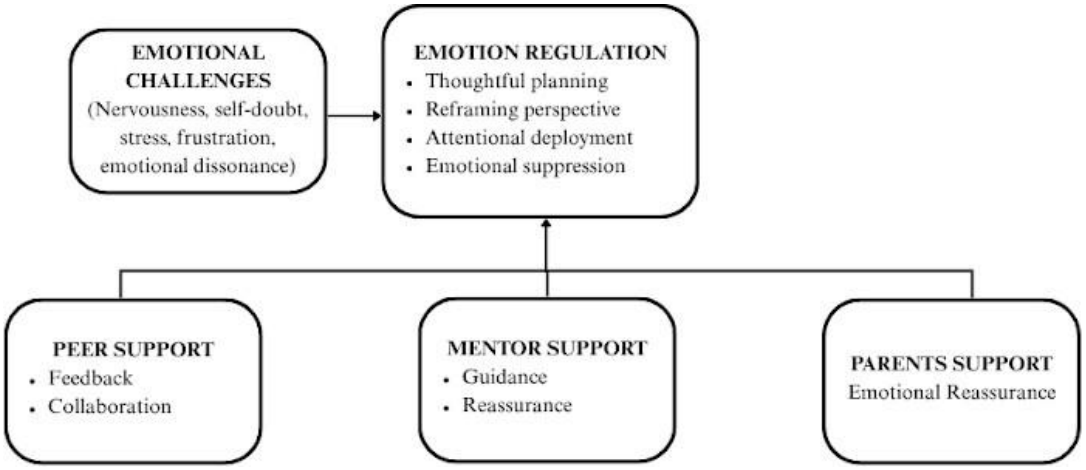
4.2.1.3. Family support

Even though not directly involved in the classroom setting, family members, particularly parents, are important emotional support figures during teaching practicum. Their role was not similar to peers or teacher mentors. Parents did not give any instructional or professional guidance related to teaching but rather provided emotional encouragement, validation, and stability outside the school context. For many participants, family support served as a buffer against stress and emotional exhaustion. One of the participants shared his experience with 'sister', a person whom he considered as his parent. Participant 3 recalled: "I revealed everything to her, in a very straightforward and vulgar way with my language, but despite my harsh language, she was able to understand me and gave me positive affirmations that lifted my spirits." (Participant 3)

From this interview, it can be concluded that family support is often manifested in the form of verbal reassurance, empathetic listening, or simply being present to talk to at the end of a challenging day. This kind of effective support did not solve classroom issues directly, but it contributed to participants' emotional recovery and resilience. Although subtle, this support functioned as an informal yet essential mechanism that enabled participants to continue engaging with the practicum experience without feeling overwhelmed.

4.3. The connection between emotion regulation and support mechanism

The findings of this research indicate that there is a close connection between emotion regulation and support mechanisms during the school-based practicum. While participants employed several emotion regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal or situation modification, their ability to manage emotion was often affected or even enabled by the presence of external support, such as peers, a mentor teacher (guru pamong), or even family members. For instance, peer support was found to reduce emotional intensity by providing safe spaces to share feelings, receive feedback, and validate experiences. The interrelationship between emotion regulation and support mechanisms is described in Picture 1 below.



Picture 1. Connection between emotion regulation and support mechanism

As the picture illustrates, such a supporting social interaction can help facilitate emotion regulation strategies such as reappraisal (Gross, 1998), where negative situations were reframed more positively through conversation. Similarly, mentor teachers' reassurance allowed participants to feel less anxious about making mistakes, indirectly supporting their regulation of nervousness or self-doubt. Meanwhile, family support served as an emotional stabilizer, helping participants release tension after stressful classroom events. This dynamic illustrates that emotion regulation among pre-service teachers is not an isolated cognitive process, but one that is socially situated and relational. This aligns with Wenger (1998), who stated that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon. Learning is not merely the result of individual cognition but emerges through social interaction (Dillenbourg, 1999).

5. Conclusion

This study investigates the emotional challenges encountered by pre-service English teachers during their school practicum, analyzes the emotion regulation strategies they employ, and describes the role of support mechanisms in mitigating these challenges. Findings indicate that negative affective states—including nervousness, self-doubt, stress, and frustration—are pervasive, with nervousness reported unanimously by all participants. In response, participants utilized a range of regulation strategies, most prominently thoughtful planning, which was consistently cited. Additional strategies included cognitive reappraisal, attentional diversion, and the suppression of emotional expression, the latter being identified as particularly difficult to implement due to involuntary emotional leakage.

The analysis further highlights the critical function of interpersonal support systems—including peers, mentor teachers, and family—in facilitating emotional

regulation. Such support manifested through constructive feedback, verbal affirmation, and collaborative teamwork. These results highlight the interconnectedness of intrapersonal regulation and the social dynamics of the practicum environment.

Theoretical implications of this research extend the understanding of teacher emotion through the integrated lenses of Gross's process model of emotion regulation and Hochschild's concept of emotional labor, contributing to broader discourses on professional identity formation in teacher education. Practically, the study emphasizes the necessity of fostering structured, supportive practicum environments that promote both pedagogical competence and emotional resilience.

For future research, it is recommended to extend inquiry to pre-service teachers in other subject disciplines (e.g., Bahasa Indonesia, mathematics) and to employ mixed-method designs, including quantitative measures, to enhance generalizability. Incorporating direct classroom observations could also provide valuable triangulation, enriching the contextual validity of the findings.

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