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"I feel unappreciated because I'm not the real teacher": Understanding pre-service teachers' emotions and Identity

Rahmila Murtiana[1*]
Risdaneva[2]

[1]English Education Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: rahmila.murtiana@uin-antasari.ac.id

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Abstract

This study examines the emotional experiences of pre-service teachers (PSTs) during their teaching practicum and explores how these emotions shape their emerging teacher identities. This narrative study explores the personal stories of five PSTs, each reflecting unique challenges and emotional responses. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews with each participant, analyzed using narrative analysis, and presented as reconstructed stories. The findings reveal that PSTs frequently experience negative emotions such as frustration, anxiety, anger, and a sense of being unappreciated. These emotions arise from student behavior and the challenges associated with classroom management. Positive emotions such as satisfaction and pride also emerge. However, the struggles with self-doubt and feelings of being undervalued were more prevalent. These narratives highlight the crucial role of understanding PSTs' emotions as they navigate into the complexities of teaching practicum. The findings of the study underscore the need for emotional support, collaboration, and guidance to foster resilience and confidence among PSTs, ultimately shaping their sense of teacher identity in positive ways.

Keywords: *Narrative inquiry, pre-service teachers, teacher emotion, teacher identity*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a profession that involves emotions (Hargreaves, 1998). As Schutz et al. (2007, p. 223) stated, "For anyone who has spent time in a classroom, it is clear: the classroom is an emotional place". Scholars have defined teacher emotion in different ways, depending on their theoretical standpoint. From a psychological perspective, emotion is a private, individual, and physiological phenomenon, whereas from a sociocultural perspective, emotion is not only determined by individual characteristics but also by relationships and social contexts (Chen, 2021). Hargreaves (2001) describes teacher emotions as socially or culturally constructed feelings based on human experiences. From this perspective, emotions are shaped within social contexts and how these contexts influence emotional experiences and expressions.

Understanding teacher emotions and various experiences that teachers encounter in the process of teaching and learning is important because teacher emotions can impact their lives, careers, retention, and professional development as teachers (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). However, research on teacher development focuses primarily on cognitive aspects (Chen, 2021), whereas teacher affective side or teacher emotion has not received much attention. In the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), Cowie (2011) noted that the emotional aspect of EFL teachers has been relatively ignored in both initial teacher education and ongoing teacher development, as well as within institutional contexts. This neglect is partly rooted in the assumption that teacher emotion is too complex, difficult to measure (Saric, 2015), and therefore challenging to understand (Zembylas et al., 2011). Emotions are often associated with being feminine (Fried et al., 2015), perceived as irrational, childish, and out of control, in contrast to the characteristics typically expected of a teacher, such as maturity and thoughtfulness (Chen, 2021).

In fact, understanding teacher emotion is important because it can serve as a catalyst for improving teaching and learning (Cowie, 2011), influence teacher wellbeing (Fried et al., 2015), and inform how successful a teacher is in leading their professional life (Lee et al., 2016). It could also provide insights into how teachers feel about themselves and their work, in other words, their professional identity. Hence, there should be some acknowledgment that emotion is a significant element in EFL teaching, and given the limited research on EFL teacher emotion, there is a need to explore this area further.

Several empirical studies on EFL teacher emotions have been conducted in various educational contexts, indicating that teachers experience more negative emotions than positive ones (Chen et al., 2022; Fried et al., 2015). The most common negative emotions are the feelings of stress, fatigue, and burnout. A heavy workload, school culture, and educational policy are among the factors that create negative emotions in teachers. A study conducted at a secondary school in Singapore highlighted the emotional burden experienced by English teachers due to the subject content, the workload of grading and marking students' assignments, and the pressure of high-stakes testing (Loh, 2016). Similarly, Rizqi (2017) found that EFL teachers in an Indonesian junior high school experienced stress because of the curriculum demands.

In addition to instructional responsibilities, teachers' emotions are also influenced by their relationships and interactions with stakeholders at their workplace, including colleagues, school leaders, students, and parents. Since the predominating task of a teacher is teaching in class, teacher emotion mainly pertains to teachers' experiences during teaching and learning and their interactions with students (Frenzel, 2014). A study conducted by Esmaeli et al. (2019) on EFL teachers at a public school in Iran revealed that teachers experienced negative emotions, including anger, anxiety, frustration, and helplessness, due to their lack of skills in classroom management. The teachers fail to establish a good rapport

with the students and are unable to create an atmosphere conducive to student learning. In another study, English teachers from the US who taught at a university in Turkey reported experiencing tension due to the cultural gap and the students' poor manners (Kocabaş-Gedik & Ortaçtepe Hart, 2021).

Emotional experiences are not exclusive to in-service teachers; they also extend to pre-service teachers (PSTs) or student teachers who are still pursuing their studies at a teacher education program. In her study, Mendez Lopez (2020) found that PSTs often experienced negative emotions such as insecurity, frustration, worry, and stress, primarily due to student behavior, attitudes, and their undeveloped teaching skills. In the Indonesian context, Mudra (2018) examined the challenges faced by PSTs during their teaching practicum in rural areas, highlighting their lack of confidence in teaching performance and frustration with classroom management.

While the studies discussed above offered valuable insights into the emotional challenges faced by EFL teachers, including PSTs, they overlooked the connection between these emotional experiences and the construction of teacher identity. To address this gap, this study aims to extend the discussion on EFL teacher emotions by exploring their relationship with teacher identity, specifically through the experiences of PSTs during their teaching practicum. As Trent (2013) argued, teaching practicum is a pivotal stage in the journey of becoming a teacher and provides PSTs with a valuable opportunity to develop their emerging teacher identity. During teaching practicum, especially school-based practicum, PSTs commonly experience a range of positive and negative emotions as they navigate into new experiences (Mendez Lopez, 2020). These emotional experiences play a crucial role in shaping their professional identity and influencing their commitment to a teaching career (Ji et al., 2022).

Recent studies that discuss the interplay between teacher emotion and teacher identity can be found in Song (2021), who investigated the emotional labor and transformation of the identity of ESL teachers in the US, and Chen et al. (2022), who explored the trajectories of student-teachers emotional experiences and the professional identity development of PSTs in a university in China. In the Indonesian setting, Imamyartha et al. (2023) and Isnawati & Rahayu (2023) conducted research on EFL teacher emotional geographies, but their work did not address the relation with identity construction. Considering the limited number of studies that focus on the interplay between PSTs' emotions and their teacher identity, especially in Indonesia, this study aims to fill the gap.

The study aims to address the following research question: 1) What types of teacher emotions do PSTs experience during their teaching practicum? and 2) How do those emotions intertwine with the construction of their teacher identity? Taking a narrative approach, this study aims to contribute to the line of research on teacher emotion and teacher identity by examining the experience of PSTs from Kalimantan, Indonesia. Most existing research on EFL teacher emotion in Indonesia has employed descriptive qualitative and case study approaches (e.g., Imamyartha et al., 2023; Limeranto & Kuswandono, 2023; Rizqi, 2017), focusing on teachers from the Java region and overlooking diverse geographical and institutional contexts. By exploring the experiences of PSTs teaching in *madrasah* (Islamic school) settings in Kalimantan, this study offers a more nuanced perspective of EFL teacher emotion in different regions in Indonesia through a different methodological lens. It also contributes to a broader understanding of teacher development across varied educational settings. The details of the methodology are explained in the next section.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research approach

This study adopted a qualitative approach, specifically narrative inquiry, to explore the pre-service teachers' experiences during teaching practicum that affect their emotions and how the emotions intertwine with the construction of their teacher identity. In a narrative inquiry, the researcher explored and analyzed lived experiences through the participants' stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This approach is based on the idea that people make sense of their lives through narratives, and the researchers seek to understand how individuals construct meaning by collecting and interpreting their stories (Polkinghorne, 1995; Riessman, 2008). The key features of narrative inquiry include temporal dimension, contextual understanding, and co-construction of meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This approach is suitable for this study because it enabled an in-depth understanding of the pre-service teachers' experiences during the teaching practicum and the various range of emotions they felt. Through stories, participants can voice their thoughts, feelings, and emotions about what they have experienced. Stories can also reveal individuals' identities (Barkhuizen et al., 2013).

Participants and Context

The data presented in this article were drawn from a larger-scale doctoral study by the first author on the identity of EFL beginning teachers conducted from 2021 to 2024. The participants of this study had already graduated from their teacher education program in Kalimantan when the data were collected. The stories they shared regarding the practicum teaching were part of their teaching journey as beginning teachers. Due to the limitation of paper length in this journal, this article only reported their narratives of the teaching practicum, focusing on the emotional experience and its relation to their identity construction.

Criterion-based sampling was employed as a method for selecting the participants. This method allowed the researcher to select the participants based on specific attributes or criteria that align with the research objectives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The participants were recruited through the snowball sampling technique. The initial stage of participant recruitment was conducted by distributing research invitations via social media platforms, including Instagram and WhatsApp. Colleagues also assisted by sharing the invitation with potential candidates. The invitation provided brief information about the study, the participant criteria, and the Consent Form, which the participants had to sign if they agreed to participate. Initially, two participants responded and agreed to take part in the study. These participants then referred peers who also met the criteria and helped disseminate the invitation further. In the original study, 15 participants were involved. However, this article focuses on five participants whose narratives were most relevant to the research questions and aims outlined in the introduction.

The following table presents the demographic data of the participants. For ethical considerations, the participants' names were listed as pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

Table 1. The participants' demographic data

No.	Pseudonym	Gender	Teaching practicum placement
1	Abdi	Male	MA (Madrasah Aliyah) grade 10, 11
2	Fadly	Male	MTs (Madrasah Tsanawiyah) grade 7, 8, 9
3	Khair	Male	MTs (Madrasah Tsanawiyah) grade 7, 8, 9
4	Meli	Female	MA (Madrasah Aliyah) grade 10, 11, 12
5	Tika	Female	MA (Madrasah Aliyah) grade 10

Data collection

The data were obtained from one-on-one, in-depth interviews with each participant. The type of interview used in this study was a narrative interview, which differs from other types of qualitative interviews in terms of its structure and purpose. The structure of a narrative interview contains a chronological dimension and configuration of the plot (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000), so it has elements of tensions, conflicts, significant moments, and resolution, as in a story integrated into the interviewing structure.

Prior to the interviews, a semi-structured interview protocol was prepared as guidance. The interview questions included prompts asking participants about their first teaching experiences, including stories of their first day of teaching and the challenges they encountered. The participants were encouraged to tell their stories in detail, and based on their responses, the researcher asked follow-up questions to obtain more in-depth information. The interview questions were in English, accompanied by Indonesian translations to accommodate the participants' language preferences. This approach acknowledged that language choice could influence how participants expressed themselves or positioned themselves in relation to the researcher (Barkhuizen et al., 2013). It turned out that all the participants preferred to tell their stories in Indonesian, and some even mixed it with their local languages. The interviews were conducted via the Zoom platform, which is widely used in research and familiar to the participants. It was also convenient due to its recording feature so that the researchers did not need external tools to record the interviews.

Given that interviews served as the primary data collection method, we employed data triangulation by conducting multiple interviews to enhance the validity of the findings. Each participant was interviewed three times throughout the study. The first interview focused on establishing rapport and gathering background information. The second and third interviews provided opportunities to explore emerging themes in greater depth. These follow-up interviews served as member checking, allowing the researcher to confirm and clarify responses from previous sessions, thereby strengthening the consistency and trustworthiness of the data (Patton, 2002).

Data analysis

The data analysis procedures began by transcribing the interviews. Since the responses were in Indonesian, the transcription results also had to be translated into English. All the procedures were conducted manually. Although it was time-consuming, this method was beneficial for a narrative researcher to familiarise themselves with the data and ensure its accuracy. During the process of transcribing and translation, the researcher can also take notes on initial thoughts about the participants' stories and highlight the important parts.

Literature on narrative inquiry suggests various strategies for analyzing data. Polkinghorne (1995) divided the techniques of analysis into *analysis of narratives* and *narrative*

analysis. *Analysis of narratives* is often referred to as paradigmatic analysis, in which the researcher identifies common categories and themes across the participants' stories. Meanwhile, in *narrative analysis*, each participant's stories are presented as a single, detached story, and the experiences were not necessarily the same across the participants.

In narrative analysis, researchers need to familiarize themselves with the structure and content of narratives by reading and rereading the transcripts (Gibbs, 2018). This process involves focusing on one participant's transcript before moving to the next participant (Saldana, 2016). This method was more manageable and appropriate to get a holistic understanding of specific participants' narratives rather than trying to find the themes across several participants simultaneously. In this study, narrative analysis is used, and the results of analysis, that is, the experiences of individual participants, are presented in the form of restoring or reconstruction of stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The stories told by the participants often appeared not in sequence, so the role of the researcher was to create a plot or a meaningful story from the disordered experience (Riessman, 2012).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Following narrative analysis, the results of this study were presented in the form of individual stories of the participants. Each story entails the types of emotions experienced by the participants during the teaching practicum. Their stories also reflected how they viewed themselves as a pre-service teacher, or in other words, their teacher identity.

Abdi: "I was not appreciated"

Abdi came from a family of traders and initially did not intend to take up an English major or become an English teacher. During high school, he almost failed his English class because of his low score in English. However, he was determined to improve his English skills and prove to his English teacher that he was eventually able to master English. After graduating from high school, Abdi finally enrolled in an English teacher education program at an Islamic university.

Abdi undertook his teaching practicum at *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic high school). He considered himself confident and did not feel nervous during his teaching practicum because he was used to speaking and delivering speeches in front of the public. However, when he was teaching, he found implementing the lesson plan to be a significant challenge. He had not anticipated the students' low language proficiency, which made the lesson that he had planned not run smoothly. In addition, Abdi struggled with classroom management. Many students displayed poor behavior and showed a lack of respect toward him as a teacher. Reflecting on these difficulties, Abdi explained:

> *My students at the teaching practicum were rather rude because the school was located in an area known for its rough people. They were just rude and impolite. They sometimes came late. I wanted to rebuke them, but I felt uneasy. Because I heard there was an incident, some students were rebuked, but then they brought their father to school. And the father got mad at the teacher.*"

Abdi also felt annoyed with the students who frequently left the class without permission.

> "*Sometimes during the class, if the students wanted to go out, they just went out. For example, they wanted to go to the cafeteria; they just went out and didn't return. I felt like I was not being appreciated because I was just a newcomer teacher.*"

In his story, Abdi expressed his downhearted and frustrated feelings as a PST. In dealing with his students' attitude, Abdi tried to discuss it with the cooperating teacher at the school. However, the teachers at school also appeared to have difficulties in disciplining the students.

Fadly: "I was really nervous"

Fadly was born and grew up in a small village. As a student, Fadly did not have an interest in English. However, his high school English teacher kept encouraging him about the prestige of being able to speak English. Fadly finally chose English teacher education as his major at the university.

During his teaching practicum, Fadly was placed at *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic middle school), where he was assigned to teach grades 7, 8, and 9. He recalled feeling overwhelmed with nervousness as he entered the classroom for the first time. As a result, he forgot some of the steps he had designed in his lesson plan.

> *"I was really nervous for the first time. I taught ninth grade. I was really nervous. Even while I was taking their attendance, I was already sweating. I was also nervous when explaining the material. And one of the students said, 'Sir, don't be nervous'." But I was really under pressure. I really felt under pressure because it was my first time teaching. I felt like I wasn't ready to teach that day [laugh]. After that, the cooperating teacher commented, 'I understand,' she said. "It's your first time to teach. Just relax. Don't take it as a burden," she said. But because it was the first time, what I had prepared just disappeared from my mind. My cooperating teacher kept motivating me. "Take it easy," she said. She gave a suggestion, 'Just relax. Just assume these students are your own friends.'*

Besides being nervous and not remembering his lesson plans, Fadly also faced some challenges with classroom management, especially with the ninth-grade students, who were very noisy and difficult to control

> *"When I taught for teaching practicum, the students were really hard to handle. It was hard to discipline them. Eight graders and seventh graders were okay, but ninth graders were all naughty. When I asked them to be quiet, they didn't listen. I could only take a deep breath and kept saying to myself: 'Be patient. Be patient.' I remember one of my friends, who also taught ninth graders, hitting the table when she entered the class. Only that could make them become quiet. When I asked the teachers at school, they said it was really the students' nature. They couldn't be controlled. Even there were some teachers who didn't want to enter that class. Because the students were difficult to control."*

Fadly's experience of being very nervous in class and his struggle to control the students' behavior occurred at the early stage of his teaching practicum. After a few weeks of practice, Fadly stated that he was able to make progress and improve his teaching. It was mostly because he was supported and guided by the cooperating teacher at the school. From observing the cooperating teacher, Fadly learned how the teacher approached and handled the students. Eventually, Fadly's teaching began to improve, and his feelings changed from being nervous to confident and proud.

> *"I felt proud when I knew that I was appreciated. When the students liked me. I felt like - this is how the feeling is. This is the feeling of being a teacher. Also, I was proud when the students were able to answer and understand the material. When they could do the tasks and when they could answer well, so they got high scores. I asked them, 'Was the material easy?' They said, 'not because the material was easy, but because your explanation was easy to understand.'"*

Fadly felt an increasing confidence when he was finally able to deliver the instruction successfully. Toward the end of his teaching practicum, Fadly received a gift from his students. Fadly shared his experience in the following interview excerpts:

> *"During the farewell party, I got a letter from the students. And a box. I asked, 'What's this?' They said, 'Just open it, sir'. I opened it. It was a watch. 'Why did you give me a watch?' I asked. 'Because you didn't have a watch. When you were teaching, you often passed the hour,' said the students. 'Why we give you a watch, so you can always wear it, and you'll remember us.'"*

This gift symbolized the appreciation of the students toward Fadly as he became better at teaching.

Khair: "I got angry"

Khair came from a small town in South Kalimantan. In the interview, he shared that as a teenager, he frequently changed his mind about what he wanted to be. In high school, he was thinking of majoring in Chemistry at university. However, he was accepted into an English teacher education program. As it turned out, he enjoyed studying English, and his skills in English improved significantly during his studies.

Khair completed his teaching practicum at *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic middle school), where he taught students from grades 7 to 9. For him, the biggest challenge was managing students he perceived as aggressive. He found their behavior toward him inappropriate, leaving him feeling shocked and unsettled.

> *"I was teaching the seventh grade. The students were around 28-30 people. The school could be considered a favorite school. The students came from wealthy families – you could tell from the expensive stuff they brought and their gadgets. They were very aggressive, so it was a shock for me. Their character, in my opinion, was very different from my experience when I was their age. They tried to get my personal information. They wanted to know my Instagram. Because I was a new teacher and still young, they were quite interested. Well, I don't know how to explain it, but they were very hyperactive and talkative, and that caught me off guard because it was beyond my expectation."*

The situation became even more uncomfortable for Khair when the students began crossing his personal boundaries.

> *"They were also annoying and too much. They asked questions that weren't appropriate. One day, I got angry because when I was explaining something, all of a sudden, a student asked, "Sir, are you single?" I was like, "Hey!". They might be joking, but to me, it was offensive. I mean, they crossed the privacy between students and teachers."*

Khair expected that students at an Islamic school would behave politely and nicely toward the teachers because he assumed that they had been taught about good manners based on Islamic norms. Khair said in the interview that singing and birthday celebrations were not allowed because it was not in line with Islamic teaching. However, on the other hand, students' attitudes toward him as a teacher appeared to be out of control. Khair perceived it occurred because of the influence of social media.

> *"There were some students in the class who said that singing on our birthday was prohibited. When someone had a birthday, and I said, 'Oh, happy birthday,' and started to sing, they said, 'Oh, that's haram.' I was like, 'Oh, okay' [laughs]. The school was not that strict, but some of the people were very rigid. There were some teachers who did not allow male teachers to shake*

hands with female students.

So, it felt quite contradictory, like birthday celebrations were not allowed based on their beliefs, but in contrast, they'd intrude on your privacy. Toward their teacher, they were aggressive, hyperactive, and forcing to know private things about me. Well, I guess that's typical teenage behavior. They got influence from social media, how they act, behave, or react to something. For me, it's not a matter of respect for the teacher, but they were just too active and too much. They asked questions which were not appropriate, and I didn't even know how to answer wisely."

When Khair was no longer able to handle the situation in the class, he would go to the cooperating teacher at the school and ask for her advice.

"Luckily, during teaching practicum, I was quite close with the cooperating teacher, so I usually talked to her, asking why it was like this. If the students were beyond my control and I couldn't handle the things myself, the cooperating teacher would step in. After the students calmed down or were reprimanded by the cooperating teacher, it became easier to start the lesson and deliver the material."

Meli: "I really didn't know what to do."

Meli liked English lessons since high school, but she also loved Math. When she was applying for university, she was confused between choosing a Math major or an English major. Then her father recommended her to choose English with the reason that English teachers would have more employment opportunities.

During teaching practicum, Meli was placed at *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic high school), where she taught students from grades 10 to 12. As a student teacher, she discovered that applying teaching theories in practice was more challenging than she had expected. The biggest obstacle she faced was getting students' attention during lessons, especially because many of them showed little interest in learning English.

"At first, I was really confused. I had learned so much at university, but it turned out that applying it in class was not easy. When I asked the students in class, 'Do you love English?' they answered, 'No…we don't like it' [laughs]. *I didn't have the ability to control the students. The class was so noisy – really, really noisy. Everyone was talking. Some of the students didn't show respect to the teacher, and I really didn't know what to do. Getting the students' attention was so difficult."*

Meli also expressed her frustration because she did not know how to engage the students in the lesson and keep them interested in her explanations. Although she had studied a range of teaching methods at the university, putting the theory into practice was not as easy as she thought.

"I felt so stressed to teach. I kept thinking, 'Why are the students like this? Why won't they pay attention? How can I stop them from being noisy?' I felt like maybe the factor was from myself. I wasn't able to control the class because I lacked experience. I was still awkward around the students in the class because they were older teenagers. I tried some methods. I invited them to play games. Some students were enthusiastic, but others – whatever game I played, they just didn't care. They had no motivation at all. It was tough. I tried various methods, playing games, using songs, but still, they weren't interested."

Tika: "I feel unappreciated because I'm not the real teacher."

Initially, when she graduated from high school, Tika wanted to study medicine and

become a doctor. However, she failed the university entrance test. She passed the test into an English major instead and forced herself to study in the program. After one semester, she began to enjoy learning English and realized that being a teacher was similar to being a doctor in terms of sharing and caring for others.

Tika completed her teaching practicum at *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic high school). The school was quite big and had large classes, which became a challenge for Tika to manage the class. In her interview, Tika shared the difficulties she encountered.

> *"I taught the 10th grade. There were a lot of students in my class. When I first introduced myself, the students ignored me. When I was explaining the material, the students at the back were busy talking with each other. Many of them didn't pay attention to the teacher. It was a shock for me. There were also students who skipped class or slept in the class. Maybe because I'm still a young teacher, a student teacher, so they didn't respect me. I feel unappreciated because I'm not the real teacher."*

Furthermore, Tika explained that she had tried to find some methods to get the students' attention and to make the students participate actively in class.

> *"I wanted to use the CLT method. CLT was student-centered, and I expected it would be more fun. But I failed. I wanted the students to be active, but they just weren't. They were busy doing other tasks. They were distracted by other assignments from other subjects. Also, when I was teaching, there were also some students who were busy with their phones, texting or scrolling during the lesson."*

Managing student behavior was another challenge. Tika found that her attempts to discipline or motivate the students did not work.

> *"If I tried to reprimand them, they talked back. When I was explaining something, and there was a student who didn't focus, I'd call out his name and ask questions. But he didn't respond. He was just flat. Or if I asked the students to come to the front, they would not do it unless they were threatened, like, 'If you don't do the work, your score will be low.' Or they should be given a reward. Unless I said that I would increase their score, they would not be active. Without that, no one would volunteer. It was so difficult."*

Tika's experience showed how hard it can be for a new teacher to manage a class, gain students' respect, and keep them interested.

In the next section, the PSTs' experiences are discussed within the broader context of teacher emotion and teacher identity theories.

Discussion

Frustration, as defined by Morris & King (2018), is a low-level negative feeling that arises when individuals are prevented from achieving goals or changing undesirable situations. This emotion was evident in the narratives of Abdi and Tika, where their goals to gain student respect and manage the classroom were undermined by both student misbehavior and a lack of institutional regulation**.** Abdi faced some students who were extremely rude. Tika similarly struggled with students who did not take her role seriously. These cases demonstrate what Cowie (2011) terms goal obstruction – a key source of teacher frustration.

This frustration was not limited to classroom dynamics. Both participants also pointed to a lack of institutional support, specifically the passive role of cooperating teachers

who failed to provide adequate guidance. These combined factors align with the findings from previous research showing that classroom challenges and limited support from colleagues are principal sources of teacher frustration (Cowie, 2011; Morris & King, 2018). Importantly, this emotion reveals a deeper conflict between the PSTs' ideal teacher identity and the limited control they actually have in the classroom.

The second type of emotion experienced by the participants was anxiety, particularly in relation to classroom performance and self-evaluation. Li et al. (2023) describe teacher anxiety as the feelings of tension, apprehension, and nervousness that teachers may experience in relation to their teaching responsibilities. Fadly's nervousness on the first day of teaching practicum reflects what Li et al. (2023) identify as fear of negative evaluation and lack of teaching experience, which are the core dimensions of PSTs' anxiety.

Meanwhile, Meli and Tika did not talk explicitly about their anxiety, but their reflections revealed their concerns about their capabilities in delivering the materials and controlling student behavior. Meli, in particular, questioned whether her own shortcomings led to student disengagement, asking: "*Maybe the factor was from me. I wasn't able to control the class.*" Such attribution of failure illustrates what Zembylas (2003) refers to as emotionally embedded identity work, where teachers interpret emotional responses as evidence of professional incompetence.

Compared with experienced teachers, who often have more stable self-concepts and coping mechanisms, PSTs are especially vulnerable to anxiety due to their emerging professional identities and lack of classroom authority (Liu & Wu, 2021). Anxiety thus functions not only as a reaction to specific challenges but also as an emotional experience that can influence how PSTs grow as teachers. It can either hold them back or push them to improve, depending on the support they receive.

The third emotion that emerged among the participants in this study was anger. Burić & Frenzel (2019) define teacher anger as an unpleasant feeling that is typically described using terms such as "angry," "annoyed," or "enraged." Anger is an instinctive reaction to circumstances where a person feels offended or wronged, which is usually activated by external factors such as injustice, humiliation, or physical conditions (Deng et al., 2022). It is a powerful emotion that is sometimes hard to control. Some potential stimuli of teacher anger include uncooperative colleagues, parents' misbehavior (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003), blocked academic goals, and students' inappropriate manners (Sutton, 2007), as well as educational policies and school organizations (Burić & Frenzel, 2019). Teacher anger is not only triggered by students' attitudes but also by their colleagues, parents, and the educational system (Deng et al., 2022).

In this study, Khair expressed anger toward students who invaded his personal boundaries, while Abdi recalled his emotional struggle with disrespectful students. However, both participants chose to suppress their anger and report the incidents to cooperating teachers. This aligns with Deng et al.'s (2022) argument that teacher anger should be controlled because anger is often associated with aggressiveness and may lead to detrimental effects. Holding back their anger might help PSTs cope for a while, but it can also lead to emotional exhaustion and identity dissonance if PSTs feel they cannot act in accordance with their sense of authority. In this case, anger isn't just a feeling—it becomes part of the emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983) as teachers try to stay true to themselves while still following the rules in schools where their role is not fully respected.

Besides negative emotions, PSTs in this study also experienced moments of positive emotions during teaching practicum. The positive emotions are happiness, satisfaction, and

pride. These emotions, while less frequently reported, played a significant role in affirming the PSTs' developing sense of professional identity. According to Frenzel (2014), pride is associated with the personal accomplishments or success of the individuals with whom one feels emotionally connected (Frenzel, 2014). This was evident in Fadly's narrative, where he described feeling proud and happy when students appreciated his teaching and complimented the clarity of his instruction. Such experiences served as emotional validations that enhanced his perception of teaching competence. These findings resonate with Mendez Lopez's (2020) research, where teachers expressed pride when students followed instructions successfully and engaged positively with the lesson. Positive emotions here are central to the identity-building process, offering teachers emotional confirmation of their evolving roles.

A recent study conducted by Jalilzadeh et al. (2024) identified broader sources of teacher positive emotions such as interpersonal work-relationship with colleagues, relationship with students, and good income from the institution. The participants in their study were in-service teachers who already established their teaching careers. Meanwhile, in this study, the participants were PSTs who had no permanent roles, so their emotional rewards were derived primarily from student engagement and feedback. This distinction suggests that interpersonal classroom dynamics serve as a meaningful source of teacher positive emotion.

These emotional experiences, both positive and negative, can be seen as integral to the process of teacher identity construction, which, as Block (2015) argues, is continually shaped by social interaction and the tasks of teaching. The data in this study clearly support this theoretical position. PSTs' narratives reflected not only the challenges of enacting pedagogical knowledge in real classrooms but also how emotional responses to those challenges shaped their evolving self-conceptions. For example, Meli's doubts about her classroom control and Fadly's nervousness illustrate the struggle to implement theories into practice. These experiences are best understood through the lens of self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997) and the emotional dimensions of teacher identity (Zembylas, 2003). As PSTs who just stepped into the field, both Meli and Fadly had limited ideas to improvise their instruction. This situation created a feeling of low confidence and decreased self-efficacy, which affected their professional identity (Canrinus et al., 2011).

Moreover, recognition and respect from students emerged as critical factors in shaping PSTs' identity. Abdi and Tika felt disrespected because their status was only a student teacher, not a 'real' English teacher. Meanwhile, Khair was annoyed at the students' inappropriate behavior. For Khair, it was important that although his status was still a PST, the students should pay respect to the teacher. This echoes the idea in Mendez Lopez (2020) that appreciation is essential for PSTs to develop a confident and coherent teacher identity. Conversely, Fadly's experience of receiving appreciation from his students shows how positive emotion can reinforce a PST's self-concept as a capable teacher. As Teng (2017) suggests, recognition and appreciation can stimulate PSTs to internalize their professional role and reconstruct their identity.

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the types of emotions experienced by pre-service teachers (PSTs) during teaching practicum and how their emotions intertwined with the construction of teacher identity. Five PSTs in this study expressed their feelings of frustration and a lack of appreciation due to students' disrespectful behavior, overwhelming nervousness in applying theoretical knowledge into practice, and feelings of being undervalued because of their status as student teachers. The narratives of these PSTs illustrate the emotional complexities they encountered during their teaching practicum. Their experiences highlight the struggles PSTs face in managing classrooms, handling emotions, and establishing authority. Their stories

also reflect their evolving teacher identities – caught between being students themselves and stepping into the role of professional teachers.

Although the findings are unique in their own context and cannot be generalized to other teaching contexts, this study offers rich insights into the importance of understanding teacher emotion and how it affects the identity construction of PSTs. These findings emphasize the need for emotional support, stronger mentorship, and practical training to help PSTs navigate the transition from student to teacher with confidence. Teacher education programs, particularly in Indonesia, should consider integrating training on emotional regulation and resilience into the curriculum. Additionally, providing opportunities for reflective practice, such as guided discussions or emotion journals, can help PSTs process their experiences and strengthen their professional identity.

Several avenues for future research emerge from the limitations of this study. First, given that data collection relied solely on interviews conducted within a short timeframe, future studies could adopt a more comprehensive approach by incorporating diverse data collection methods such as reflective journals, diaries, classroom observations, or visual narratives through photovoice. Second, a longitudinal study tracking participants as they transition into full-time teaching would provide valuable insights into how their emotions and teacher identities evolve over time. Such research could identify key factors influencing these changes, offering a deeper understanding of the long-term emotional and professional development of novice teachers.

Further studies could also focus on a specific teacher's emotions, such as anxiety or worries, and their impact on teacher well-being. This area remains underexplored, particularly within the context of EFL teaching. Additionally, investigating teachers' strategies for emotional regulation and resilience—particularly from the perspective of experienced educators from various settings—could offer meaningful contributions to the field of EFL teacher education. Exploring these strategies would enhance our understanding of how teachers navigate emotional challenges and construct their professional identity over time.

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