Perspectives of Lecturers on Emergency Remote Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Tertiary Education Institutions in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

*This **descriptive qualitative study explores lecturers' perspectives on Emergency** Remote Teaching (ERT) in New Zealand Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Through in-depth semi-structured interviews with the five purposively selected lecturers from four TEIs, this article investigates the challenges and opportunities lecturers experienced in teaching during the pandemic. While the findings showed some opportunities that include enhanced flexibility, teacher creativity, and saving commute time to the workplace, they also demonstrate that the pandemic created three significant challenges of (i) socio-psychological, (ii) technological, and (iii) pedagogical nature. This study recommends that TEIs need to develop a crisis management action plan to mitigate teaching-learning difficulties in a similar kind of situation in the future. Additionally, TEIs could benefit by upskilling their lecturers and students to use digital literacy and virtual teaching and learning.*

Keywords: Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), tertiary education, COVID-19, online teaching

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization declared a global pandemic on 11 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak (WHO, 2020) and recommended preventive measures to break the transmission chain of the coronavirus across the world. The first case of COVID-19 in New Zealand was reported on 28 February 2020 (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2020). The government of New Zealand introduced a four-tiered alert level system on 21 March 2020. The Prime Minister (PM) announced that the nation was at COVID- 19 alert level 4, and a state of national emergency on 25 March (PM announcement, 23 March 2020). The PM enforced that all education services requiring face-to-face contact be suspended immediately, advising to shift as much delivery as possible online to allow staff to work from home and reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus. Auckland was

in lockdown longer than other parts of New Zealand due to the community transmission of COVID virus.

Several countries, including New Zealand, considered lockdown the best option to prevent the spreading of the virus (Lorenza & Carter, 2020; Martelli, 2020; UNESCO, 2021; WHO, 2020). Despite implementing prevention strategies, the pandemic hit every aspect of human life, including education. As a result, the pandemic created a learning crisis worldwide. Higher education institutions globally, including New Zealand Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs), were either shut down or switched to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), hybrid teaching or online learning modes during the pandemic (MoE, 2020). Lecturers were forced to prepare and adjust to the emergency remote teaching mode, and TEIs started providing academic staff with the support required to deliver online instruction (e.g., workshops on how to facilitate curriculum content through virtual or online). Similarly, the Ministry of Education suggested that all New Zealand TEIs use alternative approaches to continue teaching and learning activities (MoE, 2020, 2022). Therefore, TEIs used a wide range of emergency approaches to continue teaching-learning activities. They started various modes of teaching that included distance, blended, and online teaching through synchronous and asynchronous modes to facilitate learning during COVID-19 (ERO, 2021).

Prior to COVID-19, Ayebi-Arthur (2017) investigated resilience with e-learning in response to the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes in New Zealand. Similarly, Tull et al. (2017) reported on the effectiveness of the professional development practices supporting shifting from face-to-face training to online communities of practice during the earthquake in 2011. These emergency crises induced teaching and learning modes became essential tools for TEIs to upgrade their face-to-face teaching by adopting an ERT approach to teaching learning and following hygiene practices. The ERT approach to teaching and learning due to COVID-19 pandemic is different to well-planned hybrid teaching prior to COVID-19 because lectures did not have sufficient times, favourable environment, sufficient resources to design and deliver the course.

Although online and distance forms of education had occurred in New Zealand since around 1922 (Bewley, 1996), they were limited to specific courses before 2020 in the contexts where the current study was conducted. In this study, research participants reported that they did not teach all courses through blended learning mode prior to COVID-19 pandemic. This suggests that New Zealand TEIs were forced to use an entirely online teaching mode only after the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite having significant pieces of literature about faculty perspectives on using ERT during the COVID-19 pandemic across Europe and the United States (Cameron-Standerford et al., 2020; Erlam et al., 2021; Gamage et al., 2020; Marshall et al., 2020; Pather et al., 2020), there is a limited study **conducted regarding lecturers' perspectives on the use of ERT in the New Zealand** tertiary education context. Against this backdrop, the main aim of this research project was to explore the perspectives and the ways tertiary-level lecturers managed to use ERT during the pandemic. In order to achieve this purpose, the following research questions were formulated.

- How did the lecturers in New Zealand TEIs perceive the use of ERT during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What challenges and opportunities did lecturers face in using ERT?

In the following section, I will review the existing literature, followed by methodology, findings, discussions, and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies (Chan, et al., 2021; Ferri et al., 2020; Whittle et al., 2020) have reported that COVID-19 created a tidal wave of disruption to higher education globally. According to the UNESCO (2021) report, more than 1.6 billion students were affected worldwide. Higher education institutions were forced to adopt remote teaching during the pandemic. A substantial body of literature has demonstrated the impact COVID-19 has had on human beings globally, with educational institutions being no exception (Whittle et al., 2020). Most of them signal how people working in different fields responded to the immediate threats posed to them, how they attempted to recover from those threats, and reimagined their personal and professional lives. However, this research focuses mainly on the literature associated with TEIs in the Australasian context, as they share a similar foundation of structures and distribution of resources as is common here in New Zealand.

Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) during COVID-19

Educationists, teachers, and policymakers believe that ERT can be used to continue teaching and learning activities in a pandemic situation where face-to-face teaching is impossible (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020). ERT refers to teaching which takes place using technologies to teach students remotely to mitigate learning loss in an emergency situation. In other words, ERT denotes the use of technological resources [e.g., online conferencing, electronic platforms to access resources, and non-internet-based technologies (e.g., radio, television)] to continue learning. If students and teachers are not able to come to school or university physically for the teaching and learning, ERT will allow them to continue teaching and learning activities.

Lockdowns, educational institutions closures, social distancing, and isolation measures were put in place to control the spread of the coronavirus. As a result, schools enacted ERT with technological support as a mode of instruction to continue teaching and learning activities as part of a crisis response protocol (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020). Without having appropriate infrastructure support such as hardware, computers, laptops, software, internet connectivity, and digital resources, it is very difficult to facilitate teaching and learning activities through ERT to meet the learning needs of all students (Thompson & Copeland, 2020).

Several researchers (Chan, Bista, & Allen, 2021; Houlden & Veletsianos, 2020; Whittle et al., 2020; Wang & East, 2020) have stated that the COVID-19 crisis accelerated emergency remote teaching, online teaching, and virtual teaching without providing sufficient professional development opportunities for lecturers to modify their usual teaching-learning approaches. As a result, teachers often encounter problems with the skills and knowledge to facilitate online and

remote teaching (Dhawan, 2020). In the specific context of New Zealand, although tertiary education providers have been facilitating teaching and learning through distance education for many years (Erlam et al., 2021), COVID-19 required the expansion and advancement of this process.

Modes of Delivery to Facilitate ERT

Several countries have adopted different approaches to facilitate ERT during the pandemic (Chan, Bista, & Allen, 2021; Erlam et al., 2021). Some countries applied mixed delivery modes, including face-to-face and online teaching, to minimise a learning crisis. For instance, New Zealand adopted a combined approach, using two television channels to deliver educational content, integrated with an internet delivery and a hard-copy curriculum resource (Ministry of Education, 2020). Non-internet-based technologies (e.g., radio, telephone, and television) and internet-based technologies (e.g., Zoom meetings, Teams meetings, email, Microsoft 365, Google, Learning Management System, and social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and Viber) were also used to deliver instruction during the pandemic.

Challenges and Opportunities of ERT during the Pandemic

While the government of New Zealand has put in place policies, technological infrastructures, and digital resources to facilitate ERT in TEIs (Erlam et al., 2021; ERO, 2021), challenges continued to exist to implementing ERT due to a lack of sufficient resources and inconsistencies in connectivity and accessibility issues (Brown et al., 2021; Flack et al., 2020; Lorenza & Carter, 2020, Wang & East, 2020).

Flack et al. (2020) conducted a comprehensive study and explored the educator perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in Australia and New Zealand, including 3,500 primary and secondary teachers from government and non-government schools. Most teachers in this study believed that students would require additional instructional support to facilitate their learning. Participants also stated that social isolation reduced the well-being of the students, negatively affecting their learning potential. Similarly, Lorenza and Carter (2020) conducted a study on Emergency Online Teaching (EOT) during the pandemic to explore the impact of EOT on undergraduate students in two Australian universities. Their findings indicated that pedagogy had to adjust for online teaching and learning activities. Likewise, Erlam et al. (2021) studied the experiences of an ERT in university teaching and learning during the pandemic at a New Zealand university. Miscommunication from the university, concerns about student access to technology, lack of digital competence, and difficulty in spending much time on screens, finding a quiet workplace, managing work hours, and work-life balance were reported as challenges. However, enhanced flexibility, enhanced teacher creativity, increased learner autonomy, and reduced commute time were reported as some of the benefits of remote teaching. Teachers in his study recognised that the crucial components, such as a passion for work, digital skills, and confidence to move to a successful transition, were negatively impacted by the pandemic (Erlam et al., 2021). In line with these research findings, Pather et al. (2020) highlighted the stress digital technologies created associated with family time and work imbalance during online teaching,

contributing to fatigue and easy burnout among teaching faculty and other university staff members.

Wang and East (2020), on the other hand, reported the factors influencing to design of the Chinese curriculum for a campus-based Chinese language course in a New Zealand university during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors highlighted the complexities of contextual factors to delivering the course. **Particularly, social, technological, financial, students' engagement and** organisational factors were hindering factors to deliver the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

Lecturers' and Students' Socio-psychological Issues

Several studies stated that COVID-**19 adversely impacted lecturers' and students'** social, physical, and mental health (Buckley Flack et al., 2020; Cao et al., 2020; Muzi et al., 2021; Odriozola-Gonzalez et al., 2020). These studies reveal that the pandemic has significant adverse effects on the socio-physio-psychological aspects of human beings such as frustrations, worries, anxieties, and stresses. Lecturers and students were no exception to these effects. Buckley Flack et al. (2020) stated that social isolation, well-being, and loss of learning potential were major concerns for New Zealand and Australian school teachers. Social and physical distancing have adversely impacted on aspects of their socio-emotional state (Drane et al., 2020; ERO, 2021) due to the stressful situations created by the pandemic. As a result, students and teachers reported declining mental and social well-being because they missed their friends, relatives, and co-workers (Mishra et al., 2020). Thapaliya et al. (2023) found that the COVID-19 directly impacted lecturers' social-physical and psychological health. As consequences, students and teachers required personal counselling on reducing stress and anxieties (Thapaliya et al., 2023).

Collaboration and Networking

Collaboration and networking were considered essential among higher education institutions during the pandemic crisis as they are likely to support higher education institutions economically and educationally. Despite a range of other issues (**e.g., the relationship between teachers and students and students'** engagement with ERT), available literature demonstrates that online delivery strengthens collaboration, cooperation, communication, and co-construction of new knowledge with academia in the world (Hartnett et al., 2021). As discussed by Erlam et al. (2021), collaboration with international scholars significantly **supported faculty members of New Zealand's TEIs during the pandemic.**

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this study was to investigate u**niversity lecturers' perspectives** and experiences regarding using ERT during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to achieve this purpose, this research adopted a qualitative phenomenological design by exploring the understanding of the essence of lived experiences of lecturers regarding ERT during the pandemic (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2016). To obtain in-depth information regarding the

phenomenon, this study conducted in-depth interviews with five participating lecturers (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Semi-structured and open-ended in-depth interviews (Morris, 2015; Tasker & Cisneroz, 2019) were used to gather data that helped understand the lived experiences of faculty associated with ERT issues (Taylor et al., 2016). As Flick (2018) suggests, an information sheet detailing their participation, research process, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time and consent forms were sent out to the participants for approval, and signed-off consent forms were collected electronically before conducting interviews. As maintaining the confidentiality of the research participants is essential (Christians, 2007), pseudonyms have been used throughout the paper. Interviews were conducted **online to understand lecturers' perspectives regarding E**mergency Remote Teaching (ERT) during the COVID-19 pandemic between January and March 2022 via Zoom, which lasted from 30 to 45 minutes. With permission from the participants, all the interviews were recorded for transcription and analysis.

Research Participants and Settings

This research recruited five purposively selected (Campbell et al., 2020) university lecturers from TEIs in New Zealand as research participants to generate rich and in-depth information (Patton, 2015). Initially, invitation emails were sent to 20 lecturers throughout New Zealand TEIs who met the research criteria, and only eight lecturers were interested in participating in this study. Finally, five participants with a range of experiences from two public universities and two private education providers were recruited based on the purpose of this study. All the participants in this study had taught and designed higher education courses in different subject areas, including health care, sociology, postgraduate research, early childhood education, and initial teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data were gathered using one-on-one personal interviews online via Zoom meetings. Table 1 presents participant names[1], qualifications, and teaching experience.

Participant Name	Qualification	Teaching Experience
Peter	Ph.D.(Education)	20 years
John	Ph.D. (Health Science)	10 years
Marina	Ph.D. (Social work)	5 years
Rabina	Master of Psychology	3 years
Tina	Ph.D. (Education)	12 years

Table 1: *Demographic Information of Research Participants*

Semi-structured in-depth Interview

The semi-structured in-depth interview was used to collect data. Using semi-structured in-depth interviews helped the researcher to establish rapport with research participants, understand issues, and obtain enough information on a

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[1] Participant names are pseudonyms to protect their identity.

phenomenon of interest (Taylor et al., 2016). Specifically, the following questions were used as guiding questions in interviews:

- **What were the lecturers' perspectives on using Emergency Remote** Teaching in Tertiary Education Institutions during the pandemic crisis?
- What were the challenges and opportunities using ERT experienced by lecturers?
- What kinds of digital devices did lecturers use to facilitate their teaching and learning activities?
- **How would they explain students' interest and motivation regarding the** use of ERT in teaching and learning activities?

Data Analysis

Data were thematically analysed through a phenomenological reduction process (Creely, 2018; Neubauer et al., 2019) by reducing the information into the various constituent parts of the phenomenon being investigated. Afterward, the thematic analysis involved organising and breaking data into manageable units and synthesising them. Six phases of the recursive process of thematic analysis were used to analyse data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These phases include familiarising with data, creating codes, finding initial themes, reviewing and developing themes, refining, defining, naming, and writing up. Detailed analysis and the accompanying story of each theme were presented. Each data narration was considered how it fitted with the themes and sub-themes. An in-depth analysis of individual themes was made based on the research questions. The research quality and rigour were maintained by asking further questions to the participants where required and collecting information until data saturation **(Creswell &. Guettterman, 2019). Using verbatim quotes from the participants'** interviews, descriptions of their experiences were created under the phenomenological data analysis tradition (Creely, 2018; Groenewald, 2004; Neubauer e**t al., 2019). Participants' voices have been presented in the first**-person narrative to maintain validity, and their perspectives and lived experiences have been summarised in terms of using ERT during the pandemic. Three broad themes emerged from the data, including the use of technological devices to facilitate ERT, the opportunities of ERT, and the challenges of ERT. Each theme has been discussed in the following section.

FINDINGS

Three core themes emerged from the data: Use of technology to facilitate ERT; Opportunities of ERT; and Challenges of ERT. The latter theme included three perspectives: (i) socio-psychological; (ii) technological; and (iii) pedagogical.

Use of Technology to Facilitate ERT

Findings of this study indicated that the participants used multiple technological resources, such as online conferencing, electronic platforms to access to resources, computer-assisted learning applications, as well as non-internet-based technologies, including radio and television, to continue teaching and learning. Computers, laptops, iPads, mobile phones, and video recorders through various

software and computer programs/applications were also used to design, develop, and facilitate teaching and learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some participants also reported that they employed a hybrid model (online and face-to-face) to deliver lessons. Marina, stated:

> ...prior to COVID-19, I did not have online teaching experience ... during COVID-19, usually, I facilitate courses in a hybrid manner, which means I have some students on campus, and some of them come online (e.g., Zoom meetings) ... sometimes I also provide recorded webinars for them to watch at their convenience if they cannot make classes...

This is supported by John. He explains:

> I facilitate my courses in a hybrid way prior to COVID-19 ... I did not find any difficulties during COVID-19 ... so I tried to adapt my teaching to maximise the participation of both my domestic and international students, using different digital platforms ... Zoom meetings, blogging, vlogging, YouTube, television programmes in TVNZ and TED Talks...

The responses from these participants indicated that they mostly used digital platforms, including blogs, vlogs, Zoom meetings, and YouTube, to deliver lessons to students during the COVID-19 pandemic. This finding suggested that lecturers at TEIs in New Zealand facilitated their teaching and learning activities by using technological platforms to avoid possible learning disruptions during the pandemic. Although Marina only facilitated teaching and learning activities through an ERT approach (e.g., Zoom meetings; webinars) during COVID-19, she did not express any difficulties to teach students. Peter had a similar experience even though he facilitated teaching and learning activities though a hybrid approach prior to the pandemic. He stated that he used different ERT modes to deliver instruction during the pandemic. He used both non-internet-based technologies (e.g., television programme) and internet-based technologies such as Teams meetings, email, Microsoft 365, and Learning Management Systems (e.g., Moodle).

Opportunities of ERT

Collaboration, peer support, networking, and job flexibility were highlighted by research participants as the main benefits of working remotely during the pandemic. Collaborating and networking among co-workers enabled them to pick up new abilities from their peers and other educators. In discussing those opportunities, Tina offered the following comments:

> ...opportunity for me to build up a network from local to global ... I connected with faculties from Australia, Fiji, and the United Kingdom. For example, I invited a guest lecturer from Australia to lecture on 'how to support people with mental health issues during a pandemic' for my undergraduate students...

Her remarks suggested that she networked with other academics while hosting foreign guest speakers to share their expertise and experiences with her students. Rabina concurs when she said, "I cooperated and discussed with lecturer and the course coordinator before drafting and designing lesson plans for remote teaching, which provided me with the ability to share my teaching materials with my colleagues on virtual platforms".

Additionally, Marina perceived that online teaching was flexible for herself and her students. "My students may study from their homes, and students can revisit the session if they do not comprehend the course contents in their own time. Moreover, I have flexibility while creating instructional resources," she explains**. Peter and Tina also concurred. "We can work from home", they added, "saving time in getting to work". "I adore how adaptable online instruction is and** how involved the chat room and breakout rooms are with the students. You (researcher) and I would not conduct this conversation over Zoom meetings unless there were no pandemics," said Tina. According to their remarks, students participated in teaching and learning activities, receive flexible work hours, and save time commuting during online instruction. Considering this study participants' observations, it can be inferred that despite their social and geographic isolation during the pandemic, there were some benefits from the online instruction model. At the same time, it not only provided them with the opportunity but also encouraged to network with local and international colleagues, academics, and researchers. John stated,

> Due to COVID-19, I got opportunities to collaborate with local and global researchers in my field, health science ... I invited guest lecturers from Australia, Canada and Ghana to facilitate a class entitled "how to assist patients with dementia in care home during COVID-19" to my students. Guest lecturers accepted my request and facilitated classes for my students ... If there is no COVID-19, I may not get an opportunity for collaboration with academics globally...

John's comments signal that he got opportunities to collaborate with lecturers from Australia, Canada and Ghana due to COVID-19. He used academia to share their ideas and knowledge with his students. As a result, he and his students had the opportunity to co-construct new knowledge in his subject.

Participants in the study also emphasised that they could obtain new skills and information through online instruction. Peter elucidated:

> Digital technologies were a type of creative instrument ... I did all I could to deliver the course material effectively to students during the **lockdown ... I used a little whiteboard and a pen and using my phone** to film my lecture videos...

According to Peter's comments, his cell phone and a little whiteboard at home innovatively supported him in delivering lessons online. He used them to acquire new abilities and to create new information for his classes.

Challenges of ERT

Despite the part**icipants' claims that employing technology in their emergency** remote teaching session has been beneficial, they also admitted encountering

several challenges. The challenges of employing ERT are discussed in the following subsections.

Socio-psychological Challenges
Findings indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted both lecturers' and students' time management and well-being while conducting teaching-learning activities online. Participants stated that they adhered to the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines for online programmes when they were instructing. However, most participants claimed that delivering course information through online education requires a longer time. According to Peter, "online teaching involves much time for resource preparation ... need to work weekends to complete a task". Rabina corroborates that "it is challenging to manage time when I facilitate remote teaching from home ... because I am responsible for my two children who are doing home-schooling".

These comments suggest that the pandemic seemed to have a significant influence on the lecturers' personal and professional lives. The lecturers' obligations to their families prevented them from concentrating fully on their job.

Participants also reported that students appeared to be worried about their mental health, future degree, career progression, and financial pressures, as most of them lost their jobs because of the pandemic. This is evident when Marina states, "...around twenty students neither submit their assignments on time nor attend online classes regularly ... When I inquired, they mentioned that they were not feeling well ...". Marina's comments highlighted students' increased pressures, health issues, and anxiety during the pandemic. John supported Marina's views when he recalled one of his students saying, "... I have not paid four weeks' rent sir yet to my landlord because I lost my job due to COVID-19 ... how can I focus on study if I am unable to manage my regular expenses?". According to John's statement, his student might not have enough income to cover living bills and other costs. Tina concurs with this when she recounts the tales of her students: "It has been incredibly challenging trying to balance working remotely, education, kids, and home-schooling ... I burnout because I am doing four jobs at once". Rabina and Peter agreed with this. The tale of Rabina's students has been replicated: "... students are occasionally indolent and daydreaming during online instruction. I must follow up on each student's academic and behavioural concerns". Peter also narrates his student's story in the following way:

> Some students (e.g., school teachers) must deliver their courses
> online. They, therefore, struggle with it. They acknowledged
> experiencing issues getting in touch with their students and running
> their online courses. They must simultaneously take care of their
> family, including their children.

These remarks suggest that COVID-19 significantly impacted students' well-being, mental health, and engagement with online learning.

Technological Challenges

Despite emphasising the advantages of employing digital technologies to facilitate online lessons, the research participants encounter specific technological difficulties.

The difficulty lecturers experienced in relation to a shortage of resources is typical at tertiary education institutions during the pandemic. These include network sustainability, support for online instruction, technical difficulties, and access to necessary software applications. Peter relates the experiences of his students. Some students, he argues, "have connectivity and speed difficulties with **the internet". He further maintained that during the pandemic, one of his** students needed to move his apartment, being without internet access for six **weeks. "He missed out on opportunities to learn". These sentiments expressed by** the participants elucidate that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, their students enjoyed participating in online learning; however, complications associated with internet access and other technical difficulties prevented them from learning opportunities.

Additionally, lecturers highlighted that some students were returning to their home countries with limited or mediocre internet connection and were spread out across different time zones. Similar issues involving accessibility, connection, and dependability of internet networks exist in rural New Zealand (Pather et al., 2020). However, another difficulty in establishing online education is ensuring reliable internet **access. "Internet speed is slow", says Rabina. The** remarks made by Tina and Marina, are identical to Rabina's. These remarks make it evident that inadequate internet connectivity is one of the challenges in Emergency Remote Teaching instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pedagogical Challenges

Although lecturers in New Zealand's higher education institutions have adopted blended forms of instruction since the 2000s (Erlam et al., 2021), research participants in this study claimed that they encountered pedagogical difficulties when teaching remotely during the COVID-19 outbreak. Many participants reported that they needed additional time to prepare the course material. John reflected on his experiences. He stated,

> **... we were instructed to switch on to E**RT mode without any prior **training and preparation ... the institution decided that** all the **lecturers had to completely deliver their teaching to online mode ... it** happened in very short period of time. This created a significant challenge for me and my teaching strategies...

John's comments demonstrate his frustration about the abrupt decision by his institution was made to shift his entire teaching to online mode. This could mean that lecturers are not always physically, mentally, technologically, and pedagogically ready to deliver lessons remotely due to the unrealistic pressures associated with time for preparation.

Additionally, the necessity for increased professional learning and development (PLD) for ERT during the pandemic crisis was mentioned by the participants. As a result, lecturers believed that transitioning to and incorporating remote education was challenging because of the limited PLD **regarding ERT. "The TEIs provided some workshops for lecturers on how to**

administer online assessments for students, especially for those who had large classes with 200–**300 students, but I say professional development, not much",** according to Rabina. Peter had a similar experience when he said, "I do not believe the institution has provided lecturers with professional development **training for ERT". It may be inferred from the remarks made by the research** participants above that lecturers did not have sufficient PLD in emergency remote teaching to cater for their demands.

Another significant challenge, according to the respondents, was administering digital assessments. Tina commented: "… it is challenging to conduct an online assessment since it is challenging to maintain students' integrity. I discovered that pupils plagiarised web resources and the work of their **peers". Marina agrees with this point when she clarifies, "…the use of an e-**assessment did not always result in success … students' answers on the answer sheet, in my experience, do not accurately reflect their real knowledge; instead, they can cheat by using other sources (e.g., online)". The observations of these participants indicated a worry over the originality of students' academic work since students sought assistance from peers or outside sources to complete their tasks. This might imply that there may have been plagiarism and ethical **misconduct on online tests and students' assignments.**

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated lecturers' perspectives on ERT in New Zealand TEIs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings highlighted that lecturers experienced opportunities and challenges while using remote instruction to facilitate teaching and learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. It was evident **across the participants that the pandemic substantially influenced both lecturers'** and stu**dents' teaching and learning activities because of their socio**-physical, mental, and psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with earlier research studies (Cao et al., 2020; Ferriet al., 2020; Goyal et al., 2020; Odriozola-Gonzalez et al., 2020; Pather et al., 2020; Wang & East, 2020). This research also demonstrated that the lecturers integrated a range of technologies, and adapted their pedagogy and curricula in their ERT during the pandemic, which is consistent with other studies, such as Chan et al. (2021), and Flack et al. (2020). Erlam et al. (2021), and Martelli (2020) reported how academia integrated their pedagogical and technological knowledge in remote and online teaching during the COVID-19 crisis.

In line with Pather et al. (2021), the findings of this study reveal that the pandemic provided lecturers with opportunities for networking and collaboration with other academics to co-create knowledge locally and worldwide. The research highlights how working online benefits students and faculty members because of the flexibility of time and place (Dhawan, 2020; Lorenza & Carter, 2020). The outcomes of this research further demonstrate that remote teaching is a quick but problematic to fix. Moving emergency remote teaching to online instruction has been a hasty reaction to a crisis rather than carefully thought out and prepared online learning and teaching (Hartnett et al., 2021; Hodges et al., 2020). The findings further reveal that working from home hurts both work time and family time because of the prolonged working hours. It validates what Erlam et al. (2021)

reported: working from home may exacerbate tensions between work and family obligations. This is further supported by Joseph & Trinick, (2021), who shared their narrative on how they had to rapidly move from face-to-face teaching to online (cloud network) teaching and learning during the emergency situation. They highlighted key challenges and opportunities they faced regarding student participation and engagement, teaching and learning, and well-being, some of which have been also reported by participants of this study in the New Zealand context.

This research also demonstrates that lecturers have favourable sentiments toward remote teaching in virtual classrooms. Despite having positive attitudes towards distance learning, they acknowledged that some difficulties would make it necessary to integrate online learning during the pandemic completely. A shortage of required equipment, particularly digital devices, fast and reliable technical assistance and high-speed internet access, were some to mention (Erlam et al., 2021; Pather et al., 2020; Thapaliya et al., 2023). Similarly, inadequate professional development opportunities regarding the use of technology are another barrier to using online education (Album & Ahmed, 2015; Hamel et al., 2013), as research participants acknowledged the need for professional development training to adopt online teaching efficiently. Moreover, in line with the findings by Erlam et al. (2021), Martelli (2020), and Pather et al. (2020), all the research participants demonstrated their concern regarding **assessment, particularly when they revealed their worry towards students'** integrity and originality of their academic work.

In conclusion, this research examined lecturers' perspectives on using Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) in New Zealand Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) during the COVID-19 crisis. As the research demonstrated, research participants have opportunities and challenges in their personal, professional, and social aspects. While employing ERT in their virtual classrooms, they faced pedagogical challenges and difficulties associated with resources. However, they remained committed to expanding their professional responsibility, integrity, collaboration, and networking with academics locally and globally.

Based on the study's findings, it can be recommended that to assist teaching and learning in a similar situation requiring ERT (e.g., Cyclone Gabrielle) in New Zealand, tertiary education providers and the New Zealand government should prepare a viable and efficient crisis management action plan to minimise possible complications and facilitate student learning. Educational institutions need to understand the crisis management education policy and how to serve students during disruption.

The crisis management action plan should clearly indicate how TEIs provide social-psychology support processes for lecturers and students during emergency situations. In order to teach remotely during a crisis, New Zealand tertiary education providers and associated authorities need to offer sufficient resources and training of ERT to lecturers and students, to equip lecturers to efficiently and effectively prepare resources and execute teaching and learning activities virtually in a similar situation in the future. Specific actions and preparations that can be suggested based on this research study and the literature reviewed are:

- ensure that all teaching and learning materials are available online in principle to allow quicker transition to ERT;
- up-skill lectures and students in digital tools and how to teach effectively during ERT situations;
- plan how to provide IT Infrastructure support during a crisis;
- provide sufficient resources (e.g., laptops or other relevant devices) to staff and students;
- offer free counselling services for teaching and non-teaching staff, students, and parents.

Suggestions for future research

This study is limited to a qualitative case study of five lecturers who worked at four tertiary education institutions in New Zealand. The findings of this article may not be necessarily generalisable, although the findings could be validated by using quantitative tools for a large-scale study. Additionally, any further research will help gain in-depth ideas about lecturers' perspectives on using technology-mediated pedagogical practices if data are collected from online classroom teaching.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

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