


Chapter 2


Crisis–Responsive Education: Integrating Blended Learning Models Through Agile Management Practices

Rismawati Rismawati

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8046-6764>


*Universitas Muhammadiyah Palopo,
Indonesia*

Salju Salju

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2908-9470>


*Universitas Muhammadiyah Palopo,
Indonesia*

Rusdiana Junaid

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9653-1812>


*Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo,
Indonesia*

Supriadi Supriadi

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7194-9456>

*Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo,
Indonesia*

I. Nyoman Darmayasa

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6341-6909>

Politeknik Negeri Bali, Indonesia

Javaid Ahmad Wagay

Kashmir University, India

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the incorporation of agile management principles into blended learning frameworks as a strategic reaction to educational disruptions in crisis situations. Utilizing case studies from the Global South, including Mauritius, Indonesia, Kenya, and the Caribbean, it underscores how adaptable, inclusive, and feedback-oriented strategies can improve educational resilience. The chapters analyze theoretical foundations, policy innovations, and exemplary practices to illustrate how governments, educators, and development partners may together design systems that adapt and prosper in times of crisis. Agile blended learning represents a

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technology transformation and a model of collaborative governance, educational equity, and localized innovation. This volume offers a thorough guide for developing future-ready education systems that cater to all learners in uncertain times, utilizing visual frameworks, strategic roadmaps, and proactive recommendations

FOUNDATIONS OF CRISIS-RESPONSIVE EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

1.1 The Nature of Educational Crises: From Natural Disasters to Pandemics

Global educational systems have consistently faced disruptions due to various crises, including natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and storms, as well as public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic (Chatzipanagiotou & Katsarou, 2023; Maqsood et al. 2021; Rahimi & Oh, 2024). These crises reveal systemic weaknesses, underscoring the fragility of conventional educational delivery models that depend significantly on in-person instruction and centralized infrastructure. In small island developing states (SIDS) like Mauritius, the effects of such interruptions are frequently exacerbated by geographic isolation, restricted access to digital infrastructure, and reliance on physical educational institutions. Educational crises impede academic continuity and exacerbate existing inequities, especially for underprivileged groups without digital access and socio-economic resources.

An educational crisis is generally defined by its abrupt emergence, inadequate readiness, and the pressing requirement for continuation strategies (Bartusevičienė et al., 2021; (Seetal et al., 2021). These characteristics require swift decision-making, institutional adaptability, and the capacity to modify instructional delivery techniques. The sudden closing of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 compelled education ministries globally to implement emergency remote teaching models. The efficacy of these strategies was markedly inconsistent, dependent on local governance capabilities, teacher digital proficiency, and infrastructure preparedness. The pandemic highlighted the necessity of proactive crisis-responsive systems that incorporate resilience as a fundamental component of educational design (Chatzipanagiotou & Katsarou, 2023; Müller et al. 2025; Wang et al. 2025).

Blended learning models have arisen as a vital solution in these circumstances, providing adaptable mixtures of online and offline education that may be customized to situational requirements (Kumar et al. 2021; Singh et al., 2021). However, their effectiveness relies not only on technical implementation but also on the adaptability of educational governance. Agile management practices—defined by iterative

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