

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES FOR TEACHER SELF-REGULATION

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Abstract: The article examines the manifestations of teachers' emotional regulation strategies and the psychological functions that influence the selection of different strategies. The study involved 30 teachers from various faculties with diverse academic backgrounds. The study showed that among traditional teachers, emotional suppression predominates in age-related changes, whereas among modern teachers, cognitive appraisal is dominant. It is not academic experience, but rather the demands of the new educational environment that lead teachers to choose more adaptive strategies for managing their emotions. The study shows that as age increases, emotional self-regulation strategies also change. There is a correlation among teachers' use of cognitive strategy, extraversion, and expressive suppression. According to the typology, the correlation between extraversion and cognitive strategy is more significant than that with expressive suppression ($p=0.001$). Cognitive reappraisal is positively correlated with extraversion, agreeableness, is positively correlated with extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, and at the same time, expressive suppression is negatively correlated with neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience.

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Introduction

The rise of social-psychological problems associated with changing values among young people in education necessitates viewing modern education from a new perspective. This also requires teachers to reconsider their emotional strategies when approaching students (Jabbarov, 2021). From this perspective, the problem of emotional regulation is one of the most important psychological and pedagogical issues relevant to personal and professional development. In the “person-to-person” system of relationships, significant psychological stresses in professional activity contribute to the development of professional stress, mental fatigue, and behavioral disorganization (Andreyeva, 2008; Jabbarov, 2021).

Teaching is an emotionally demanding profession, sometimes resulting in high stress, burnout, and fatigue for the teacher. It is often claimed that certain emotion regulation strategies can reduce teachers’ feelings of burnout. The use of cognitive reappraisal (i.e., cognitively changing the emotional impact of a situation) is generally associated with positive outcomes, the use of expressive suppression (i.e., the suppression of emotional reactions), however, usually leads to negative outcomes (Donker et al., 2020).

The impact of emotional strain on young teachers is particularly significant. According to research findings, without systematic work to prevent it among future teachers, the “emotional exhaustion” syndrome begins to develop even during their time in university (Andreyeva, 2003; Jabbarov et al, 2024). Additionally, the levels of self-actualization differ among educators and students, including those who are frequently exposed to trauma and those who are rarely exposed, the negative impact of trauma on their emotional resilience and academic achievements increases (Jabbarov, 2018). In this regard, it should also be noted that the professional role compels the teacher to make well-founded decisions, overcome nervousness and despair, and rein in angry outbursts.



However, the external containment of emotions does not reduce the intensity of the emotional process and does not contribute to psychological and physical health. On the contrary, the impossibility of psychologically processing emotions contributes to the development of their physiological component, increasing the likelihood of various psychosomatic illnesses. Frequent unpleasant emotional states, such as irritability, anxiety, and pessimism, lead to the consolidation of negative personal qualities, which in turn negatively impacts the teacher's work efficiency and their relationships with children and colleagues. In the future, this can lead to general dissatisfaction with the profession (Semyenova, 2002; Vakil, 2021).

In modern times, mastering emotional self-regulation skills appears particularly relevant for enhancing the psychological culture of teachers. In this regard, the ability to manage emotions is a component of emotional intelligence (EI), a set of mental abilities for processing emotional information, and an important indicator of its level of development. Numerous studies show that the impact of teachers' emotional regulation strategies on students' academic achievement varies, and the role of national and cultural factors is undeniable. In our research on this aspect, the primary goal is to examine the impact of teachers' emotional regulation strategies on students' academic achievement. Naturally, certain aspects of this issue have been systematically studied. However, the outcomes of selecting or using emotional regulation strategies have not been studied comprehensively. During emotional regulation, different strategies can produce various manifestations in learning activities. Therefore, the primary task of our study is to determine which strategies are associated with academic achievement. We believe that this approach can lead to enhanced specific recommendations and practical applications. Emotion regulation can be defined as the physiological, behavioral, and cognitive processes that individuals use to manage and respond to their emotional experiences effectively (Jabbarov and Ibrahimova, 2013; Gross, 1998; Gross and John, 2003; Gross and Thompson, 2007).



Methodology

Design

It should be noted that within the body of research dedicated to the study of teachers' emotional regulation strategies, self-regulation, character, individual cognitive self-assessment, and emotional exhaustion factors have been under-researched. Therefore, the purpose of our study is to determine the relationship between teachers' emotional regulation levels and self-appraisal, life satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and personality traits. To this end, a quantitative approach was used.

As the primary methodological approach in the study, the model of enhancing training optimization through increasing the effectiveness of emotional regulation strategies was employed. The quantitative approach was adopted as the methodological orientation in the study (Sivrikova et al., 2017).

Quantitative data is information about quantities and therefore numbers, while qualitative data is descriptive in nature and pertains to phenomena that can be observed but cannot be measured (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Furthermore, we can explore whether the relational style can explain the expected relationship between emotional strategies and cognitive self-reappraisal within the framework of the changing central-tendency approach.

Participants

The study was conducted on teachers teaching in various faculties at Odlar Yurdu University. The main criteria for the study were age groups and work experience. Thirty teachers participated in the study. The sample included 15 male teachers (50%) and 15 female teachers (50%). 99.5% of the teachers from both genders taught regularly and tried to conduct interactive lessons. They were offered various methodologies, and their consent was obtained. No actions were taken against anyone's will in the study.



Instruments

Several methodologies were used in the study. The methods used in the study were to determine the teachers' level of emotional exhaustion, to identify the emotional self-regulation strategies they used in the training process, was also conducted with the aim of studying the impact of teachers' life satisfaction level on their self-regulation strategies.

The following methods were used in the study:

1. The "Emotion Control Values" questionnaire (Pankratova and Osin, 2015).

2. The "Big Five" personality inventory (Egorova and Parshikova, 2016).

3. The "Life Satisfaction Methodology" (Sivrikova et al., 2017). This methodology utilized the "Satisfaction of Education Participants" methodology developed by Lukyanova and Kalinina, which is based on the "Life Satisfaction" questionnaire developed by Melnikova (1996). The level of psychosocial mismatch in teachers' professional activities was determined using a specially designed questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire were grouped into four blocks:

1) passivity, fatigue;

2) motivation for professional activity;

3) alienation from work;

4) assessment of negative impact (Sivrikova et al., 2017).

The total questionnaire consists of 33 questions. The lower the total score, the higher the level of psychosocial adaptation to the profession. The opposite is also true.

4. To assess individual differences in attention, the 10-item ERQ "Emotional Cognitive



Reappraisal and Reaction Inhibition” method was used (Gross & John, 2003). The cognitive reappraisal scale presented consists of six items. Participants were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with the statements offered on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) 7 (“completely agree”) on a scale.

5. The other method used in the study is the “Emotion Exhaustion” study method. In determining the level of emotional exhaustion, the “Diagnostic Method for the Level of Emotional Exhaustion” is claimed to have been successfully applied with various research methods and used to assess the health of different population groups (Boyko, 2019; Rochev, 2018). The method consists of 84 items. Each answer option is initially evaluated by authorized experts with a specific number of points. This is indicated in the key next to the decision number in parentheses. This is because the features included in the symptom have different meanings when determining its severity. The maximum score of 10 points was given by the judges to the item that most strongly indicated the symptom. According to the “key,” the following calculations are performed:

- 1) the sum of the scores is determined separately for each of the 12 symptoms of “burnout”;
- 2) The sum of the symptom scores is calculated for each of the 3 stages of “burnout” formation;
- 3) The final indicator of the “emotional burnout” syndrome is the sum of the indicators for all 12 symptoms. Mathematical statistics methods, including the r-Spearman rank correlation coefficient, were used for the statistical processing of the empirical study’s results. The quantitative data was processed using the SPSS Statistics 22 software program.

Data collection

The study began with an empirically derived and validated approach to the problem. Then, permission was sought from the educational institution to obtain the information through a documentary presentation required by the university administration. Once approved, the instruments were administered, and the data were entered into SPSS 22 statistical software for differential



analysis in accordance with the proposed objectives. After processing, they were clearly presented and summarized in tables with the necessary analysis and comments.

Results

To analyze the data obtained, the study began with an age-appropriate assessment of teachers' emotional strategies. For the research, two specific emotional regulation strategies were selected: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Cognitive reappraisal is a change in one's attitude toward a situation that allows for the modification of emotional reactions, while expressive suppression is the inhibition of the external manifestations of already-formed emotional reactions.

Table 1. Age-Appropriate Evaluation of Teachers' Emotional Strategies

Emotional assessment scales	Teachers' age dynamics (in %) (n=30)			
	25-35	36-46	47-56	57<
Cognitive reappraisal of emotions	72.25	67.76	48.13	26.09
Expressive suppression of emotions	27.75	35.24	51.97	74.91

As shown in Table 1, the emotional evaluation scales differ significantly in the teachers' age-related dynamics. Thus, among young teachers aged around 25–35, 73.25 percent chose appropriate strategies for cognitive appraisal, while 26.75 percent chose expressive suppression of emotions. Clearly, age-related changes are more pronounced in cognitive evaluation among new-generation teachers. This stems from their ability to manage their emotions and make decisions appropriate to the situation.

As seen in Table 1, instances of expressive suppression of emotions are less pronounced in them. This fact indicates that it is not academic experience, but rather the demands of the new



educational environment, that are significant in teachers' management of their emotions. Other changes vary in a developmentally appropriate and regular manner, and in the 57-59 age group, a greater difference is noted between cognitive reappraisal strategies (26.09) and expressive suppression strategies for emotions. This fact indicates that emotional self-regulation strategies also change as age increases. However, the reasons for this change can be numerous factors. Studying each of them for this research poses a methodological challenge.

Table 2 shows that when teachers use cognitive strategy or expressive suppression, there is a correlation among their various qualities. Thus, in terms of typology, the correlation between extraversion and cognitive strategy is more significant than that with expressive suppression ($p = 0.001$).

Table 2 shows that cognitive reappraisal correlates with extraversion and agreeableness, it, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, and at the same time, at the $P = 0.2$ level, expression suppression is negatively correlated with neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience. Often, however, it is merely a tendency.

Table 2. Age-Appropriate Assessment of Teachers' Emotional Regulation Strategies

Row	Methodologies	Scales	Cognitive strategy	Suppression of expression
1.	The Big Five methodology	Extraversion Goodwill Awareness Neuroticism Openness to experience	0,20** 0,34** 0,12 -0.36** 0.19	-0,21** -0,12 0,15** -0.27** 0.25



2.	Emotional intelligence methodology	General emotional intelligence Understanding one's own emotions Managing one's emotions Control of expression Understanding the emotions of others Managing the emotions of others	0,34** 0,13 0,55** 0,18** 0,32** 0,28**	-0,17 0,30** 0,48** -0,08 -0,19** 0,16*
3.	Life Satisfaction Methodology	General tolerance in life Attractiveness Control Acceptance of risk	0,28** 0,24** 0,22** 0,16*	-0,25 -0,18 -0,16 -0,19*

Cognitive reappraisal correlates significantly ($P=0.5$) with emotional intelligence, including teachers' self-regulation of their own emotions. (e.g., "When I feel a positive emotion, I know how to maintain it long-term", "I know how to calm my emotions if I get angry") This approach to the problem is that, in the teachers' opinion, teachers should not openly express their emotions. The situation is the same for the life satisfaction scales.

The cognitive reappraisal strategy differs from the expressive suppression strategy. Here, a significant positive correlation was found between general life tolerance, attractiveness, control, and risk acceptance and cognitive strategies (at $p=0.01$ and $p=0.5$ levels). In the expressive suppression strategy, however, there are no correlations and in some cases, they are only trending (at the $p=0.001$ level, $r=-0.19$).

Table 3. Indicators of the relationship between teachers' emotional strategies and years of academic experience

Emotional assessment scales	Teachers' academic years of experience (n=30)		
	5 il	10 il	15 il



Cognitive reappraisal of emotions	0,09*	0,28*	0,35**
Expressive suppression of emotions	- 0,10*	0,21**	0,17*

Table 3 shows that as teachers' years of academic experience increase, there is a significant relationship among their emotional strategies. As experience grows, teachers' emotional regulation strategies change. This change is primarily related to a reduction in expressive suppression of emotions and an increase in cognitive reappraisal. In fact, such a trend contradicts the previous assessment. However, this finding indicates that as experience increases, cognitive strategies become dominant in emotional regulation. In other words, there is a significant relationship between cognitive regulation strategies and teachers' work experience (at the $p=0.001$ and $p=0.05$ levels). This also confirms previous surveys and can be brought to the forefront as a new approach.

Table 4. The relationship between teachers' emotional strategies and emotional exhaustion

Emotional assessment scales	Emotional exhaustion (n=30)		
	formalized	formalization	neutral
Cognitive reappraisal strategy of emotions	44.13	40.56	58.12
A strategy for the expressive assessment of emotions	53.87	63.44	45.88

As seen in Table 4, the relationship between teachers' emotional strategies and emotional exhaustion is not unambiguous. Each of the three emotional exhaustion scales is evident both when using the cognitive reappraisal strategy and when using the expressive suppression strategy. However, in quantitative terms, the scores are higher (61.44) when using the expressive appraisal strategy. This fact confirms that the regular use of the expressive appraisal strategy contributes to emotional exhaustion.



Conclusion

Our research showed that although teachers have sufficiently adapted to their professional activities, their emotional regulation strategies differ. At the same time, among inexperienced teachers, there are more frequent cases of leaving the profession, which manifests itself in the inadequate selection of emotional regulation strategies and, as a result, the development of emotional exhaustion. On the other hand, it has been determined that teachers' choice of emotional self-regulation strategies depends on their academic experience and level of satisfaction with education. Fatigue from life and professional burnout, and difficulties in cognitive self-assessment, complicate strategy selection, create chronic stress, and ultimately lead to teacher dissatisfaction with their work. Frustration with life and fatigue during the teaching process create the conditions for choosing inappropriate and undesirable strategies, which ultimately reduces the effectiveness of instruction. Research has shown that the level of life satisfaction among teachers is on par with satisfaction with their own performance and satisfaction with their current situation, and that it varies depending on their relationships with colleagues, students, management, and parents.

The study showed that the cognitive reappraisal strategy is distinct from the expressive suppression strategy and varies according to teachers' levels of emotional exhaustion, self-regulation mechanisms, and academic work experience. However, there is a significant positive correlation between general life coping, locus of control, and risk-taking and cognitive strategies. In the expressive suppression strategy, such correlations are absent or, in some cases, only tendential.

Discussion

Our research showed that expressive suppression of teachers' emotions is less prominent than cognitive reappraisal strategies. This fact indicates that it is not the academic experience, but



rather the demands of the new educational environment that are significant in teachers' management of their emotions. Our findings are consistent with a number of studies. Thus, the predominance of cognitive reappraisal in emotion regulation and the selection of emotional strategies is a dominant finding in a number of studies (Breslav, 2006; Viliunas, 2008). Often, this systematic review is aimed at determining the relationship between discrete emotions and a teacher's emotion management or self-efficacy (Chen, 2021; Vakil, 2021).

The existence of a relationship between a teacher's emotions and their self-efficacy has also been evidenced in a number of studies (Chen, 2021). These findings support the TEM model of emotional strategies (Chen, 2021), are consistent with Bandura's (1997) theoretical model of emotions, and are a source of information for self-efficacy beliefs (Frenzel, 2014; Sutton and Wheatley, 2003).

Also, according to Schirmer (2015), the number of negative emotions people experience generally exceeds the number of positive emotions. However, positive emotions are important for an individual's psychological well-being (Fredrickson, 2001). Because in the educational context, the experience of positive emotions during the teaching and learning process can reduce the impact of burnout syndrome. (Frenzel et al., 2016). Although these studies differ in content from our research, the abundance of positive emotions and the teacher's lack of exposure to burnout syndrome will encourage them to use a cognitive reappraisal strategy. In this regard, the findings are consistent.

It is not to deny the relationship between positive emotions and teacher efficacy beliefs, but to show that there is a positive relationship between the two. These results are consistent with the idea that positive emotions can foster psychological resources, such as a teacher's self-efficacy beliefs (Fredrickson, 2001). Furthermore, by accrediting their own abilities to achieve certain educational goals, a teacher may experience more positive emotions or fewer negative emotional states (Bandura, 2012). This finding is relevant to the educational process, as experiencing positive emotions and a teacher's high self-efficacy can contribute to quality instruction (Pitkaniemi, 2017).

Teachers with a positive belief in their own effectiveness are more patient with unruly students, as well as being student-centered, are more likely to use instructional and emotional strategies aimed



at adapting the classroom to their students' needs (Zee and Koomen, 2016).

When using emotional strategies, as researchers note, by experiencing and expressing positive emotions, a teacher can contribute to a student's learning and engagement, and emotions can consequently be contagious (Fenzell et al., 2019). The results show a negative relationship between negative emotions and teacher self-efficacy beliefs, with the exception of feelings of rage. In fact, researchers have paid much attention to teachers' emotional experiences during regular instruction and their impact on the lives of teachers and students (Cross and Hong, 2012; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Hargreaves, 2001; Schutz et al. 2007; Sutton, 2004; Sutton and Wheatley, 2003).

It has been found that negative emotions, such as anger and frustration, frequently reported by teachers, reduce teachers' intrinsic motivation and increase students' negative emotional experiences (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Extensive research has shown how the accumulation of negative emotions by teachers undermines their well-being and hinders students' learning achievements (Chan, 2006). Overall, teachers' emotions are crucial factors in education, and a primary goal of emotional research is to explore how teachers' emotions, particularly negative ones, can be regulated.

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