

Beyond Pedagogy: Examining EFL Teachers' Emotional Turbulence and Their Strategies for Emotional Regulation

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Abstract: This study investigates the emotional challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and the strategies they employ to regulate their emotions within the classroom context. Using a qualitative research design, data were collected from 17 secondary school EFL teachers in Jakarta, Indonesia, through open-response questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that classroom conditions such as student disengagement, classroom management difficulties, and heavy workload were primary stressors that triggered negative emotions, including frustration, anger, helplessness, and stress. To manage these emotions, teachers employed various regulation strategies, including cognitive reappraisal, mindfulness practices, seeking social support, and setting professional boundaries. These strategies helped teachers mitigate the emotional impact of classroom challenges and maintain effective teaching. The study highlights the significant role of emotion regulation in enhancing teaching effectiveness and fostering positive learning outcomes. The findings contribute to the broader literature on teacher well-being by providing insights into the emotional dynamics of EFL teaching. However, the study's limitations, including the small sample size and reliance on self-reported data, suggest the need for further research. Future studies should explore the long-term impact of emotional regulation on teacher retention and student achievement across diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: Emotional Regulation Strategies, Efl Teachers' Emotions, Negative Emotions, Types Of Negative Emotions, Qualitative Research

1 Introduction

Emotions play a pivotal role in shaping the teaching and learning experience, influencing both instructional effectiveness and student engagement. In the field of education, research has consistently demonstrated that teachers' emotions impact their motivation, classroom management strategies, and overall professional well-being (Chen, 2019; Wang et al., 2021). Positive emotions, such as enthusiasm and satisfaction, foster dynamic and engaging learning environments, while negative emotions, such as frustration and anxiety, can lead to diminished teaching effectiveness and increased stress (Chen et al., 2023). Among educators, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers encounter distinct emotional challenges due to the unique nature of language instruction, which involves overcoming linguistic barriers, managing di-

verse student proficiency levels, and addressing cross-cultural complexities (Jalilzadeh et al., 2024; Zhao & Wang, 2024). Moreover, EFL teachers often experience heightened emotional turbulence stemming from external pressures, such as high-stakes assessments, administrative expectations, and the demand to maintain student motivation in language acquisition contexts (Lemarchand-Chauvin, 2023). Despite the growing recognition of teacher emotions as a critical factor in education, there remains a limited understanding of how EFL teachers, particularly in secondary schools, regulate their emotions to sustain effective pedagogy. Given the high-stakes nature of language instruction, understanding how EFL teachers experience and regulate negative emotions is essential for developing targeted interventions that promote teacher well-being and instructional efficacy.

While an extensive body of research has explored

the role of emotions in education, the majority of studies have primarily focused on the emotional experiences of students rather than teachers, thereby leaving a critical gap in understanding the complexities of teacher emotions in instructional settings. Furthermore, within the domain of teacher emotions, much of the existing literature has emphasized positive emotions and their contributions to student engagement and classroom dynamics, whereas negative emotions—such as frustration, anxiety, and burnout—remain relatively underexplored, particularly in the context of EFL instruction. Given the unique demands of EFL teaching, which include managing linguistic diversity, cultural sensitivity, and fluctuating student motivation, it is imperative to investigate how teachers experience and explore emotional challenges in the classroom. Moreover, the majority of studies on teacher emotions have been conducted in Western educational contexts, with limited empirical investigations focusing on EFL teachers in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, where sociocultural and institutional factors may significantly shape emotional experiences and coping mechanisms.

Given the crucial role of teacher emotions in shaping classroom dynamics and student learning outcomes, this study seeks to address key gaps in the existing literature by investigating the emotional challenges faced by EFL teachers. Specifically, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What classroom conditions contribute to the emergence of negative emotions among EFL teachers?
2. What types of negative emotions do EFL teachers experience during the teaching process?
3. How do EFL teachers regulate their emotions to ensure that the teaching-learning process remains effective?

These questions are particularly significant as they examine the intersection of emotional well-being and pedagogical efficacy, a crucial yet underexplored dimension of EFL instruction. Understanding the emotional experiences of teachers holds profound implications for multiple stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, and institutional administrators. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the discourse on teacher psychology by enriching the understanding of affective dimensions in professional teaching contexts, particularly in non-Western EFL environments. From a practical standpoint, the findings can inform teacher training programs by incorporating emotion regulation strategies into professional devel-

opment curricula, equipping teachers with the necessary skills to manage emotional challenges effectively.

1.1 Role of Emotions in the Classroom

Emotions play a fundamental role in shaping the dynamics of classroom interactions, influencing both teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Teachers' emotional experiences are deeply intertwined with their instructional practices, classroom management strategies, and overall well-being (Mennes et al., 2024; Samnøy et al., 2022). Positive emotions, such as enthusiasm, joy, and fulfillment, have been shown to enhance pedagogical effectiveness by fostering an engaging learning atmosphere and strengthening teacher-student relationships (Leng & Zhang, 2024). Conversely, negative emotions, such as frustration, anxiety, and stress, can hinder teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively, leading to decreased motivation, impaired classroom management, and emotional exhaustion (Agyapong et al., 2023). The interplay between emotions and teaching underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how educators manage emotional challenges to maintain instructional quality and professional resilience.

The classroom is an inherently emotional space where teachers must constantly regulate their feelings while responding to diverse situational demands. Teaching involves not only delivering content but also managing student behaviors, adapting to institutional expectations, and handling unforeseen challenges, all of which can evoke strong emotional reactions (Simonton et al., 2022). When teachers effectively regulate their emotions, they create a more stable and conducive learning environment, reducing student anxiety and fostering a sense of emotional security. However, when teachers struggle to manage their emotions, the resulting tension may disrupt the learning process and diminish overall classroom cohesion. This highlights the necessity of equipping educators with strategies for emotional regulation to mitigate the adverse effects of negative emotions.

Despite the growing recognition of teacher emotions as a crucial component of educational success, research on this topic remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of EFL instruction. EFL teaching presents distinct emotional challenges, as educators must manage linguistic barriers, address diverse student proficiency levels, and sustain motivation in a subject that many learners may find difficult or intimidating (Zhao & Wang, 2024). Furthermore, external pressures such as standardized assessments, admin-

istrative demands, and institutional constraints contribute to heightened emotional strain among EFL teachers (Ebadijalal & Moradkhani, 2022). Given these complexities, it is necessary to explore how EFL teachers experience, interpret, and regulate their emotions to maintain pedagogical effectiveness. This will provide valuable insights into the broader discourse on teacher well-being.

1.2 The Dual Role of Emotions in Teaching

Emotions serve as a critical driving force in teaching, shaping educators' instructional approaches, motivation, and overall well-being. Teachers who experience joy and satisfaction in their work tend to adopt more innovative pedagogical methods, foster stronger connections with students, and maintain resilience in the face of challenges (Harrison et al., 2023). Positive emotions create a nurturing classroom atmosphere that enhances students' motivation, cognitive engagement, and academic performance (Sun et al., 2024). When teachers radiate confidence and enthusiasm, they serve as role models, encouraging students to develop a positive attitude toward learning.

On the other hand, negative emotions such as frustration, anxiety, and anger can significantly hinder teachers' effectiveness and well-being. Teaching is inherently complex, requiring educators to balance instructional demands, administrative responsibilities, and interpersonal relationships with students, colleagues, and school administrators (Craig, 2015). When faced with classroom disruptions or student disengagement, teachers may experience heightened stress and emotional exhaustion, and prolonged exposure to such stressors can lead to emotional burnout, diminished job satisfaction, and a decline in teaching performance (Sperati et al., 2024). Negative emotions may also manifest in teachers' interactions with students, potentially creating a hostile or demotivating learning environment that negatively affects learning (Wang et al., 2023).

While positive and negative emotions play distinct roles in teaching, they are often interconnected, requiring teachers to employ emotional regulation strategies to maintain a balanced and productive classroom environment. Teachers who can regulate their emotions are more likely to sustain professional resilience, adapt to classroom difficulties, and maintain student engagement even in high-stress situations (Farhi & Rubinsten, 2024). However, the ability to regulate emotions is not innate and requires targeted professional development and institutional support. By equipping educa-

tors with the necessary skills to manage their emotions, schools, and policymakers can enhance both teacher retention and overall educational quality. Given the profound impact of emotions on teaching, it is important to further investigate the emotional experiences of educators, particularly in EFL contexts, where linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical challenges further complicate the emotional landscape of teaching.

1.3 Recent Studies on emotional well-being in EFL contexts

The field of EFL education has seen increasing scholarly interest in the emotional well-being of both teachers and learners, particularly concerning emotion regulation, psychological resilience, and burnout. Recent studies have examined diverse factors influencing well-being in EFL contexts, ranging from technological interventions such as AI-driven chatbots (Rezai et al., 2024) to the role of positive emotions in teacher engagement and resilience (Noughabi et al., 2024). Additionally, several researchers have explored psychosocial determinants of teacher well-being, including emotion regulation, self-efficacy, and professional identity (Ismail et al., 2023), while others have investigated the impact of emotion regulation and burnout on teacher retention and professional development (Liu, 2024). Furthermore, studies focusing on cross-cultural and ecological perspectives (Lucena & Ojeda, 2024; Zhou & Wang, 2024) provide valuable insights into how environmental and cultural variables shape emotional well-being. While the overarching consensus highlights the necessity of emotional resilience in EFL teaching and learning, variations in research focus and methodological approaches underscore the complexity of emotional regulation in diverse EFL settings.

Despite differences in focus, many studies converge on the pivotal role of emotion regulation in fostering well-being. Rezai et al. (2024) emphasize that emotion regulation mediates the relationship between ChatGPT use and well-being, suggesting that AI-driven tools may serve as both cognitive and emotional scaffolds for learners. Similarly, Ismail et al. (2023) argue that emotion regulation, alongside self-efficacy and reflective teaching, is a strong predictor of teacher well-being, underscoring the importance of individual psychological resources in managing stress. Studies on teacher well-being and burnout (Liu, 2024; Xiao & Tian, 2023) further corroborate the significance of emotion regulation as a protective factor against job-related distress. Meanwhile, Noughabi et al. (2024)

and Zhou & Wang (2024) highlight the positive influence of enjoyment on engagement and academic performance, reinforcing the perspective of positive psychology in EFL education. Across these studies, there is a shared recognition that effective emotional regulation is instrumental in enhancing resilience, reducing burnout, and improving both teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

While the studies agree on the importance of emotional regulation, they differ in theoretical perspectives and research methodologies. Rezai et al. (2024) employ a quantitative structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, establishing causal links between ChatGPT use, emotion regulation, and well-being, whereas Xiao & Tian (2023) adopt a qualitative case study method, exploring interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) among EFL teachers. Similarly, Lucena & Ojeda (2024) apply Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory to examine how external factors such as school environment and policy impact teacher well-being, in contrast to Ismail et al. (2023), who focus on individual psychological constructs through a survey-based SEM approach. Moreover, while Noughabi et al. (2024) and Zhou & Wang (2024) position their studies within positive psychology, emphasizing the benefits of enjoyment and engagement, Liu (2024) frames emotional well-being within the burnout-prevention paradigm, prioritizing the mitigation of emotional distress. These variations indicate that while there is broad consensus on the significance of emotions in EFL education, the specific pathways through which emotional well-being is cultivated remain subject to disciplinary, methodological, and cultural interpretations.

Taken together, these studies reinforce the notion that emotional well-being in EFL contexts is multidimensional, shaped by personal, technological, institutional, and cultural factors. Across different research paradigms, emotion regulation emerges as a central mechanism linking well-being to engagement, instructional effectiveness, and academic achievement. The findings suggest that fostering supportive learning environments, integrating emotional training into teacher development, and leveraging technological tools can significantly enhance emotional well-being in EFL settings. Furthermore, cross-cultural comparisons (Noughabi et al., 2024; Lucena & Ojeda, 2024) illustrate that cultural and ecological factors play a crucial role in determining how emotional experiences manifest and how teachers and learners manage psychological challenges. However, despite these in-

sights, gaps remain in understanding the long-term impact of emotional well-being interventions and the interactive effects of multiple psychological and contextual factors in shaping emotional resilience in EFL education.

While these studies provide valuable insights into emotional well-being in EFL contexts, there remains a significant research gap concerning how EFL teachers actively regulate negative emotions in real-time classroom interactions. Most existing studies focus on emotion regulation as a predictive factor for well-being, yet few explore the lived experiences of EFL teachers in managing emotional distress within their professional settings. Additionally, while several studies highlight the protective role of positive emotions, fewer examine the full spectrum of negative emotions and the specific coping strategies teachers employ to sustain pedagogical effectiveness. This gap underscores the need for research that investigates the intersection of classroom challenges, emotional struggles, and regulation strategies through qualitative, phenomenological, or mixed-method approaches. Addressing these gaps, the present study contributes to the field of TEFL by offering a nuanced exploration of EFL teachers' emotional regulation strategies. The findings from this study will provide practical implications for teacher training, institutional policies, and psychological interventions, ultimately fostering emotionally resilient teaching communities in EFL contexts.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, incorporating open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews to investigate the emotional experiences and regulatory strategies of EFL teachers. Given the inherently subjective and context-dependent nature of emotions, a qualitative approach is the most appropriate methodological framework, as it allows for a rich, in-depth exploration of teachers' emotional landscapes that could not be fully captured through quantitative means (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The open-ended questionnaire was designed to provide flexibility, enabling participants to articulate their emotional experiences and coping mechanisms in their own words without being constrained by predetermined response categories. This method was particularly beneficial given the participants' demanding schedules, allowing for asynchronous data collection while ensuring depth in their responses. Meanwhile,

in-depth interviews were conducted with selected participants to explore further into emerging themes, providing a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between classroom conditions, negative emotions, and regulatory strategies. The interpretative nature of qualitative research ensures that the findings reflect the complex, dynamic, and socially constructed reality of teaching, making it possible to capture the subtle, context-specific factors that shape teachers' emotional responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2.2 Participant Selection and Ethical Considerations

The participants in this study consisted of 17 secondary school EFL teachers from various institutions in Jakarta, Indonesia, selected based on specific eligibility criteria to ensure the relevance and depth of the findings. Initially, two teachers from two different secondary schools were invited to participate in the study. These teachers were then asked to distribute letters offering participation to their colleagues, encouraging those who were interested to voluntarily join the research. This snowball sampling technique facilitated access to a wider network of teachers while ensuring that potential participants had prior awareness of the study's purpose. As a result of this process, 21 EFL teachers expressed their willingness to participate. However, to maintain methodological rigor, the researchers conducted a selection process based on pre-established inclusion criteria, which required participants to have at least five years of teaching experience, hold a Bachelor's degree in English education, and be actively teaching in a secondary school setting. After careful review, 17 teachers met these criteria for the study.

Once the participants were identified, the researchers provided a detailed explanation of the research procedures, objectives, and expectations. The teachers were informed that they would be participating in open-ended questionnaire responses and, for some, in-depth interviews, depending on their availability. Additionally, they were briefed on the importance of confidentiality and anonymity, ensuring that their personal information and the names of their respective schools would remain undisclosed throughout the research process. The participants were also allowed to ask questions regarding the study to clarify any concerns or uncertainties before proceeding with their involvement. This transparent approach aimed to foster trust between the researchers and participants while ensuring that all individuals fully understood the

nature of their contributions. Following this explanation, participants were asked to provide their informed consent, indicating their voluntary participation in the study. They were assured that their participation was entirely optional and that they could withdraw at any stage without any repercussions. Ethical considerations were strictly upheld under research ethics guidelines, emphasizing autonomy, confidentiality, and respect for participants' rights (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2.3 Data Collection Methods

This study utilized open-response questionnaires and in-depth interviews. These methods were deliberately chosen to capture the complexity and depth of teachers' emotional experiences, aligning with the study's aim of examining (1) the classroom conditions that contribute to negative emotions, (2) the types of negative emotions experienced by EFL teachers, and (3) the strategies they employ to regulate their emotions. A qualitative open-response questionnaire was particularly advantageous as it provided participants with the flexibility to articulate their experiences in a detailed and unrestricted manner, free from the constraints of structured response formats. This approach allowed teachers to express their emotions, perceptions, and coping mechanisms in their own words, thereby ensuring that the data captured was both authentic and reflective of their lived experiences.

However, recognizing the inherent limitations of written responses in capturing the emotional nuances and contextual depth of teachers' experiences, the study also incorporated in-depth interviews to complement the questionnaire data. The interviews provided an opportunity for researchers to probe deeper into emerging themes, clarify ambiguities, and explore the dynamic interplay between emotions, classroom stressors, and regulatory strategies. This method facilitated a more contextually grounded and interpretative analysis, ensuring that the findings not only reflected surface-level emotional expressions but also revealed the underlying psychological and pedagogical factors influencing teachers' emotional regulation. The combination of these two qualitative methods enabled the study to balance breadth and depth, capturing both the variability and specificity of emotional experiences among EFL teachers.

2.4 Data Analysis Approach

To systematically analyze the qualitative data obtained from open-response questionnaires and in-depth inter-

views, this study employed thematic analysis, a widely recognized qualitative data analysis method that facilitates the identification, organization, and interpretation of recurring themes within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Thematic analysis was chosen due to its flexibility in capturing both explicit and latent meanings in participants' responses, making it particularly suited for exploring the emotional complexities and regulatory strategies of EFL teachers. Given that emotions are deeply embedded in personal experiences and contextual factors, thematic analysis enabled the researchers to unravel underlying patterns and categorize them into meaningful themes.

The data analysis process followed a structured coding framework, beginning with open coding, where researchers carefully examined participants' responses to identify recurring ideas, key phrases, and emotional expressions. This phase was followed by axial coding, where connections between the initial codes were established to identify overarching patterns related to classroom stressors, types of negative emotions, and emotion regulation strategies. Finally, selective coding was conducted to refine and consolidate the emerging themes into core categories that aligned with the research questions (Saldana, 2021). To enhance the credibility and reliability of the analysis, inter-coder reliability checks were performed, where multiple researchers reviewed and validated the coding scheme to minimize subjective bias and ensure coherence in theme development.

Reflexivity was also maintained throughout the analysis process, with researchers critically reflecting on their interpretations to mitigate potential biases that could influence data coding and theme identification (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By integrating these analytical rigor techniques, this study ensured that the thematic analysis yielded robust, credible, and empirically grounded findings, providing valuable contributions to the broader discourse on teacher emotions and pedagogical resilience in EFL contexts.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Classroom Conditions That Trigger Negative Emotions

The findings from this study revealed several key classroom conditions that significantly contribute to the negative emotions experienced by EFL teachers. These stressors varied across different aspects of the teaching environment, ranging from student disengagement to negative interaction with colleagues, as

seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Classroom Conditions That Trigger Negative Emotions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disengagement • Classroom management challenges • Heavy workload and time pressure • Unclear expectations and lack of support from the administration • Large class sizes • Student expectations and pressure to achieve • Limited resources and teaching materials • Negative interactions with colleagues
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The first significant stressor identified was student disengagement. Teachers expressed considerable frustration when students exhibited a lack of interest or enthusiasm during lessons, particularly in activities that required active participation, such as group discussions and speaking exercises. This disengagement led to feelings of helplessness and discouragement, as teachers struggled to ignite student motivation. The emotional impact of this disengagement was particularly acute, as it not only affected the teacher's emotional state but also influenced the overall learning environment. Teachers felt that their efforts to create engaging lessons were undermined by students' lack of motivation, leading to a pervasive sense of ineffectiveness. This finding aligns with the research question, revealing that the emotional challenges faced by teachers are closely linked to their perception of student engagement and the ability to maintain a productive learning atmosphere.

The second key stressor identified was classroom management challenges, particularly the issues of disruptive behavior, lack of discipline, and disrespectful interactions. Teachers reported feeling emotionally drained when attempting to manage unruly students or maintain discipline in the classroom. These challenges often escalated into heightened feelings of anger, frustration, and stress, as teachers struggled to assert authority and create a conducive environment for learning. The emotional toll of managing classroom behavior was significant, as teachers expressed a sense of exhaustion from constantly controlling conflicts and disruptions. This finding supports the research question by demonstrating that classroom management is a primary factor in triggering negative emotions among teachers. The emotional labor involved in maintaining discipline can lead to stress and emotional burnout, which further impacts the teacher's ability to perform effectively in the classroom.

Comparing the findings of this study with existing literature on emotional well-being in EFL contexts, several commonalities and differences emerge.

Similar to the findings of Liu (2024), who identified burnout as a result of emotion regulation challenges in the EFL context, this study also highlights the critical role of stressors related to workload and emotional management. Ismail et al. (2023) emphasize the connection between self-efficacy and teacher well-being, which can be negatively impacted by classroom management difficulties and a lack of resources. In line with Rezai et al. (2024), this study also emphasizes how institutional constraints, such as unclear expectations and limited administrative support, contribute to teachers' emotional distress. However, one key distinction in the current study is the emphasis on negative interactions with colleagues, which was less prominent in other studies. The sense of isolation and lack of collegiality reported by some teachers in this study suggests that emotional support from colleagues and administrators plays a more significant role than previously acknowledged in maintaining emotional well-being.

This study highlights the multifaceted nature of classroom conditions that trigger negative emotions in EFL teachers. Student disengagement, classroom management challenges, and heavy workloads were identified as significant stressors, leading to feelings of helplessness, exhaustion, and stress. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of research on emotional well-being in EFL teaching by providing insight into the specific classroom conditions that influence teachers' emotional responses. By addressing these stressors, educational institutions can create more supportive environments that reduce emotional distress and improve both teacher well-being and instructional effectiveness. The study underscores the importance of developing comprehensive teacher support systems and professional development programs that not only address pedagogical skills but also equip teachers with strategies for managing emotional challenges in the classroom.

3.2 Types of Negative Emotions Experienced by EFL Teachers

The findings from this study revealed a diverse range of negative emotions experienced by EFL teachers as a result of various classroom stressors. These emotions included frustration, anger, helplessness, stress, anxiety, disappointment, burnout, guilt, inadequacy, and isolation (See Table 2). Each emotion was linked to specific challenges in the classroom, such as student disengagement, classroom management difficulties, and heavy workload. Teachers reported that these

negative emotions not only affected their emotional well-being but also had a significant impact on their teaching effectiveness and overall professional satisfaction.

Table 2. Types of Negative Emotions Experienced by EFL Teachers

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- Frustration
 - Anger
 - Helplessness
 - Stress
 - Disappointment
 - Burnout
 - Guilt
 - Inadequacy
 - Isolation
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A predominant negative emotion identified was frustration, which was most commonly experienced in response to student disengagement. Teachers frequently expressed frustration when students showed little interest or motivation in the lesson, particularly during activities that required active participation such as speaking exercises or group discussions. This emotional response was exacerbated by teachers' perceptions of their inability to engage students effectively. Frustration often led to feelings of helplessness and discouragement, as teachers struggled to inspire student interest despite their best efforts. This aligns with the research question, as it highlights the direct link between classroom conditions, such as disengagement, and frustration as a primary negative emotion. Moreover, frustration was often cited as a precursor to emotional exhaustion, which affected teachers' ability to maintain an effective and positive learning environment.

Another key emotion identified was anger, which arose from challenges related to classroom management, such as disruptive student behavior and lack of discipline. Teachers described feeling angry when students disrupted the flow of the lesson, disrespected classroom norms, or ignored the teacher's authority. This anger was often coupled with stress and frustration, particularly when teachers were unable to regain control of the classroom. The emotional impact of managing disruptive behavior led to heightened feelings of ineffectiveness and exhaustion, especially when such behaviors were persistent and unresolved. These findings underscore the connection between classroom management issues and the emotional strain on teachers, reinforcing the importance

of support systems and strategies for managing classroom dynamics.

Connecting and comparing these findings with existing literature, several parallels emerge. For instance, Liu (2024) similarly identified stress and burnout as significant outcomes of emotion regulation challenges in EFL contexts. Liu's study emphasizes the emotional burden of pressure-filled teaching environments and the impact of classroom disruptions on teacher well-being, which mirrors the current study's findings on the emotional responses to student behavior. Additionally, Ismail et al. (2023) also highlight the role of self-efficacy and emotion regulation in shaping teachers' psychological well-being, suggesting that negative emotions such as frustration and anger are likely to emerge when teachers feel unsupported or ineffective in their roles. However, a key distinction in the current study is the identification of guilt and isolation as significant emotional responses, which were not as prominently discussed in the literature reviewed in the attachment. The feelings of guilt and isolation point to the broader emotional challenges of teaching, particularly when teachers perceive themselves as failing in their responsibilities or lack collegial support.

The findings from this study highlight the multifaceted nature of negative emotions experienced by EFL teachers. Frustration, anger, helplessness, and stress were identified as the primary emotional responses to various classroom stressors such as student disengagement, classroom management issues, and workload pressure. These emotions not only influence teachers' emotional well-being but also their pedagogical effectiveness and job satisfaction. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on teacher well-being by providing a comprehensive understanding of the emotional challenges faced by EFL teachers. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that address the emotional needs of teachers, such as professional development programs focused on classroom management, emotional regulation strategies, and peer support systems. Future research should further explore how these emotions intersect with cultural and institutional factors to shape the emotional experiences of teachers in diverse EFL settings.

3.3 Strategies for Emotional Regulation

The findings from this study revealed a range of strategies that EFL teachers employed to regulate their emotions in response to the various stressors they encountered in the classroom. These strategies included both

cognitive and emotional techniques, such as cognitive reappraisal, mindfulness practices, and seeking social support, as well as practical approaches like setting professional boundaries, engaging in self-care, and participating in professional development programs. The teachers also reported using reflective practices and humor as methods to process their emotions and create a more positive teaching environment (See Table 3). These strategies played a crucial role in helping teachers manage the emotional challenges of their profession, allowing them to continue teaching effectively while maintaining their well-being.

Table 3. Strategies for Emotional Regulation

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- Cognitive reappraisal: for instance, when faced with student disengagement, teachers reframed the situation by reminding themselves that some students may have personal difficulties or external factors affecting their behavior.
 - Mindfulness and relaxation techniques: for example, incorporating mindfulness practices and relaxation techniques to manage stress - deep breathing exercises, short breaks, and meditation or praying.
 - Seeking social support: for instance, talking to colleagues about challenges, receiving emotional encouragement, sharing experiences, and discussing ways to cope with stress.
 - Setting professional boundaries: for example, avoiding taking work home, limiting the time spent on administrative tasks outside of school hours, and prioritizing personal time.
 - Focusing on personal well-being and self-care: for example, engaging in activities such as exercising, pursuing hobbies, and spending time with family and friends to recharge emotionally.
 - Reflective practice: for instance, employing reflective practices to process emotions and improve teaching strategies, and taking time after class to reflect on teaching methods, student interactions, and emotional responses to the classroom environment.
 - Humor and positive thinking: for instance, using humor as a way to diffuse tension in the classroom and alleviate emotional distress. emotions but also contributed to fostering a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment for students.
 - Professional development and training: for instance, participating in professional development programs, workshops on classroom management, and emotional intelligence & stress management.
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A significant number of teachers reported using cognitive reappraisal to regulate their emotions, particularly when faced with student disengagement and classroom management issues. This strategy involved changing the way teachers interpreted challenging sit-

uations, such as viewing students' lack of motivation as a result of external factors rather than as a personal failure. By reframing their perceptions, teachers were able to reduce feelings of frustration and helplessness, enabling them to approach classroom challenges with a more balanced perspective. This finding supports the research question by demonstrating that cognitive reappraisal is an effective strategy for managing negative emotions, particularly in response to student behavior, and it contributes to maintaining a positive classroom environment. Teachers who adopted this strategy were better able to maintain their emotional composure and continue engaging with students constructively, despite facing challenges.

In addition to cognitive reappraisal, teachers also reported using mindfulness techniques and relaxation exercises as strategies to manage stress and anxiety. These methods, including deep breathing exercises, meditation or praying, and taking short breaks during the day, allowed teachers to calm their minds and reduce feelings of overwhelm. Mindfulness practices were particularly helpful in moments of emotional intensity, such as when teachers were dealing with classroom disruptions or when they felt emotionally drained. The use of these techniques aligns with the research question by illustrating that mindfulness and relaxation strategies can mitigate the negative emotional impact of stressful classroom situations.

Several commonalities and distinctions emerge when comparing these findings with the literature on emotional regulation in EFL contexts. Similar to the findings of [Ismail et al. \(2023\)](#), who emphasized the importance of emotion regulation in enhancing teacher well-being, this study also highlights the central role of cognitive strategies like reappraisal and reflective practices in helping teachers manage their emotions. However, while [Ismail et al. \(2023\)](#) focused on the role of self-efficacy and identity, this study expands the conversation by incorporating social support as a key strategy for emotional regulation. The current study's finding that seeking social support from colleagues played a significant role in emotional regulation aligns with research by [Xiao & Tian \(2023\)](#), who found that interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) is vital in managing negative emotions. Unlike the study by [Liu \(2024\)](#), which emphasized individual emotional regulation methods, this study underscores the importance of community support and collaborative practices as essential elements of emotional well-being.

This study illustrates the diverse strategies em-

ployed by EFL teachers to regulate their emotions in the face of classroom challenges. These strategies demonstrate the various ways in which teachers manage the emotional demands of their profession. The use of these strategies helps teachers maintain their emotional well-being and ensure that they can continue to engage with students effectively. The findings contribute to the literature on teacher well-being by providing a deeper understanding of the practical emotional regulation techniques used by EFL teachers in response to stressors in the classroom.

3.4 Implications for Teaching Effectiveness

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of emotion regulation in enhancing teaching effectiveness and, ultimately, student learning outcomes. Teachers who effectively regulated their emotions, particularly those using strategies such as cognitive reappraisal, mindfulness, and seeking social support, were better able to maintain a positive classroom environment, even in the face of challenges such as student disengagement and disruptive behavior. This emotional resilience allowed teachers to remain engaged and motivated, which in turn facilitated more effective teaching. When teachers manage their emotions well, they can create a more supportive, focused, and dynamic learning environment that encourages student participation, fosters positive relationships, and promotes deeper learning. As teachers are less likely to be overwhelmed by frustration or anxiety, students experience greater academic success and improved motivation, contributing to a positive feedback loop in the classroom. Thus, emotion regulation is not only a key factor in teachers' well-being but also an essential element in improving student engagement and academic achievement.

To further support teachers in managing emotional challenges and enhancing their teaching effectiveness, institutions must implement targeted support systems and offer comprehensive professional development opportunities. Schools should prioritize providing teachers with access to resources that promote emotional resilience, such as workshops on emotional intelligence, stress management techniques, and classroom management strategies. Additionally, fostering a culture of collegial support, where teachers can regularly collaborate and share experiences, is crucial for reducing feelings of isolation and promoting emotional well-being. Prioritizing the emotional well-being of teachers, educational institutions can create a more sustainable and effective teaching environment, which will ul-

timately benefit both teachers and students in the long term.

4 CONCLUSION

This study explored the emotional challenges faced by EFL teachers and the strategies they employ to regulate their emotions, contributing to the growing body of research on teacher emotion and well-being in language education. The key findings revealed that classroom conditions, such as student disengagement, classroom management difficulties, and heavy workload, triggered negative emotions like frustration, anger, and stress among EFL teachers. To cope with these emotional challenges, teachers employed a variety of emotion regulation strategies, including cognitive reappraisal, mindfulness, seeking social support, and professional boundary-setting, which helped mitigate the negative impact of stressors on both their well-being and teaching effectiveness. This research contributes to the field by providing a comprehensive understanding of the emotional dynamics in EFL classrooms and the practical strategies that support teachers' emotional resilience, thus enhancing their pedagogical effectiveness. However, the study has limitations, including the relatively small sample size and the self-reported nature of the data, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should explore the long-term effects of emotion regulation on teacher retention and student outcomes, as well as the role of institutional support in fostering teachers' emotional resilience, using longitudinal designs and a more diverse sample across different cultural and educational contexts.

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