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English Teachers' Emotions and Regulation Strategies in Response to Students' Disruptive Behaviour

Estrategias de regulación de emociones de docentes de inglés frente a comportamientos disruptivos de los estudiantes

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This study explored the emotions and coping strategies of 25 Bhutanese English teachers in response to student disruption. Thematic analysis of in-depth interviews revealed that the participants encountered a variety of students' disruptive behaviours that elicited a wide range of emotions, both positive (e.g., compassion and pride) and negative (e.g., frustration, irritation, anger, sadness, anxiety, insult, guilt, and disappointment). Findings also indicated that teachers regulate their emotions using both antecedent-focused (e.g., situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, and cognitive change) and response-focused (e.g., emotion suppression, deep breathing, journaling, talking with colleagues or students, listening to music, and watching movies) emotion regulation strategies. The study concludes with practical implications for policymakers, teachers, and teacher educators and recommendations for future research.

Keywords: English language teachers, teachers' emotions, emotion regulation strategy, disruptive behaviour, Bhutan

Este estudio explora las estrategias de regulación de emociones de 25 profesores de inglés butaneses frente al comportamiento disruptivo de los estudiantes. El análisis temático de entrevistas a profundidad reveló que los participantes afrontan una variedad de comportamientos disruptivos en el aula, que provocan emociones positivas (compasión y orgullo) y negativas (frustración, exasperación, tristeza, ansiedad, ofensa, culpa y decepción). Los docentes recurren a estrategias de regulación de sus emociones, basadas en los antecedentes (p. ej., seleccionar o modificar la situación, prestar atención y hacer cambios cognitivos) o en la respuesta (p. ej., suprimir la emoción, respirar profundamente, escribir diarios, conversar con colegas o estudiantes, escuchar música y ver películas). Se concluye con recomendaciones para futuras investigaciones e implicaciones para gestores de políticas, docentes y formadores de docentes.

Palabras clave: Bután, comportamiento disruptivo, docentes, emociones de los docentes, estrategias de regulación de emociones

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Introduction

Teaching is an emotionally charged profession (Derakhshan et al., 2023; Kariou et al., 2021), as it is inherently intertwined with emotions (Frenzel, 2014; Pekrun, 2006). Teachers experience several emotions (both pleasant and unpleasant) in their profession and classroom environments (Pekrun, 2006). Some pleasant emotions often experienced by teachers include joy, pride, happiness, satisfaction, and optimism, while unpleasant emotions include stress, exhaustion, sorrow, irritability, disappointment, frustration, and empathetic concern, among others (Pekrun, 2006). These emotions often stem from teachers' working environment, students, colleagues, individual achievements, assessments, classroom management skills, facilities, institutional and leaders' support, and so on (de Ruiter et al., 2020; Derakhshan et al., 2023; Sutton et al., 2009). Research suggests that teachers employ various emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) to tackle their emotions (Gross, 1998; Sutton, 2004; Sutton et al., 2009). In this regard, antecedent-focused and response-focused ERSs have been identified as some common strategies employed by teachers. While antecedent-focused ERSs involve actions individuals take before experiencing emotions, response-focused ERSs pertain to ongoing emotional experiences (Gross, 1998). Earlier theories (Frenzel, 2014; Gross, 1998, 2014) and studies (Chang & Taxer, 2021; Derakhshan et al., 2023; Phan & Pham, 2023) have identified situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, emotion suppression, emotional reappraisal, deep breathing, reflection, self-talk, and so forth, as some antecedent-focused and response-focused ERSs commonly used by teachers to address their emotional experiences in their profession.

It is evident in the literature that teachers' emotions are regarded as one of the important aspects of the teaching profession because they are directly related to a sense of well-being, the success of instructional practices, professional conduct, teaching, the teacher–student relationship, and overall classroom effectiveness (de Ruiter et al., 2020; Frenzel et al., 2021; Gross, 2002; Wang et al., 2023). Simply put, teachers' emotional states play a critical role in education because positive emotions are frequently linked to a better classroom environment, whereas negative emotions have the opposite effect. Given the significance of teachers' emotional states in the field of teaching and learning, research has discovered and documented a variety of sources that cause teachers' emotions and subsequent ERSs. However, little has been said about teachers' emotions in response to students' disruptive behaviour (SDB), that is, what types of emotions teachers experience when students exhibit disruptive behaviour in the classrooms and how teachers regulate those emotions. More specifically, it appears that Bhutanese educational researchers have overlooked the above-mentioned phenomena, although SDB has always been one of the pressing issues in Bhutan (Wangdi & Namgyel, 2022). One should be aware that SDB is a threat to the well-being of both teachers and students, as well as the classroom environment. More so, SDB triggers negative emotions in teachers (Wang et al., 2023), which influences teaching practices, classroom conduct, and classroom instruction (de Ruiter et al., 2020).

Therefore, to help teachers improve their teaching experience, well-being, and life at large, educational agencies must understand and document the nuances of emotions teachers feel due to SDB and the ERSs used to tackle these emotions. This study was thus conducted to explore "what" kind of emotions teachers experience as a result of SDB and "how" they regulate these emotions, as one of the underrepresented topics in the international research literature (Wangdi & Dhendup, 2024). The findings may help educators develop emotional intelligence by understanding the emotions triggered by SDB and the successful ERSs employed by Bhutanese English teachers.

Theoretical Framework

Emotion Regulation Theory

Emotion regulation refers "to shaping which emotion one has when one has them, and how one experiences and expresses these emotions" (Gross, 1998, p. 224). Owing to the importance of understanding how people shape their emotions, Gross (1998) proposed a theoretical framework: the process model of emotion regulation. This theory suggests that individuals actively monitor and modify their emotions in response to situational demands. Gross (1998) outlined two primary forms of ERSs: antecedent-focused (e.g., reappraisal) and response-focused (e.g., suppression). Antecedent-focused ERSs involve actions taken prior to an emotional response occurring. This includes situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, and cognitive change (Gross, 1998, 2002). According to Gross (2008, 2014), situation selection means choosing whether to address or avoid situations that trigger emotions, while situation modification entails altering the environment to change its emotional effect. Attention deployment refers to directing one's focus towards or away from stimuli of emotions, while cognitive change involves reassessing the situation or one's ability to manage it to alter emotions. Response-focused strategies encompass techniques that influence ongoing emotional experiences, expressions, or physiological responses, such as intensifying, diminishing, prolonging, or curtailing emotions (Gross, 1998, 2014).

According to Yan et al. (2022), response-focused strategies include expressive suppression (inhibiting the outward expression of emotions) and acceptance (acknowledging and allowing emotions to be experienced without trying to change or suppress them). Expressive suppression refers to altering one's response to prevent expressive behaviour from emotion (Gross, 1998, 2014). Teachers use expressive suppression by ignoring their feelings of anger in the classroom, treating the emotion as if it is not affecting them. Gross (2002) noted that expressive suppression takes place later in the emotional response process, primarily reducing observable behaviours without significantly mitigating negative emotions. Teachers employ this strategy because they believe it is inappropriate to express such emotions towards students (Sutton, 2004). Other response-focused strategies may include distraction techniques, relaxation exercises, and seeking social support.

In the context of the current study, teachers may employ different ERSs to regulate emotions in response to SDB. It is a well-established fact that teachers experience an array of emotions, including frustration, anger, and stress, when their students misbehave in the classrooms (Chang, 2013; de Ruiter et al., 2020; Xu & Klassen, 2023). By understanding teachers' ERSs prompted by SDB, educators and researchers can develop interventions and support systems to help teachers effectively manage their emotions and promote a positive learning environment for all students.

Disruptive Behaviour

Disruptive behaviour refers to a range of behaviours exhibited by students in the classroom (Wangdi & Namgyel, 2022), such as problems regulating emotions, non-compliance, aggression, and not obeying societal and classroom norms (Mahvar et al., 2018). Disruptive behaviours interfere with learning activities, can be psychologically and physically unsafe, and can cause property damage (Mahvar et al., 2018). Previous studies have documented SDB commonly observed in classrooms, which include talking without permission, disturbing other students, sleeping in class, coming late to class, shifting from one chair to another, drawing in the class, making inappropriate comments, engaging in arguments with peers or teachers (Kessels & Heyder, 2020; Smith et al., 2022; Wangdi & Namgyel, 2022), non-compliance with classroom rules and instructions (Smith et al., 2022), attention-seeking behaviours (Cicekci & Sadik, 2019), and aggressive behaviours such as bullying,

intimidation, or physical altercations. These behaviours negatively impact the classroom environment, learning process, student achievement, teacher instruction, and students' and teachers' well-being (Smith et al., 2022; Wangdi & Namgyel, 2022). More specifically, SDB is believed to trigger emotions in teachers (Chang & Taxer, 2021; de Ruiter et al., 2020), which is intricately linked to their occupational and psychological well-being (Li et al., 2023). When faced with SDB, teachers often feel emotions such as frustration, stress, anger, disappointment, and annoyance, amongst others (Wang et al., 2023; Xu & Klassen, 2023). One might say that SBD plays the most important role in teachers' emotional experiences because it is ubiquitous and occurs daily.

Teachers' Emotions and Regulation Strategies

Prior research has documented that the roots of teachers' emotions are multifaceted and involve various factors (Frenzel et al., 2021). On the one hand, teachers' emotions are believed to be triggered by past experiences and well-being (Wang et al., 2023). On the other hand, teachers' emotions are often found to be elicited by situational factors such as classroom dynamics, administrative support, and workload demands (Buckman & Pittman, 2021; de Morais et al., 2023; de Ruiter et al., 2020). Teachers' prior experience and well-being as triggers of their emotions are well elucidated in research conducted by de Ruiter et al. (2020) in the Netherlands with elementary school teachers. The study discovered that teachers react more negatively to classroom events involving students perceived to have a history of disruptive behaviour, with anger being especially pronounced. Additionally, their research found that teachers' emotional responses—particularly feelings of anger—were related to their occupational well-being. Moreover, SDB, lack of student engagement, and poor teacher–student relationships also trigger emotions in teachers, particularly negative ones such as frustration, anger, stress, and anxiety (de Ruiter et al., 2019; de Ruiter et al., 2020). Recently, Xu and Klassen (2023) investigated the emotions experienced by Chinese and British teachers in response to SDB and found that both groups showed a variety of negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, hopelessness, shame, sadness, and annoyance. Among these emotions, annoyance and anger were reported as the most intense across the groups, with Chinese teachers reporting suggestively higher levels of apprehension than British.

Therefore, teachers often find ways to regulate their emotions to maintain their well-being (Gross, 1998; Shaifuddin & Wahid, 2022). In this context, Shaifuddin and Wahid (2022) conducted a literature review on ERSs used by science teachers to improve their individual and social well-being, and they discovered that intrinsic, antecedent-focused, cognitive change, acceptance, and appraisal were the teachers' most commonly used ERSs. Recently, Derakhshan et al. (2023) investigated Iranian EFL teachers' emotional experiences and regulation strategies during assessment practices and found that they experience an array of both positive (e.g., love, confidence, hope) and negative emotions (guilt, doubt, shame, etc.) during assessment and then use various preventive and responsive strategies to regulate these emotions. The researchers found that teachers use antecedent-focused strategies like optimism, self-talk, and reflection, as well as response-focused strategies like deep breathing and emotion projection. Other techniques used by the teachers included walking, drinking, and changing their body language when confronted with emotional triggers. In another study, Phan and Pham (2023) investigated the ERS used by Vietnamese language teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic while teaching online. The study concluded that teachers frequently used in-the-moment and out-of-class ERSs. In-the-moment regulation strategies included techniques like deep breathing and mindfulness, whereas out-of-class included engaging in reflection, seeking support, and self-care. Overall, it can be concluded that teachers

use many antecedent-focused and response-focused ERSs, both inside and outside classrooms (Li et al., 2023; Shaifuddin & Wahid, 2022).

Due to the importance of teachers' emotions and their regulatory responses to those emotions, several studies have investigated both the triggers and ERSs used by teachers in various contexts. However, the literature survey revealed that only a limited number of studies (Chang & Taxer, 2021; de Ruiter et al., 2019; de Ruiter et al., 2020; Xu & Klassen, 2023) have attempted to explore these phenomena. For example, de Ruiter et al. (2019), de Ruiter et al. (2020), and Xu and Klassen (2023) explored teachers' emotional journey regarding SDB, and Chang and Taxer (2021) examined how teachers regulate their emotions in response to SDB (i.e., non-cooperative, defiant, immature, physical or verbal aggression, loud, clowning around, being distracted), identifying that teachers in the USA use various ERSs such as response modulation strategies (suppression/masking), attention deployment, cognitive change, and situation modification.

Moreover, there appears to be a knowledge gap regarding the phenomenon discussed in this study in the Bhutanese context. There is no evidence in the literature that delves into the emotions of Bhutanese teachers triggered by SDB and regulation strategies. Thus, to fill this literature gap, this study was conducted to explore the emotions experienced by Bhutanese English teachers due to SDB and their regulation strategies. Furthermore, Frenzel (2014) noted that emotions are situational and subjective (depending on the individual), and Frenzel et al. (2021) found that teachers' emotions are context-specific and difficult to capture. These two arguments, concerning potential variation in teachers' emotions across the contexts, suggest that the emotions highlighted thus far among teachers worldwide, including their regulatory strategies, may differ from those of Bhutanese teachers. This was an added reason for conducting this study. This study's findings are hoped to help teachers in Bhutan and beyond in dealing with their emotional crises and, as a result, improve their well-being, which is inextricably linked to their teaching and, most importantly, to learners' learning and life. One should keep in mind that SDB is regarded as a threat in the field of teaching and learning. We must also remember that teachers face SDB daily and that daily emotional experiences, particularly negative ones, can be detrimental to teachers' job satisfaction and well-being (Buckman & Pittman, 2021; Gross, 1998; Shaifuddin & Wahid, 2022). Hence, educators must understand both emotions and ERSs to effectively deal with emotions in their classroom and the profession at large.

Research Questions

1. What types of SDB do English language teachers in Bhutan report encountering?
2. What types of emotions do English language teachers in Bhutan experience when students exhibit disruptive behaviour in the classroom?
3. What types of ERSs do English teachers in Bhutan use in response to emotions caused by SDB in the classroom?

Method

Research Design and Participants

We employed a qualitative research approach to answer the research questions. Twenty-five (men = 13, women = 12) Bhutanese in-service English language teachers from 14 public schools, with teaching experience ranging from 3 to 20 years, voluntarily participated in this study. Their ages ranged from 23 to 48. Three participants held a bachelor's degree in language and education, four had a postgraduate degree in language and education, and the remaining 18 had master's degrees in English. They were all Bhutanese teaching in different districts of the country. When this study was conducted, five participants taught in rural areas, 14 in semi-urban areas, and six in urban areas. Codes (e.g., P1, P2) were used to protect participants' identity.

Instruments

Data were gathered using a survey (Appendix A) and semi-structured interviews (Appendix B). The survey had seven questions on participants' demographic information, and the semi-structured interview had six questions. We followed Adams's (2015) suggestion to use semi-structured interviews "to ask questions on topics that . . . respondents might not be candid about if sitting with peers in a focus group" (p. 494). Given that this study explored individuals' emotional experiences and regulation strategies, we assumed that some emotions (e.g., insecurity, depression, fear) experienced by teachers would be sensitive about and would not be willing to share in front of their peers if data were collected, for example, through focus groups. The semi-structured interview questions focused mainly on exploring teachers' emotional experiences regarding SDB and their ERSs. To improve the credibility of the instrument, we referred to Adams's (2015) recommendations on how to draft semi-structured interview questions. Moreover, a qualitative research expert validated the drafted questions, and pilot interviews with two randomly selected English teachers in Bhutan were conducted to improve their accuracy before being used in this study.

Data Collection

Using a selective convenience sampling method, the second author sent a letter of invitation to English teachers across the country via email and other online platforms such as Facebook, WeChat, and Telegram, primarily to those who were acquainted with the researcher. The invitation letter contained a brief description of the research and its objectives, a Google Form that requested demographic information, and a consent form that informed teachers about their voluntary participation. Teachers who signed the consent form were contacted, and an online meeting was scheduled for interviews at their convenience. After receiving the date and time from teachers, we conducted a series of online interviews (through Zoom). The individual in-depth semi-structured interview, which used bilingual options to respond, lasted an average of 30 minutes for each participating teacher. We recorded the interviews with permission from the participants. We then conducted verbatim transcriptions of each interview for thematic analysis. To guarantee that the extracted data were accurate, we repeatedly listened to and watched the recorded interview videos while transcribing.

Data Analysis

Prior to data analysis, we created the coding scheme using an inductive and deductive approach (Burla et al., 2008). The inductive approach used data from pilot interviews, and the codes generated were validated by the same two pilot participants. Next, we added some codes from the literature reviewed for this study to supplement the potential missing codes (emotions) that previous studies have highlighted as teachers' emotions about different aspects, including SDB. The final coding scheme consisted of code name (e.g., angry, happy, sad) for both positive and negative emotions, code definition (e.g., anger = participants getting angry because of SDB), text examples (e.g., I get angry when my students' exhibit disruptive behaviour), and coding rules (0 = *disagree* and 1 = *agree to the generated codes*). We sent the final coding scheme to an expert to improve its validity, and a few modifications were made based on the suggestions. The final revised coding scheme served as a reference throughout the coding process of this study.

Following, we thematically analysed the participants' responses, employing Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines to answer the research questions. During the initial phase of gaining familiarity with the data, we read and re-read the participants' responses and removed irrelevant data. In the second phase, data coding, each of us independently coded the data using a coding scheme to compare it later and thus improve the credibility and reliability of the generated codes.

The inter-coder agreement between the two coders was measured using Krippendorff's alpha (α), and it yielded a value of 0.88, which is satisfactory (Krippendorff, 2019). In the third phase, we searched for relevant themes by revisiting the codes. Then, in the fourth and fifth phases, we reviewed and named the generated themes. Nine sub-themes emerged under one predetermined main theme: student disruptive behaviours for Research Question 1, 10 sub-themes for Research Question 2 under the main theme "emotions," and 13 sub-themes under the main theme "emotion regulation strategies." The generated themes, sub-themes, and codes were then emailed to participants for member checking and to a scholar friend for audit trial (Creswell & Miller, 2000). While participants did not provide feedback or suggestions indicating agreement, a scholar friend did, which we included in the final report. The final phase was producing the report. By adopting an insider researcher position (Holmes, 2020) and being reflexive throughout this study, we provided detailed descriptions of the study's findings and the process involved (see Holmes, 2020, for the advantages of an insider position). The findings of the current study were considered credible, trustworthy, and authentic because they were confirmed through inter-coder agreement, member checking, auditing, and providing information about the researchers' positionality.

Results

Disruptive Behaviours

Although the primary objectives of this study were to explore English teachers' emotions in response to SDB and the ERS they used, it was felt necessary to first understand the different types of SDB that English teachers in Bhutan have encountered or are experiencing. For this reason, the first research question explored the types of disruptive behaviour that Bhutanese students exhibit in the English classroom. In doing so, the findings reveal nine common SDBs. To quantify the findings, the frequency of reported disruptive behaviours was counted and given in parentheses. Among nine disruptive behaviours extracted in this study, untimely talking (13) emerged as the most prevalent, followed by lack of attention (10), sleeping in class (7), inappropriate gestures (6), moving in the class (5), shouting (4), and laughing (4). Other disruptive behaviours, such as coming late to class, frequent washroom visits, looking out of the window, and unyielding arguments among students, occur with varying frequencies.

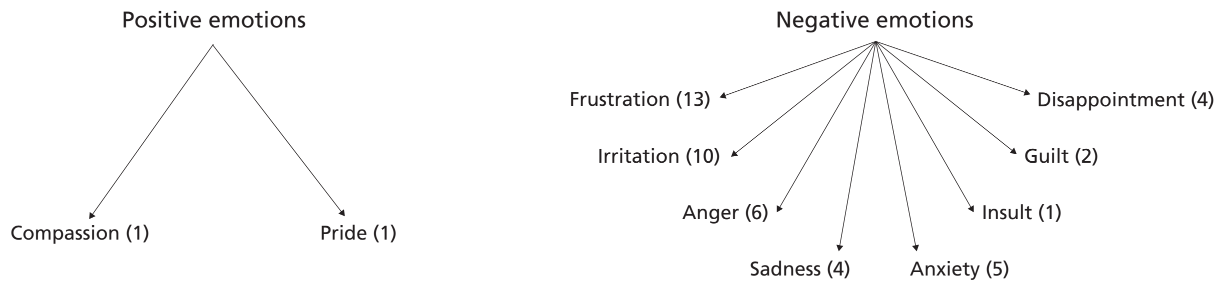
Emotions

The second finding of the study revealed that the participating teachers had experienced both negative and positive emotions in response to SDB in the classroom. The participants reported having experienced negative emotions such as frustration, sadness, guilt, disappointment, insult, irritation, anger, and anxiety (see Figure 1). Among these, frustration (13), irritation (10), anger (6), anxiety (5), and disappointment (4) were the most frequently mentioned emotions. The following excerpts further support these findings:

> I usually feel sad and guilty. I feel sad, especially when my students do not pay attention or show any interest in my teaching. At the same time, I feel guilty because I sometimes feel like I am not helping my students learn and that I am failing as a teacher. (P7)
>
> Honestly, I go through all types of negative emotions whenever I encounter disciplinary issues in my classrooms. I feel frustrated, angry, insulted, and anxious because when I was a student, I was not like them, I would attentively listen to whatever my teacher said. (P17)
>
> Whenever my students misbehave in my classroom, such as not arriving on time, it triggers my anger and frustration. It is disappointing because when students come late, it disrupts my instruction and teaching. (P24)

Surprisingly, in addition to these negative emotions, a few participants commented on unexpected positive emotions. These participants see SDB as an

Figure 1. Types of Emotions Experienced by Teachers



opportunity to practice compassion (1) and a source of pride (1). This finding suggested that, despite the challenges, teachers find moments of pride and see SDB as a platform to practice compassion. For instance, P24 opined,

> Well, I always try to look at negative emotions through a positive lens. To answer your question, whenever I have a classroom full of misbehaving students, I view it as an opportunity to practice forgiveness. I am a Buddhist, and we believe that our hardships and enemies are the best teachers for practicing compassion. (P3)

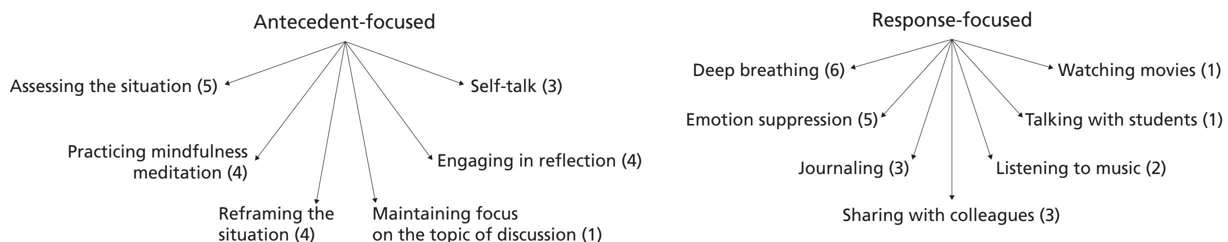
Emotion Regulation Strategies

The third finding revealed that participants use various ERSs in response to SDB. Participants reported using both antecedent- and response-focused ERSs (see Figure 2). Antecedent-focused ERSs included assessing the situation (5), fostering optimism (4), practising mindfulness meditation (4), reframing the situation (4), engaging in reflection (4), self-talk (3), and maintaining focus on the topic of discussion (1). Some relevant interview excerpts are included below to supplement these findings.

> Normally, I try to be positive in all kinds of situations. As for students' disruptive behaviour, I always consider the nature of the lesson I deliver, the attributing factors such as weather conditions, classroom size, and of course the personal mood of a child before I emotionally react to them. (P6)
>
> I often practice self-talk before my emotions take over me due to students' disruptive behaviour. Every evening, I perform mindfulness meditation too and it helps make me emotionally strong. (P18)
>
> I reframe the situation in a more positive light. I seek support from colleagues, mentors, and counsellors. I do maintain a positive perspective by reminding myself of their larger goals and values as teachers. (P23)

Participants also used response-focused ERSs such as deep breathing (6), emotion suppression (5), journaling (3), sharing with colleagues (3), listening

Figure 2. Teachers' Emotion-Regulation Strategies



to music (2), watching movies (1), and talking with students (1) to manage the emotions experienced due to SDB. To support these findings, some interview excerpts are provided below.

> Although I get frustrated inside when my students misbehave in my classroom, I would never express it in front of them because I do not want them to know what is going on inside me. So, I just continue teaching by suppressing my emotions. (P4)
>
> I usually regulate my emotions after class. I keep a personal diary in which I write about my daily interesting experiences, I talk with trusted colleagues/friends, and I occasionally listen to music and watch movies to improve my mood. (P22)
>
> Whenever I encounter disruptive behaviour, I calm myself down and then confront the learners by verbally correcting them and making them aware of how it affects their environment. (P24)

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate Bhutanese English teachers' emotional responses to SDB and their subsequent ERSs. Before delving into the main objectives of this study, it was felt necessary to understand the types of disruptive behaviours that students in the context exhibit in the class. In so doing, it was found that teachers faced several SDBs (see Figure 1), most of which were in line with what Wangdi and Namgyel (2022) delineated in the same context. Teachers reported nine types of SDBs, including disruptive behaviours, lack of attention, sleeping in class, inappropriate gestures, moving in the class, shouting, and laughing, were prominent disruptive behaviours among Bhutanese students. Similar disruptive behaviours were highlighted by previous studies (e.g., Kessels & Heyder, 2020; Smith et al., 2022) in their respective contexts, indicating that SDB is a ubiquitous phenomenon that teachers experience daily.

Our findings on emotions revealed that teachers had experienced a variety of pleasant and unpleasant emotions triggered by SDB (see Figure 2). The discovery of multiple types of teachers' emotions in this study is theoretically supported by Pekrun's (2006) and Frenzel et al.'s (2021) conceptual frameworks that underscore that teachers' emotions are multi-componential. Therefore, we believe it is reasonable to conclude that teachers' emotions in response to SDB are also *multifaceted*. The participants, however, reported experiencing more negative than positive emotions. There were eight negative and two positive emotions. The finding of having more negative emotions expressed by the participants was not surprising, given that SDB is generally associated with negative outcomes. Earlier studies by Chang (2013), de Ruiter et al. (2019), and de Ruiter et al. (2020) have also highlighted teachers' emotions, mostly negative, due to SDB. Next, somewhat unexpectedly, a small number of participants conveyed "seeing the light in the darkness." These participants noted that they experienced positive emotions in response to SDB. This finding appeared to be different from previous studies (Chang, 2013; de Ruiter et al., 2019; de Ruiter et al., 2020; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2019; Xu & Klassen, 2023) in that most of them have only highlighted the negative emotions (e.g., anger, frustration) of teachers prompted by SDB. Thus, the findings of this study argue that SDB, although often viewed as a cause of unpleasant emotions (Chang, 2013), may also induce positive emotions in teachers.

In this study, participants reported experiencing negative emotions such as frustration, sadness, guilt, disappointment, insult, irritation, anger, and anxiety as a result of SDB. Of these negative emotions, frustration, irritation, anger, anxiety, and disappointment were the most frequent. These findings are consistent with Chang's (2013) and McGrath and Van Bergen's (2019) studies, particularly in terms of frustration and anger being dominant emotions among teachers in response to SDB. Moreover, empirically, the current findings on negative emotions were partially consistent with Xu and Klassen (2023), who recently investigated the emotional involvement of teachers from China and

Britain because of SDB. It was partially consistent in that only anger, anxiety, and sadness were the same; the other emotions, such as guilt, disappointment, insult, and irritation, were not highlighted in their study. This finding of the potential uniqueness of emotions across different education contexts supports the theoretical assumptions made by Frenzel (2014) and Frenzel et al. (2021) on teachers' emotions. Frenzel (2014) stated that teachers' emotions are situational and subjective (individual-dependent), and Frenzel et al. (2021) asserted that teachers' emotions are context-specific. This could be the reason why the emotions expressed by Bhutanese participants differ slightly from those discussed by Xu and Klassen (2023), indicating that teachers' emotions due to SDB may vary depending on the context, culture, tradition, beliefs, values, and the individual's approach to dealing with it.

Although SDB is frequently associated with negative emotions (de Ruiter et al., 2019; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2019), this study found that SDB can also cause pleasant emotions. A few participants mentioned feeling compassionate, proud, and motivated when encountering SDB. This finding supports the claim made by Frenzel (2014) that teachers' emotions are relational to individuals. It appears that regardless of what triggers emotions in teachers, the outcome of their emotional experiences is determined by how they translate and react to the situations, negatively or positively. For instance, one participant said that he considers SDB, which is most likely caused by uninteresting lessons and classroom activities, as a source of motivation to learn and practice various teaching methods, which gives him a sense of pride later if they are successful. Likewise, another participant stated that she tries to view negative situations (disruptive behaviour in this case) as an opportunity to practice her compassion, rooted in her spirituality. This finding extends the previous understanding of teachers' emotions that they are multi-componential, context-dependent, culture-dependent, and subjective (individual-dependent; Frenzel, 2014; Frenzel et al., 2021; Sutton & Harper, 2009) by introducing a new construct that teachers' emotions may also be influenced by their "spirituality" levels.

In response to the emotions experienced due to SDB, it was found that teachers have used several ERSs to maintain their well-being (Gross, 1998; Shaifuddin & Wahid, 2022). These ERSs are discussed below, considering emotion regulation theory (Gross, 1998). The emotion regulation theory suggests that individuals actively regulate their emotions using antecedent- and response-focused strategies to deal with situational demands. In line with this theory, the findings revealed that the participants had used both antecedent- and response-focused ERSs to tackle their emotions, particularly negative ones. The antecedent-focused ERSs used by the participants included situation selection (e.g., assessing the situation), situation modification (e.g., reframing the situation and seeking support from colleagues or mentors), attention deployment (e.g., maintaining focus on the topic of discussion), and cognitive change (e.g., self-talk, engaging in reflection, meditation, fostering optimism). The participants' most frequently used ERSs were situation selection and cognitive change. This finding resonated with the findings of de Morais et al. (2023), who found situation selection and cognitive change as the most frequently used ERSs among Brazilian teachers. However, attention deployment appeared to be the least used ERS among our participants. The only attention deployment used was sticking to the topic of discussion, meaning the lesson and ignoring students' behaviour. The possible reason why teachers might not have used attention deployment in this study as frequently as other ERSs could be because of time constraints. In Bhutan, class periods are only 45 minutes long. Consequently, teachers may have considered that *physical withdrawal* (i.e., closing eyes and ears) and *external redirection* (i.e., moving away from lessons)—which are some attention deployment regulation strategies (Gross, 2008, 2014)—could consume time and potentially lead to incomplete lesson

coverage for the day. Another possible explanation is that the participants could be unaware of ERSs. Bhutanese teachers receive explicit formation in teaching, classroom management, materials development, and other areas as part of their teaching education program. Still, they are not taught how to regulate emotions in particular, leaving them with limited knowledge of ERSs.

Coming to response-focused ERSs, participants employed approaches such as deep breathing, emotion suppression, journaling, sharing with colleagues, listening to music, watching movies, and talking with students to manage their emotions while their students exhibited disruptive behaviour. The most common response-focused ERSs utilised by the participants were breathing deeply and emotion suppression. This finding was somewhat consistent, but in a different context—such as during assessment and the COVID-19 pandemic—with previous studies (Derakhshan et al., 2023; Phan & Pham, 2023). Both studies, conducted in the Iranian and the Vietnamese contexts, highlighted that teachers, in their respective contexts, frequently use deep breathing and emotion suppression, along with other strategies, to regulate their emotions. The potential implication can be that deep breathing and emotion suppression could be a common practice of ERSs among Asian teachers. This interpretation, however, needs to be confirmed later by comparing the most common ERSs among Asian and (for example) Western teachers. This said, although deep breathing was not mentioned, Sutton and Harper (2009) asserted that people with Asian values are more likely to suppress their emotions than those with Western values. This claim partially validates our earlier assumptions concerning the potential variation of ERSs between Asian and Western teachers. Overall, the findings that participants have used different antecedent- and response-focused strategies to control their emotions are theoretically supported by Gross's (1998, 2014) seminal works on ERSs, which stated that teachers will use different ERSs in response to various situations to improve their well-being. The current findings on ERSs were also relatable to the empirical study conducted by Chang and Taxer (2021) with teachers in the United States. These authors found that their participants use different ERSs, such as response modulation strategies (suppression/masking), attention deployment, cognitive change, and situation modification, to tackle their emotions regarding SDB.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Implications

Admittedly, numerous studies have investigated teachers' emotions as a phenomenon, the sources of teachers' emotions, and, more recently, ERSs used by teachers in response to their emotions in different settings. However, the literature revealed that not much has been discussed about teachers' emotions concerning SDB and, more specifically, what kinds of emotions teachers experience regarding SDB and how they regulate these emotions. Thus, the present study explored the types of SDBs that Bhutanese English language teachers have encountered, their emotional reactions to these behaviours, and the ERSs they use to deal with their emotions. The results revealed that Bhutanese teachers had experienced many SDBs in their classrooms, most of which were similar to what had been highlighted by the previous studies. This consistent finding with the literature led us to conclude that SDBs share similar patterns and are ubiquitous across the field of teaching and learning.

Next, based on the findings, it can be inferred that teachers experience both pleasant and unpleasant emotions as a result of SDB. The current findings were, however, slightly different from those in previous studies in that most of them have only highlighted the negative emotions of teachers over SDB. Nonetheless, the findings agree with a few theoretical concepts on teachers' emotions in general, specifically that teachers experience both positive and negative emotions in their profession (Frenzel et al., 2021; Pekrun, 2006). Another conclusion is that teachers employ different ERSs to tackle their

emotions. These ERSs were mostly in line with emotion regulation theory (Gross, 1998), which states that teachers use a variety of ERSs. In this study, teachers were found using both antecedent- (reappraisal) and response-focused (suppression) ERSs, such as situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, suppression, and so forth. The most common ERSs among current participants were situation selection, cognitive change, and emotion suppression, while attention deployment was the least used.

Although this study offers insights into teachers' emotions in response to SDB and their ERSs, we acknowledge that the study was not without limitations. The first limitation concerns the sampling method and sample size. Because participants were chosen using a selective convenience sampling method, and only a small number of teachers participated, the findings may not be transferable. Similarly, since the participants were all from Bhutan, and given that emotions are associated with one's culture, tradition, values, beliefs, and individual approach to dealing with the situation, the emotions expressed about SDB and their ERSs may not necessarily be transferable to other contexts. Future research may investigate how emotions and ERSs differ depending on the context (e.g., Western vs Asian). Furthermore, it would be interesting to conduct quantitative research to determine the impact of culture, tradition, values, beliefs, and individuals on teachers' emotional levels. Another limitation of this study was the data collection method; while the interview was conducted in-depth using guided questions, other data collection methods, such as focus group discussions and observations, could have enhanced the robustness of the current findings. Therefore, to confirm the current findings, more research with different data collection methods is required. It would be interesting for future researchers to conduct a longitudinal study on teachers' emotions and subsequent ERSs to provide strong ERSs for teachers to manage their emotions caused by SDB.

Despite its limitations, the overall results of this study may benefit researchers, ministries of education, teachers, teacher trainers, and teacher education program designers. The researchers can benefit from this study and its findings because they can use them as the basis for comparison in future studies. More so, in this study, we have highlighted several ERSs, which future researchers can use as variables to test the significance levels of each ERS in regulating emotions (quantitatively). Similarly, this study will serve as a wake-up call to ministries of education about the significance of ERS awareness among teachers and then offer teacher programs, workshops, seminars, and regular newsletters to help teachers improve their emotions and well-being in their respective contexts. Next, teachers would benefit greatly from this study because they can use the findings as a reference to deal with their own emotions in response to SDB in their classrooms. For instance, because this study has already identified the types of emotions likely to be triggered by SDB and various ERSs, teachers can either use the suggested ERSs in this study or devise their own effective ERSs to combat their emotions. Furthermore, teacher educators and program designers can incorporate the current findings into teacher education course modules. By doing this, future teachers will be well-prepared to deal with the emotions that come with their job. The incorporation of emotions and ERSs as a module may prove to be the best strategy for improving teachers' emotions in the future and, thus, their job satisfaction (Buckman & Pittman, 2021) and well-being (Gross, 1998; Shaifuddin & Wahid, 2022). However, many teacher-training institutions appear to have overlooked the ERS as a subject to learn and master.

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Appendix A: Survey Protocol

Demographic details

1. Gender:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Other

2. Age:

3. Teaching experience
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1–5 years
   c. 6–10 years
   d. 11–15 years
   e. More than 15 years

4. I teach English:
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. My school is:
   a. Rural
   b. Semi-urban
   c. Urban

6. My highest educational level is:
   a. Diploma
   b. BEd (bachelor in language and education)
   c. PEd (postgraduate)
   d. Master's
   e. PhD

7. Have you experienced students' disruptive behaviours?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What's your understanding of students' disruptive behaviour in the classroom?
2. How often do you experience students' disruptive behaviour in the classroom? What types of student disruptive behaviours do you encounter in your classrooms?
3. What do you do to prevent student disruptive behaviour in your classroom?
4. What kind of emotions (positive and negative) do you experience when you encounter students' disruptive behaviour in your classroom? Please explain.
5. How do you regulate those emotions (positive and negative) that you experience when your students exhibit disruptive behaviours in your classroom? Please explain.
6. Do you have any additional information to share with us about your experience when your students exhibit disruptive behaviours?