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Efficacious EFL Teachers' Goals and Strategies for Emotion Management: The Role of Culture in Focus

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Abstract

This research intends to explore the efficacious English teachers' goals and strategies to effectively manage their own as well as their students' emotions. The data of the study included interviews with 22 English teachers and 92 diary journals kept by 12 teachers who were among the top 20% of ELTEI (ELT teacher efficacy instrument) scorers and identified as efficacious English teachers. The results indicated that teachers' goals for regulating their positive emotions included maintaining authority in relation to students, presenting unbiased teacher character, and enhancing teaching effectiveness. For regulating negative emotions, the goals included maintaining the teacher and students' mental health, promoting teacher-student relationships, and reinforcing the image of teachers as moral guides. Teachers also used a variety of antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies hierarchically for effective emotion management including situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation. The findings were discussed with reference to the role of culture in emotion regulation and effectiveness of different sub-strategies. The results may promise some implications for teacher education programs and teacher educators about the inclusion of professional development opportunities for EFL teachers in terms of effective emotion management.

Keywords*:* Emotion regulation; Regulation strategies; Efficacious teachers; EFL context; Culture

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1. Introduction

A plethora of research indicates that differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of students' success (e.g. Cantrell, Almasi, Carter, & Rintamaa, 2013; Guo, Connor, Yang, Roehrig, & Morrison, 2012). Efficacious teachers, for example, persist in teaching the struggling students, criticizing them less frequently, and spending more time on academic instruction (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). They employ strategies that minimize the negative effect and provide students with warm interpersonal relationships and academic work (Ashton & Webb, 1986). They also have the ability to perceive and manage students' emotions, develop empathy, and effectively take control of disruptive behaviors (Coplan, Hughes, Bosacki, & Rose-Krasnor, 2011). As a result, the qualities of efficacious teachers partly involve successful management of emotions. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) also confirmed that "the substantial variation in teacher efficacy may result in part from variance in teachers' emotions" (p.339).

Despite the plethora of research on efficacious teachers' instructional activities, few rigorous studies have provided empirical support for how they manage emotions in practice. The existing literature only provides evidence on the correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and emotional intelligence (Chan, 2004; Penrose, Perry, & Ball, 2007). Yet, little is known about efficacious teachers' emotional experiences, expressions, and regulation.

Moreover, a frequently neglected issue in the discussion of teachers' emotional experience is the role of culture and subject matter (e.g. English). As Frenzel, Becker-Kurz, Pekrun, and Goetz (2015) proposed, teacher emotions systematically vary depending on the academic subject they teach since it is one of the key contextual factors that shape teachers' appraisal of situations. Nonetheless, to the best of researchers' knowledge, no study has specifically addressed the emotional experiences of EFL teachers neither in Iran nor in other cultural contexts.

Culture also shapes different aspects of people's emotional behavior. It influences not only the frequency and intensity of emotions experienced by people

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in different cultural groups (Boiger, Mesquita, Uchida, & Barrett, 2011; Kitayama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006) but also their appraisal of emotion-eliciting situations and the meanings they attach to those situations (De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2013). Moreover, emotion display rules and individuals' motivation to exercise self-regulation or self-expression are subject to the patterns of emotional response prevalent in each culture (Ford & Mauss, 2015). Yet despite its significance, few studies have directly explored the relationship between culture and teachers' emotion in the workplace.

Considering the contention, the investigation of emotional practices of efficacious EFL teachers in Iran requires further research. This line of research is particularly needed given that the prevailing pre-service and in-service courses and other professional development opportunities offer little instruction and information on teachers' emotional management. Furthermore, many teachers do not negotiate students' problems with others by reason that they may be interpreted as inefficacious in controlling students (Zembylas, 2005). Hence, teachers are left with their own interests and dispositions in addressing students' and their own emotions. The knowledge of how efficacious teachers manage their emotions is significant as it can bring about significant aid to other teachers especially the beginners. This kind of cognition is of particular significance given that teachers' emotional management is a determinant of their health and students' learning (Hargreaves, 2000)

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Teachers' emotion regulation goals

Emotional regulation has been conceptualized as "how we try to influence which emotions we have, when we have them, and how we experience and express these emotions" (Gross, 2010, p. 497). Up-regulation of emotions involves increasing the intensity or duration of the emotions whereas down-regulation contains reducing the emotional experience (Sutton & Harper, 2009). Teachers may decide to up- or

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down-regulate their emotions due to a multitude of goals including social, academic, managerial, and disciplinary ones.

Gong, Chai, Duan, Zhong, and Jiao (2013) investigated the Chinese teachers' emotion regulation goals and strategies used before, in, and after classroom teaching. The results of interviews and semi-structured questionnaires with 34 teachers indicated that they regulated their emotions in order to accomplish instruction tasks optimally and enhance teaching effectiveness. They also down-played their negative emotions so as to avoid their negative impact on students' motivation, achievement, and participation in class activities. They considered emotion regulation as a requirement of professional and ethical norms in maintaining students' mental health and self-esteem. Emotion regulation also helped them to present a good image in front of students and maintain positive teacher-student relations.

Sutton (2004) also explored emotion regulation goals and strategies of 30 teachers from the US and found that teachers regulated their emotions since it improved their teaching effectiveness through keeping them focused on the goal of academic learning. Emotion regulation also served the goal of developing nurturing relationships with students. It was also viewed as part of the teaching profession and idealized emotion teacher image.

2.2. Teachers' emotion regulation strategies

The strategies teachers use for emotion regulation have been typically divided into antecedent-focused or response-focused ones. According to Gross (1998), antecedent-focused strategies are employed before the beginning or in the initial stages of the emotional arousal and include selecting situation, modifying situation, attention deployment, and cognitive change. Situation selection involves approaching or avoiding certain situations that make the possibility of experiencing desirable (or undesirable) emotions more likely (or less likely). Modifying the situation refers to manipulating a situation in order to modify its emotional influence. Attention deployment is employed to direct attention to or move

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attention away from certain aspects of a situation. Cognitive change includes choosing a particular meaning for the selected aspect or changing the way one appraises the situation so as to impact its emotional significance. Lastly, response-focused strategies affect emotional expression and physiological or behavioral response when the emotional arousal has been already initiated.

The study by Jiang, Vauras, Volet, and Wang (2016) on 4 Finnish teachers also resulted in identification of situation selection strategies including avoiding talking to students when being angry and walking to another group of students. Situation modification involved talking to disruptive students out of class, informing students of one's own emotional state, exercising break, and talking freely. To up-regulate their positive emotions, teachers utilized attention deployment strategies, such as focusing their attention on students' increasing competence and learning gains as well as their maturity and interest in studies. Moreover, reappraisal, empathy, and self-talk were mentioned as cognitive change strategies.

The study of Gong et al., (2013) resulted in identification of situation selection strategies such as changing class schedule and walking to another group of students and continuing the class. Their use of situation modification strategies included designing some questions for students before the class, pausing for a while and recreating a good atmosphere, telling a joke, and adjusting teaching tempo. They also reported the use of attention deployment strategies of changing to another topic, neglecting the thing, and letting students do simple tasks so as to divert their attention from the problematic issue. They employed cognitive change strategies including thinking of the positive side of a thing, reflecting on issue, changing opinion about student learning, and asking advice from others. Finally, they modulated their response through deep breathing, relaxing for a while, jumping several times, controlling facial expressions, suppressing the emotions, and discussing the problem with others.

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Sutton (2004) also probed teachers' preventive and responsive regulatory strategies for effective management of their emotions. They used situation modification strategies of making students aware of their emotional state, preparing the lessons, and using specific management and teaching strategies. Examples of attention deployment strategies included talking to peers and themselves about finding joy, reading positive thoughts, and getting to school early. At the emotion cue, teachers employed cognitive change strategies such as self-talk, reflection, and considering the pervious experiences of unsuccessful emotion regulation. The behavioral strategies included physically moving away, pausing, deep breathing, and reflecting on their experience.

While the literature on teachers' emotion regulation goals and strategies is informative, most of the published research doesn't make specific reference to teachers' emotion regulation in relation to culture. The present study addresses this gap by integrating the role of culture into efficacious EFL teachers' emotion regulation goals and strategies. In the next section, the studies exploring the role of culture in people's emotion regulation will be reviewed and discussed.

2.3. The role of culture in emotion regulation

Emotions are socially constructed phenomena. Most of them unfold during social interactions with others and therefore, derive their shape and meaning from the ideas and practices in the larger socio-cultural context (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). The cultural context also plays a critical role in several aspects of individuals' emotional experience. First, it influences the development of emotions through emphasizing the interdependence or independence of individuals. In interdependent cultures, people define themselves more in relation to others, prioritize harmony and interconnection, and try to adjust to each other's expectations. By contrast, in independent cultures, people emphasize preserving each other's autonomy through focusing on each other's uniqueness and self-esteem (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012; Boiger, Mesquita, Tsai, & Markus, 2012, Ford & Mauss, 2015; Morling, Kitayama, & Miyamoto, 2002).

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Therefore, emotions which are consistent with these values, goals, and concerns are more frequently experienced and expressed in each cultural model. For example, in a context acknowledging people's autonomy such as European America, emotions which block one's goals and desires (such as anger and frustration) or on the other hand, affirm the identity of the self as an independent and disengaged entity (such as pride and superiority) were judged to happen more frequently and more intensely. Conversely, socially engaging emotions such as shame, guilt, and indebtedness were reported to be more common and intense in cultures such as Japanese valuing interconnection (Boiger, Mesquita, Uchida, & Barrett, 2012; Kitayama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006; Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000).

Second, cultures differ in the appraisals of the emotion-antecedent events (De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2013). Offense situations, for example, were interpreted as threats to individual's autonomy and self-worth in North American contexts and were expected to be resolved by maintaining high self-regard, assertiveness, and aggression. Offense situations in Japanese contexts, on the contrary, were interpreted as threats to social relationship and required individuals' understanding of the other persons' motives in order to be resolved. Accordingly, people in this context were suggested to do nothing by keeping calm and moving away in order to maintain the relationship and harmony (Mesquita et al., unpublished cited in Boiger, Mesquita, 2012).

Third, culture impacts emotion display rules and individuals' motivation to exercise self-regulation (Ford & Mauss, 2015). As such, people from collectivist cultures such as Asian American and Japanese contexts tended to use emotion regulation more frequently and exert greater levels of emotion suppression in comparison to European American sample (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006, Matsumoto, Yoo, & Fontaine, 2008). Culture also affects the adaptiveness of emotion regulation. That is, whether emotion regulation is considered good or bad

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for maintaining appropriate and healthy relationships (Ford & Mauss, 2015). For example, Chinese people considered suppression influential in interpersonal harmony and reinforcing social values (Wei, Su, Carrera, Lin, & Yi, 2013). Alternatively, European Americans associated it with experiential avoidance (Su, Wei, & Tsai, 2014). Finally, cultures differ in dealing with status and power relationship. As a consequence, they will expect the expression of emotions that maintain status and power and avoid emotions that threaten this differential (Matsumoto, 2006).

While the literature reviewed here highlights the significance of cultural context in emotion experience and expression, the research on individualistic culture has mainly focused on Western countries such as the US and Australia and the research on collectivist cultures has been primarily conducted in China and Japan. Nonetheless, emotion expression and experience in other cultural contexts has been largely neglected. Furthermore, many cross-cultural studies of emotions have examined emotion expression in social situations. Few studies have analyzed the role of culture in relation to teachers' emotion regulation, where the only exception is the study conducted by Hagenauer, Gläser-Zikuda, and Volet (2016). They studied how university teachers in two individualistic countries (Australia and German) displayed their emotions and what they perceived as an ideal teacher-student relationship. Their results indicated that emotion display rules were different in the two cultural educational contexts. The majority of Australian teachers displayed their positive emotions immediately, but they were reluctant to communicate their anger in a direct and immediate manner. Their German counterparts, on the other hand, expressed their positive emotions less directly, but displayed their anger immediately.

This study aims to probe the efficacious EFL teachers' goals and strategies for emotion regulation as applied in the context of schools for gifted students in Iran. More specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What goals do efficacious EFL teachers have for their emotional regulation?

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2. What strategies do efficacious EFL teachers use to regulate their emotions?
3. What is the role of Iranian culture in efficacious EFL teachers' emotion regulation?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

One part of the data in this study was collected through interviews with 22 efficacious teachers teaching English to students of secondary and tertiary levels (ages 13-18) in South Khorasan province in Iran. A second part of the data was generated through diary journals completed by 12 of the efficacious English teachers. In both methods, efficacious teachers were those who obtained the top 20% score on ELT teacher efficacy instrument (ELTEI) (Akbari & Tavassoli, 2014) and who consented to participate in the study. The interviewed teachers were mainly males (69.5%, N=16) and 21 were M.A holders or PhD. candidates (one participant had BA in TEFL). The teachers completing the diary were 58.3% female (N=7) and all were M.A holders or PhD. candidates. The average age of the participants in both methods was 38 (range 30-48) and the mean number of years they had been teaching was 17 with ranging from 6 to 26. All teachers were teaching in schools for gifted students and some were concurrently teaching in ordinary schools at the time of study. In addition to teaching at school, 38% of the teachers had the experience of leading pre-service and in-service courses and teaching at the universities for teacher education.

3.2. Instrument

Three instruments were utilized in this study:

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3.2.1. ELT teacher efficacy instrument

The efficacious teachers participating in this study were selected through administrating the ELT teacher efficacy instrument (ELTEI) (Akbari & Tavassoli, 2014) to 200 English teachers in South Khorasan province in Iran. The selection of the instrument was informed by the fact that teacher efficacy is a subject and context specific construct (Tschannen- Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). That is, teachers may feel efficacious for teaching particular subjects to particular students in specific contexts, while they feel less efficacious under other circumstances. To address the specificity of the construct in terms of subject matter and context, ELTEI was selected as the more appropriate alternative. It is a scenario-based instrument containing 32 items and focuses on 7 components of English teaching including: 1) efficacy in classroom management and remedial action; 2) efficacy in classroom assessment and materials selection; 3) efficacy in skill and proficiency adjustment; 4) efficacy in teaching and correcting language components; 5) efficacy in age adjustment; 6) efficacy in social adaptation; and 7) core efficacy. Each item on the scale provides simulations of ELT classroom life on which teachers are supposed to indicate the degree to which it applies to them on a 5-point Likert-scale. A total score was obtained for each participant by adding the relevant item responses in each scale reflecting participant's self-efficacy. The computed reliability coefficient for the self-efficacy scale obtained through Cronbach's alpha was .83.

3.2.2. Interview

The data for the present study were collected and coded using grounded theory research approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) whose aim is to provide a detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation and identify the relationship between concepts related to the phenomena with a sufficient level of saturability (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Therefore, 2 rounds of interviews were conducted with each round lasting from 20 to 60 minutes. The input for interview protocol was mainly adapted from methodological procedures in other studies on emotions (Hargreaves, 2001; Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura, 2011; Sutton, 2004;

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Yin & Lee, 2012). The entire protocol contained 40 questions incorporating aspect of teachers' emotional relationship with their students, colleagues, school principals and parents in addition to semi-structured and unstructured questions used to further investigate the issue under discussion. Respondents were asked to reflect on emotional experiences with each group of individuals in the work place and report on critical "emotional incidents" (Erb, 2002) or "significant emotional episodes" (Hargreaves, 2000) which were emotionally salient enough to be recalled. In this article, only those questions related to teachers' emotion regulation goals and strategies are presented. A list of interview questions is provided in Appendix A.

3.2.3. The emotion diary

Interviewing data can be distorted since they are based on participants' recalling memories (Chang, 2009) and subject to memory bias (Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002). To understand teachers' day-to-day regulation strategies, a paper-and-pencil diary was used. It was adapted from Averill (1982), Oatley and Duncan (1992), and Zembylas (2002) and developed in five questions. The first question asked the participants' demographic information including age, sex, and teaching experience. The second question consisted of a list of 21 emotions from among which respondents identified the emotion(s) they felt during the episode. The list of emotions was adapted from Pekrun , Goetz , Titz and Perry (2002) as well as from Goetz, Zirogibl, Pekrun and Hall (2003) with some emotions being added during the pilot testing of the questionnaire. The list of emotions included: joy, enthusiasm, satisfaction, pride, love and affection, intimacy, relief, empathy, enjoyment, comfort, disappointment, disgust, guilt, boredom, anger, anxiety, surprise, fear, sorrow, sadness, and powerlessness.

Following, participants identified those who provoked the emotion including the respondent himself/herself, students, parents, principals, or colleagues. In the next question, they reflected on the incident (what happened?) and antecedents of

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emotion (what made you feel this way?) in an open ended format. In the last question, respondents described how they managed the emotional episode. Only the two last questions (emotional episode and respondents' treatment of emotion) were analyzed for the purpose of this study.

The diary questionnaire was translated in Persian and pilot-tested with 2 school teachers. Volunteered efficacious EFL teachers were then inquired to complete the diary and 12 consented to take part. Participants were asked to note down every event that made them feel strong for 3 months. The number of sheets was not specified and they were required to complete the diary as soon as possible after the event. Reminders were also sent at the beginning of every week to help the completion of the diaries. Overall, a corpus of 92 diary entries was compiled from teachers. The emotion diary is presented in Appendix B.

3.3. Procedures

First, the efficacious teachers were selected through administrating the ELTEI (Akbari & Tavassoli, 2014) to 200 English teachers in South Khorasan province. The respondents to the instrument were 131 females (65.5%) and 69 males (34.5 %) with the age range of 26 to 47 and the average age of 34.5 (SD=5.8). Their teaching experience varied from 1 to 26 years and the majority (47.2%) had M.A in English teaching, translation studies, linguistics, and English literature, whereas 38.5% hold B.A and 14.3% were PhD. candidates. Next, the mean efficacy score for all teachers was computed which was 1.6. The standard deviation was 23.4 and the standard error was 2.8. Finally, those teachers who were the top 20% scorers of the efficacy scale were considered as efficacious English teachers (Czemiak & Schriver, 1994). This procedure resulted in identifying 28 efficacious teachers from among whom 22 volunteered to participate in the interview and 12 consented to complete the emotion diary.

The data obtained from interviews and diary entries were content- analyzed following the same steps. The obtained data from the first round of interviews were analyzed to produce categories of teachers' regulation goals and strategies.

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Subsequent interviews were conducted to probe more details on the emergent themes, clarify inconsistencies and ambiguities, and establish saturability of analysis. The data obtained from both rounds of interviews were transcribed and coded line by line and by hand given the limitations of using computer software for grounded theory research (Glaser, 1998). The diary entries were also summarized based on the event, the emotion aroused, and teacher's treatment of the emotion. The summaries were used to provide an overview of each case and the original diary entries were used for illustration.

In both methods, the scripts and the summaries were read several times and sections of the text referring to emotion regulation goals and strategies were coded with the descriptive codes regulation goal or regulation strategy. In the next phase, sections encoded as emotion regulation strategies were refined and classified based on Gross's model(1998) which included situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation. Sections referring to regulation goals were also encoded as regulating positive emotions and regulating negative emotions. Next, each category (regulating positive and negative emotions) was reviewed to find the main themes representing teachers' reasons for regulating their emotions. This process resulted in identification of 3 goals for the regulation of positive emotions and 3 for negative emotions. The categories of goals for positive emotion regulation include maintaining authority in relation to students, presenting unbiased teacher character, enhancing teaching effectiveness, and attaining academic goals. The categories of goals representing negative emotion regulation include: maintaining teachers and students' mental health, promoting teacher-student relationships, and reinforcing the image of teachers as role models.

Several re-readings were done to ensure that all pieces of data were incorporated into analysis. Finally, segments of verbatim quotes were selected to illustrate the points. To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, a second

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researcher independently coded a set of 50 randomly-selected diaries and 8 interviews using the agreed-upon categories. The double-coding process resulted in 90.2% agreement on interview data analysis (12 disagreements from 122 coding options) and 86% agreement (7 disagreements from 50) on diary analysis. The disagreements were then discussed and the discrepancies were resolved.

4. Results

4.1. Efficacious teachers' goals for emotion regulation

Teachers' goals for emotion regulation are presented in 2 sections. The first section reports on the findings of positive emotion regulation goals and the second on negative emotion regulation goals.

4.1.1. Goals for regulating positive emotions

Teachers' goals for regulating positive emotions include maintaining authority in relation to students, presenting unbiased teacher character, enhancing teaching effectiveness, and attaining academic objectives.

Maintaining authority over students

All interviews and 34 diary entries indicated that efficacious teachers considered the incorporation of positive emotions in the classroom in order to reinvigorate students and re-stimulate their concentration power and enthusiasm. A 21 year-experienced male teacher explained the point along this line:

> *Students' attention span is limited. They aren't robots to which I can teach from the beginning to the end of the class. The maximum time they can focus their attention is 20 minutes. After that, they are gradually fed up and get distracted. To energize students we need moments of laughter and fun.* (teacher 20, interview 2)

However, while trying to maintain the classroom climate positive, efficacious teachers all reported to down-regulate their positive emotions as revealing

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excessive positivity such as joy and affection posed a threat to their authority and power in relation to students and leveled the distance that, they believed, was required to effectively lead the class. It might jeopardize the role of teacher as the manager of the class and ruin the class order necessary for learning to occur. In a diary entry, a female teacher with 26 years of experience explained how transgressing the teacher-student boundaries exposed her to others' criticism:

> *A student of mine gave me a paper from her ILI (Iran Language Institute) class and asked me to mark it by noon. I was supposed to give it back by the second break but then I was tied up and couldn't make it. In the third break, she came to the teachers' room and asked for her paper. I said I didn't make time to correct it and she said with a disrespectful tone of voice and gesture "I'm afraid." Her inappropriate behavior provoked my colleagues and principal's anger and then I was bombarded with a lot of criticisms… that why I let students talk to me this way. They all made me break out into tears.* (teacher 9, diary 11).

This excerpt shows how teachers are expected to distance themselves from students and how institutional and social expectations influence the norms and requirements of professional practice. Similar results were reported from Hagenauer and Volet's (2014) study, where teacher educators expressed positive emotions openly and verbally, but their expression was informed by the emotional boundaries they set for themselves which may imply keeping some distance from students.

Presenting unbiased teacher character

Twelve teachers stated in the interviews that their exaggerated and sustained positive emotions directed to one student or a group of students may be perceived as their discrimination and bias toward that student with the concomitant result of

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eliciting other students' negative feelings and reactions. One of the male participants with 12 years teaching experience said:

> *I would express love and affection only to the extent that it is within the limits of teacher-student relationships …. But, I believe it shouldn't be presented more tangibly between the teacher and a particular student. Otherwise, it may appear as a sort of discrimination to students* (teacher 16, interview 1).

Regulating these emotions has the positive effect of teacher's attention being distributed among the whole class and giving the shy and reserved students more motivation to engage in class activities. Similarly, the teachers in Hagenauer and Volet's (2014) research also considered personal preferences (liking or disliking particular students) incompatible with their sense of professionalism and believed that they should be completely hidden.

Enhancing teaching effectiveness and attaining academic goals

All teachers in the interviews and 64 diaries pointed to the influence of emotion regulation on the teaching process. First, emotion regulation influences time management and the subsequent achievement of identified objectives for every section of the syllabus as is illustrated in the following quote from a male teacher with 25 years of experience:

> *My syllabus and the framework I've outlined for myself is always prioritized to emotions. When I see too much happiness and letting students express it takes the class too far and makes me lag behind my program, I stop it.* (teacher 2, interview1).

Second, emotion regulation helps teachers keep themselves focused on the goal of academic learning. A male teacher having 16 years of experience evaluated the importance and incorporation of emotions in his class in line with the contribution they have to the learning process.

> *If learning is enhanced by the emotion, I'll let it go but if it impedes learning or postpones it, I'll prevent it* (teacher 11, interview 1).

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The same goal for emotion regulation is echoed in other studies (Gong, et al., 2013; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Sutton, 2004; Yin & Lee, 2012). However, in none of them, regulation of positive emotions has been mentioned as a means to achieve effectiveness. On the contrary, Gong, et al., (2013) showed that to increase instructional effectiveness teachers expressed positive emotions naturally and openly. Yin and Lee (2012) also reported that Chinese teachers enhanced teaching effectiveness through sense of humor, exaggerated face or gesture, and rhythm of speech which means open expression of positive emotions.

4.1.2. Goals for regulation of negative emotions

This section presents efficacious teachers' goals for regulation of negative emotions which include maintaining teachers and students' mental health, maintaining working teacher-student relationships, and reinforcing the image of teachers as role models.

Maintaining teachers and students' mental health

All interview accounts and 78 diary entries provided evidence for the necessity of regulating negative emotions since it influenced students' motivation and self-esteem for learning English and for other academic and social tasks. Additionally, if teachers frequently disclose their unregulated negative emotions, students may develop a sense of unreliability toward the course, schooling, and adults in general. To illustrate the point, one teacher with 24 years teaching experience wrote in his diary that he accidentally met a soldier who had been his student 6 years ago. He first didn't recognize the soldier but the soldier without any greeting and with a resentful tone asked him:

> *You know me? I'm the student who you kicked out of class 6 years ago …. And that behavior of yours made me drop out of school.* (teacher 2, diary 5).

Regulating negative emotions also has significant repercussions for teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers who are constantly involved in a range of

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negative emotions with a particular group of students gradually lose their motivation to continue with those students and to invest energy in their learning. A female interviewee with 8 of years experience commented:

> *On the whole I don't like it and I can't continue when something negative happens because the person who suffers most is me myself…. That's why I try to resolve it as soon as possible.* (teacher 18, interview 1).

Reducing the negative impact of emotions on student learning and maintaining their mental health were mentioned as goals for emotion regulation by Chinese teachers (Gong, et al., 2013). They believed that expressing negative emotions would result in students' lower motivation and achievement, frustrate their class participation, and decrease teaching effectiveness.

Maintaining working teacher-student relationships

Ten teachers interviewed agreed that through emotion display, they negotiate the threshold of their tolerance to students and define the framework for students' future behavior. If teachers' negative emotions are all masked in order to provide positive emotionality, their permissive style may result in the violation of class norms and discipline and emergence of students' unexpected and often inappropriate behaviors. By contrast, if teachers exercise rigorous control over students by disclosing their negative emotions to students' minor infractions, students may avoid any interpersonal connection to the teachers which is detrimental for their involvement and learning. A male teacher with 23 years of experience said:

> *A teacher whose emotions are shown appropriately and controllably imply to the students that he or she is not a temperamental and unpredictable person and that students can develop trusting relationships with him.* (teacher 20, interview 2).

Therefore, to maintain a working relationship with students, characterized by moderate display of emotions, teachers stated that they regulated their negative emotions. Parallel with these findings, Hagenauer and Volet (2014) also found that

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establishment of a nurturing teacher-students relationship was one the instrumental functions of conscious use of emotion display for Australian teachers.

The image of teacher as a role model

Emotion regulation goals are also governed by concepts such as the image of teacher as a role model. This conception stresses that appropriate codes of conduct and morality in the teaching profession are defined for teachers and that they are expected to conform to those codes and act as ethical and moral guides for students. Twenty teachers in the interviews and 56 diary entries indicated that this perception modified not only teachers' interpretation of event but also the emotional response they generated. The modeling role of the teacher caused them to believe that some strong reactions accompanying negative emotions are unexpected from a teacher as is shown in the following excerpt from a fifteen-year experienced male teacher:

> *I try to remind myself of the responsibilities my position has and I need this self-warning in the special moments more than others …. that I should not direct a special punishment to this student. Because definitely those emotions are created in that moment and the person may not have done that on purpose.* (teacher 10, interview 2)

Anticipating the teachers to act as moral agents and considering negative emotion regulation as part of the professional requirement have been widely discussed in other studies as well (e.g. Gong, et al., 2013; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Sutton, 2004; Yin & Lee, 2012). Overall, it is evident from the results of this study that effective emotion management by efficacious teachers means down-regulation of both positive and negatives emotions, keeping the logical distance from students, striking a balance between exaggerated leniency and excessive rigidity, and centralizing the instructional goals as teachers' primary task.

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Comparing the findings of this study with those carried out in other cultural contexts (e.g. Sutton, 2004; Yin & Lee, 2012), we realized that there are some differences with respect to positive emotion regulation. Generally, the teachers participating in this study reported to down-regulate their positive emotions while the majority of other studies provide evidence for down-regulation of negative emotions (e.g. Gross, et al., 2006).The difference in the treatment of positive emotions in this research can be attributed to cultural differences in emotional rules. Emotional rules are norms that sanction some emotions as appropriate and normal and dismiss some as inappropriate and deviant (Zembylas, 2002). The Iranian teachers are recommended to a moderate the display of positive emotions and avoid intense emotionality as a distraction to the achievement of teaching goals.

However, it seems that part of the standards and definitions of professionalism or what Hargreaves (2001) called professional geography is universal across cultures given that many cultures demands teachers to act as role models and exercise emotion regulation as a component of professional practice. The point of difference may be in emotion display expectations and rules. Yet, more research is needed to identify the similarities and differences in emotion regulation across cultures.

4.2. Efficacious teachers' strategies for emotion regulation

Efficacious teachers used a wide range of regulatory strategies including situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation. Table 1 in Appendix C presents the number of each category along with examples of the strategies provided for each in the interviews and diaries.

Situation selection

Eleven accounts in the interviews and 17 in the diaries referred to the use of this strategy by efficacious teachers. Situation selection strategy was closely associated

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with managerial and disciplinary components of classroom teaching and specification of teachers' expectations and class rules in their first encounters with students. Moreover, to avoid the occurrence of negative emotional experience, efficacious teachers sought information about students' family, economic, and social background and considered it in treating individual students and interpreting their behaviors. These strategies, while may be taken for granted by many teachers, are not reported in other studies on teachers' emotion regulation.

Furthermore, similar to teachers in Hagenauer and Volet's (2014) research, our participants concurred that they not only avoided the expression and disclosure of negative emotions unrelated to classroom context, but also as a teacher they were supposed to have control over them. Accordingly, a 24-year experienced male teacher said:

> *My personal problems should not interfere with my work. They should be left behind the door when I entered the class* (teacher 8, interview 2).

This is in contrast to the findings of Sutton (2004) and Jiang et al., (2016) as their participant teachers communicated their emotional state with students if they didn't feel physically or psychologically well.

Situation modification

Consistent with strategies employed by teachers in other cultural contexts (Gong, et al., 2013; Jiang, et al., 2016; Sutton, 2004), all teachers in the interviews and 45 accounts in the diaries reported the use of different strategies to modify the emotion-provoking situations. For example, in order not to be exposed to students' unexpected questions, teachers got enough preparation and planning before the class. While in class, they also used a variety of teaching techniques to accommodate the students' emotional state. For instance, a teacher with 17 years of experience wrote that she used joyful music and video clips related to students' course book when she perceived students were not in a positive mood (teacher 12, diary1). Other manifestations of the strategy included the use of humor, giving

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students a break when they lost concentration, dismissing the disruptive students from the class, and recording a minus point for them.

Attention deployment

The data from 15 interview accounts and 17 diaries revealed that if the emotion aroused was of low magnitude and importance or if it was students' first indication of misbehavior, the teachers ignored it. They also tolerated students' problematic behaviors by concentrating on their positive aspects (e.g. being ready for the lesson, improving in exams, etc). Considering the results of pervious unsuccessful management of their emotions where they lost temper could also help in controlling their emotions. By the same token, they changed their focus from the emotion-eliciting situation by concentrating on academic instruction and their role and responsibilities as a teacher. The use of this strategy is demonstrated in a female teacher's diary with 13 years teaching experience:

> *While in class I received a call from my university and the woman on the phone said there's been an important session at university today in which all students were supposed to attend. I was absent and it'll have bad consequences for me …. I was deeply impressed by this call so that I lost all my concentration. I even didn't see the students …. I tried to distract my attention from the call and keep focused on teaching. It was hard in the beginning but in the end I succeeded.* (teacher 5, diary 5)

Cognitive change

The use of this strategy was reported by 17 teachers in the interviews and 27 diary entries. It involved changing the appraisal of events and students to decrease their negative effect through, for instance, considering students' misbehaviors as a peculiarity of their age and puberty. Empathy was also employed when teachers reshaped their interpretation of students' challenging behaviors. In one example, a teacher with 21 years of experience described how he deeply felt sorry for an underachieving student when he understood that he was from a family with low

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economic and social background and that he had to work to earn his living (T1, D8). When the management of the situation was out of teachers' control, they reformed their cognition by accepting the status quo and adapting their expectations. An experienced female teacher maintained that she had to comply with the principal's request to change the score as

> *it is difficult to stand against their request when all teachers simply do it …. It is difficult for a lonely fish to swim against the rapid flow of water* (teacher 22, interview 2).

The same strategies were reported in other studies. For instance, Jiang, et al., (2016) reported the case of an English teacher who used empathy to understand the demanding students from his own experience at school. The teachers in Sutton's (2004) study also used reflection and taking students' behaviors and comments less personally in order to experience less negative emotions.

Response modulation

Attempts to regulate the behavioral or experiential aspects of emotions incorporated the largest category of strategies (20 interview and 56 diary accounts) in our data. When negative emotions aroused in relation to students, the teachers yelled, frowned, scolded students, or had a meaningful look at them. However, in relation to colleagues, principal, and parents, they tried to tolerate the situation and show patience. Nevertheless, silence was the strategy which the majority of teachers referred to as the most practical one. It was believed that through silence they

> *both make others aware of them being offended and at the same time impede exacerbating the situation by struggling further about it* (teacher 5, interview1).

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All these strategies are shared by teachers in other cultural contexts as well (Gong, et al., 2013; Jiang at al., 2016; Sutton, 2004).

The effectiveness of different strategies

Efficacious teachers believed in differential effectiveness of various strategies and employed the preventive and responsive strategies hierarchically based on the intensity and seriousness of the emotions. In the lowest rank, they sought to predict the emotion-eliciting situations and adopted situation selection strategies to prevent the experience of negative emotions (e.g. clear statement of rules and regulations, excluding out-of-class emotions, etc.). In the next rank, where the intensity of emotional state was not high, the responses included ignoring the event (attention deployment) and going on with the identified goal or task. The next levels ranged from response modulation strategies such as one moment silence, frowning or staring at disruptive student to situation modification strategies including general reminders and recommendations to the class concerning the expectation of teacher not being fulfilled. In the last rank of the hierarchy, teachers reacted by allocating negative mark to the troublesome student, asking him/her to stay for explanation after the class, or sending him/her out of class (situation modification) if the preceding strategies were not working.

As a result, it seems that the teachers believed in some subtypes of the strategies to be more effective than others. For example, participants of this study found general reminders to the whole class more effective than firing students, both subtypes of situation modification strategy. However, the existing research tends to generalize the effectiveness of the broad categories of strategies irrespective of the subtypes incorporated within each (e.g. Webb, Miles, & Sheeran, 2012).

5. Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore efficacious teachers' goals and strategies for effective management of their emotions. Results of interviews and diary journals indicated that effective emotion management involved complex processes rather

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than simply deciding to reveal positive emotions and suppress negative ones. It was indicated that teachers needed to consider a plethora of criteria before they adopted any plan of action with respect to the emotion being aroused. First, they had to decide on the right manner of emotion treatment (either suppression or expression of emotions) so that their higher status and rank were preserved and their roles as moral agents were not jeopardized. Second, they were required to determine the emotion duration and the impact it might have on the achievement of educational objectives and syllabus coverage. Alongside these factors, they needed to take into account students' psychological state and age peculiarities, social expectations, and ethical norms dominating teaching profession. Yin and Lee (2012) also emphasized that emotional experience and expression are rational processes as teachers have to "calculate the cost and benefit of these emotions according to the situations, the norms for teaching, and the potential consequences of their emotional expressions." (p.62)

Moreover, the findings of this study suggested that some aspects of emotion regulation and display were different in our culture in comparison to others. First, teachers participating in this study put emphasis on the effectiveness and necessity of positive emotion regulation, while in other cultural contexts, positive emotions are commonly expressed openly and freely, if not up-regulated. Second, our participants reported the use of preventive strategies (e.g. situation selection strategies) which are less frequently reported in other cultural contexts. They were also found to use regulatory sub-strategies hierarchically since they believed different subtypes have different effectiveness. Finally, emotions unrelated to classroom context were reported to be suppressed and controlled, while teachers in other cultural contexts specifically disclose and communicate them to students. All these findings point to the fact that some facets of emotional display and treatment vary cross-culturally, while others (e.g. teachers as role models) are shared by teachers across cultures.

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The results of this study, while contributing to a better understanding of efficacious teachers' emotional management and the role of culture in it, are limited in generalizability with respect to several aspects of methodology. First, the subject of inquiry, emotional experience, is notoriously difficult to be explored since, as our interviews indicated, many emotions are hard to be articulated or distinguished from each other (e.g. fear and anxiety were frequently used interchangeably by our participants). Therefore, the researchers might not have had access to all or true accounts of participants' emotional experiences. Reliance on self-report data in exploring teachers' emotional experience and self-efficacy beliefs is also another point of limitation in this study. Observation data can be used in future research to address this limitation and provide insights into the dynamics of efficacious teachers' emotional management in natural settings.

The sample of this study is also restricted with respect to school demographics since only teachers working in schools for gifted students participated in this study and, as research shows, the structure of school and its micropolitical features can shape teachers' emotions in particular ways (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Moreover, the sample mainly consisted of male participants. This is atypical considering gender distribution of teachers across the province. Future research can probe the emotions of a more representative sample as well as the emotions of teachers from other educational sectors and school cultures (primary school, art and technical schools, etc.). Furthermore, this study mainly reported the regulatory strategies teachers utilized in relation to students. More research can explore the strategies teachers employ in relation to different parties at school (principal, parents, and colleagues) and the association of strategies to power relations present in school.

Taken together, the results of this study show that it is essential to help teachers to develop regulatory strategies. To do so, policy makers can integrate aspects of socio-emotional skills into their educational policies. This being the case, curricula can be designed and programs can be developed for the purpose of training teachers to handle emotional events more effectively.

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Appendix A

Interview questions used to probe efficacious teachers' goals and strategies for effective emotion regulation.

1. How do you feel about (name the emotion)? Emotions included anger, fear, sadness, joy, disgust, surprise, and love/affection.
2. On what occasions did you feel (emotions stated)?
3. How did you deal with (emotions stated)?
4. Do you regulate, control, express, or fake other emotions while interacting with children?
5. Why did you try to regulate, (mask or control) your emotions in that situation?
6. Do you try to regulate positive emotions as well as negative emotions?
7. What are the consequences of controlling (or masking or regulating) your emotions while teaching?
8. What are the consequences of not controlling (or masking or regulating) your emotions while teaching?

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Appendix B

Emotion Diary

Dear colleague,

The present questionnaire is designed to investigate your emotions in relation to different people in the workplace. Please fill it out when you feel strong at work. Thank you.

Gender:……. Age:…… teaching experience:……

1. Which of the following emotions you experienced?

Joy□ enthusiasm □ intimacy□

satisfaction□ pride□ love &affection □

relief□ empathy□ enjoyment □

comfort □ disgust □ guilt □

boredom□ anger□ anxiety□

surprise □ fear□ powerlessness□

sorrow□ sadness □ disappointment□

2. Who created this emotion in you?

myself□ students□ parents□ colleagues□ principal□

3. What were you doing and what happened that you experience that emotion?

4. How did you treat the emotion?

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Appendix C

Table 1

Efficacious teachers' emotion regulation strategies

Strategies	**Accounts reported (N)**		**Examples of Strategies**
	I	**D**	
Situation selection	11	17	Eliciting information on students' background, specification of class rules, not letting out-of-class emotions to influence class work, avoiding controversial and political topics, pretending to positive mood and energy
Situation modification	22	45	Planning for every session, teaching based on students' emotional state, justification, surveying students' opinion, recording a minus point for deviant student, talking to disruptive student, giving students a break in class, telling a joke

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Attention deployment	15	17	Ignoring the event, focusing on class instruction, Thinking of teacher's role and responsibilities, Thinking of the consequences of the action
Cognitive change	17	27	Attributing the negative emotions to teacher's low tolerance, Thinking of students as kids, thinking of students' critical age, reflection, sorrow , empathy, accepting the status quo
Response modulation	20	56	Silence, yelling, scolding, complaining, praising, hugging, complementing students and thanking them

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