



## The Relationship between Teachers' Emotion Regulation and Psychological Well-Being in English Language Classrooms: Emotion Regulation Strategies in Focus

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### Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and psychological well-being. It also explored the emotion-regulation strategies used by 349 English language teachers. The research, a cross-sectional mixed-method survey, studied Iranian high school teachers from Kerman Province and four of its. To collect the data, teachers' emotion regulation strategies questionnaire and psychological well-being questionnaire were submitted to English language teachers either in person or via email. In addition, a semi-structured interview was used to explore the teachers' reflections concerning the strategies that they use in regulating their emotions. Correlations showed that emotion regulation and its sub-scale (cognitive reappraisal) correlated positively with teachers' psychological well-being among English language teachers. The preferred strategy of emotion regulation was cognitive reappraisal. Moreover, the findings showed a medium level of emotion regulation and psychological well-being among English language teachers. Besides, the qualitative findings revealed that teachers used situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, and cognitive change to regulate their emotions. In brief, curriculum and educational planners should take steps to support teachers in regulating their emotions, which contributes to their psychological well-being.

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## **1. Introduction**

Teaching is undoubtedly a challenging profession, but despite the odd stress-related incident or even burnout, most teachers are very committed to their job performance. (Schaufeli et al., 2009). More energetic, committed, passionate, tenacious in the face of challenges, and absorbed in their work are characteristics of teachers who are more involved with their work. Over the past two decades, there has been a surge in interest in the idea and a change from studying teacher burnout to well-being due to the significance of well-being (Seligman, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and the emergence of positive psychology (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018; Buric & Macuka, 2018). However, while a large number of studies have been conducted on the job burnout of foreign/second language teachers (e.g., Khajavy et al., 2017; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011; Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2016; Zhaleh et al., 2018), there are few studies looking at well-being as a positive experience for English language teachers. This creates a research lacuna that needs to be filled by more studies.

Although study on emotion regulation has been slowly building in a variety of fields, including general education, business, and health (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020), there hasn't been much focus on it in language education, particularly in the EFL setting of Iran. The ineffectiveness of instruction and classroom administration (Olivier & Venter, 2003), teacher attrition, and fatigue and emotional exhaustion have all been linked to a lack of understanding of teacher emotion control (Carson & Templin, 2007). (Macdonald, 1999). In this respect, there is a pressing need for research into how teachers manage their emotions. Most teacher education programs do not focus on the interaction between instructors' feelings and their actual teaching practice. (Akbari et al., 2017; Sutton et al., 2009). Negative feelings, like resentment and rage, are frequently mentioned by teachers and have been found to lower intrinsic motivation in teachers and heighten negative emotional experiences in students. (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Numerous studies have examined how instructors' accumulation of negative feelings interferes with their students' ability to learn. (Chan, 2006; Fathi et al., 2021; Greenier et al., 2021; Talbot & Mercer, 2018).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that teachers' well-being can enhance deep learning and foster students' good emotional and social growth. (Buettner et al., 2016). In the classroom, emotional and social

learning tasks (such as responsiveness, emotional support, and sensitivity) are said to be fostered by teachers' psychological health and social-emotional ability. (Buettner et al., 2016). Teachers are under a lot of job pressure and at risk of having poor social-emotional well-being because teaching is extremely anxiety-provoking (Von Münchhausen et al., 2021). Burnout, which has a substantial negative impact on teachers' mental and physical health and, in turn, their students' mental and physical health, may result from long-term job stress and worry. (Fathi et al., 2021). As a result, it would be challenging to promote social-emotional learning in the school if the system did not consider the social-emotional needs of the instructors. A novel path in the emotional study, according to Fried (2011), is to investigate how teachers' emotions, particularly negative emotions, may be controlled. In short, teachers' emotions are important variables in education.

It is remarkable that there is so little study on language education given how important good emotional control is to both the quality and success of language instruction. Emotions are at the core of language learning and instruction, yet they have largely been ignored in recent decades of applied linguistic study, according to Dewaele et al. (2019, p.1). It was pointed out by Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) that the existing literature has focused mainly on dealing with negative emotions (i.e., stress, anxiety, and burnout) in language education, with a lack of attention paid to positive emotions (such as well-being and emotion regulation) by Dewaele, 2017; Zhaleh et al., 2018; Zhang & Zhu, 2008; Zheng & Cheng, 2018). While positive feelings are preferred, cognitive approaches view negative emotions as harmful to language learning and instruction. (Benesch, 2018). Considering this, the current research investigated how emotion regulation and well-being are related, as well as the emotion-regulation strategies (ERS) employed by English language instructors.

To move away from negative emotions, the current research looks at two examples of language instructors' positive emotional tendencies: their well-being and their emotion control techniques. It is crucial to understand how EFL/ESL instructors view their emotional well-being and the techniques they use to control their feelings due to the dynamic nature of teaching foreign languages. Since emotions play a significant role in teacher-student interpersonal relationships and communication, the significance of the current study stems from its implications for regulating emotions in foreign and second-language education contexts. Both teacher effectiveness and student language learning outcomes are directly

influenced by emotions, which are primary determinants of teachers' effective functioning.

It is generally acknowledged that feeling and intellect are interwoven and essential to teaching and that teachers' emotions have a significant impact on their students' learning and teacher-student interactions. (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Turner et al., 2003). Hargreaves (1998) also asserted that effective teaching is infused with joy and that effective instructors show enthusiasm while instructing, which inspires students. Frenzel et al. have also proposed a similar approach. Positive emotions among recurring teachers lead to flexible and creative teaching strategies, which stimulate student motivation, while negative emotions among recurring teachers negatively impact these flexible and creative teaching strategies, which leads to reduced student achievement. Researchers have paid much attention to teachers' emotional experiences during regular teaching and their impact on teachers' and students' lives (e.g., Cross & Hong, 2012; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Hargreaves, 2000, 2001; Namaziandost et al., 2022; Schutz et al., 2007; Sutton, 2004; Sutton et al., 2009; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Zembylas, 2005), but there is lack of research concerning the relationship between teachers' emotion regulation and well-being in the EFL context of Iran which is the focus of the current study. To study the relationship between these two factors, it would appear essential to look into how well teachers manage their emotions. Teachers must effectively handle these circumstances and the feelings that result from them to create a welcoming, accommodating, and effective learning environment. The strategies teachers employ to control these emotions and the impacts these strategies have on teachers' well-being were also of interest in the current research.

In conclusion, it is imperative to continue researching the applicability and efficacy of instructors' feelings in the EFL setting. Aiming to expand the body of research on teachers' emotion regulation, the present study explored the relationship between teachers' emotion regulation and well-being in the EFL context of Iran in conjunction with this line of research endeavors and recognition of the influence of teachers' emotions on the improvement of the educational system. The priority in language instruction has shifted in this research from cognitive focus to affective focus as well. Consequently, the following research topics served as the director for the current study:

1. Is there any statistically significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and psychological well-being?
2. Which strategy of emotion regulation predicts the psychological well-being of teachers better?

3. What are the emotion regulation and psychological well-being positions of Iranian EFL teachers?
4. What are teachers' reflections on emotion regulation strategies that they use in their English language classrooms?

## **2. Review of Literature**

### ***2.1 Emotion Regulation in Teaching***

Gross (1998a), a social psychologist, defines emotional regulation as "the act of controlling what emotions individuals have, how others perceive them, and how they express them." In addition, Gross (1998a, 1998b) differentiated between two major categories of emotion regulation: antecedent-focused emotion regulation, which takes place prior to the generation of feelings, and response-focused emotion regulation, which takes place following the activation of response inclinations. The antecedent-focused emotional regulation concept is based on Gross (1998a, 1998b) and includes situation selection, which involves modifying the emotional impact of certain people and situations by approaching or avoiding them; The act of changing a situation directly to regulate emotions is called situation modification; attention deployment, in which individuals focus attention on or move attention away from a situation to change the influence of the situation on individuals' emotions; and cognitive change, which refers to modifying one's evaluations of a situation or one's ability to manipulate a situation in order to alter its emotional impact. After an emotion has been produced, reaction-focused emotion control includes changing the physiological, experiential, or behavioral response. Gross also talked about the results of these two major categories of mood regulation, as well as their specific manifestations. Gross' (2002) survey of the literature on emotion regulation revealed that the coping theories of Lazarus and associates are the source of his theoretical and empirical research (Gross, 1998a, 1998b; Gross & John, 2003) on emotion regulation. (Lazarus, 1966; 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to Gross' model, which is in line with Lazarus' conceptualization, scenario modification is a problem-focused form of coping that aims to alter the person's surroundings in order to change the facts that underlie negative feelings or directly alter a situation in order to alter emotions.

Another approach advocated by Lazarus is emotion-focused coping, which entails reducing unpleasant feelings by either dealing with the emotion directly or inwardly altering how one views the demanding circumstance. One could contend that Lazarus' emotion-focused coping and Gross' cognitive change, which also includes changing how one views

a circumstance, are similar. Lazarus' coping and Gross' emotional control are thus linked, as suggested by Chang (2013), and both are thought to be moderating elements in the emotional processes. In order to protect people's physical and mental well-being, Gross (1998b) hypothesized that antecedent-focused emotion regulation might be preferable to response-focused emotion regulation (such as repression). This is so because, in contrast to repression, which is described as the inhibition of continuing emotion-expressive behavior, reappraisal entails reinterpreting the meaning of an emotional input in order to change its emotional effect. Additionally, early in the emotion-generating process, reappraisal has an impact on emotional reaction patterns. (Gross & John, 2003).

Gross (1998b) conducted experiments to determine the effects of reappraisal and repression on affective speech and experience, which are important to note. When viewing a video that elicited unfavorable emotions, college subjects were randomly allocated to either a suppression or a reappraisal condition. Reappraisal, he discovered, was successful in lowering both the experience and expression of negative emotion and increasing both the experience and expression of positive emotion. Suppression, which happened after the emotion response patterns were produced and partially inhibited the display of negative emotion, was another trial result. Although it might have stopped the display of positive emotion, it was ineffective at relieving the experience of negative emotion. The following part reviews the empirical study on teachers' methods for managing their emotions, which is based on Gross's theory of emotion control.

## ***2.2 Teachers' Emotion Regulation Strategies***

It is crucial to emphasize their mediating variables before examining the empirical literature on instructors' emotion control techniques. According to some theories, emotional experiences involve person-environmental interactions that encompass surroundings and personal traits. Based on this assumption, a multitude of empirical studies have revealed that teacher personalities such as emotional intelligence (e.g., Chan, 2008), self-efficacy (e.g., Schwarzer et al., 2005), and negative mood regulation expectancies (e.g., Mearns & Cain, 2003) influence teacher coping or use of emotion regulation strategies. Environmental aspects like stress, student behavior management, and school administration have also been found to affect coping or emotional control. Gross's model of emotion regulation has had a significant impact on a study into teachers' emotion regulation, including Gong et al. (2013), Hagenauer & Volet (2014), Sutton (2004), and Sutton et al. (2009).

Gross's model's emotion regulation categories have led educational researchers in classifying emotion control methods in the classroom. For example, Sutton (2004) found that teachers employed various preventive strategies (antecedent-focused), such as making the whole class work quietly, thinking of positive aspects, diverting attention, self-talk, and responsive strategies (response-focused), such as taking a deep breath and controlling facial expressions to regulate their emotions. In addition, Gong et al. (2013) reported from the interviews that teachers used situation selection (e.g., walking to another group), situation modification (e.g., telling a joke), attention deployment (e.g., neglecting a situation), cognitive change (e.g. thinking of the positive side of a thing) and response modulation (e.g. hiding in mind) as their emotion regulation strategies. The difference between up-regulating and down-regulating emotions (Sutton & Harper, 2009), which was extended based on Gross's (1998a) presumption that both positive and negative emotions could be controlled, is another suggestion related to emotion regulation during instruction. Up-regulation was described by Sutton and Harper as an effort to intensify or prolong an affective experience. They claimed that teachers could up-regulate both positive and negative emotions in order to interact favorably with students. For example, teachers could up-regulate anger in order to teach students not to violate the law. Their definition of down-regulating, in turn, was an effort to lessen the affective experience. They claimed that in order to maintain classroom discipline and cultivate good relationships with students, teachers frequently down-regulate their negative feelings, such as anger.

According to Sutton et al. (2009), research has concentrated on up-regulating good emotions rather than down-regulating negative ones. As a result, it was critical to investigate both up-regulation and down-regulation in the present study. Finally, using quantitative techniques to investigate the impacts of reappraisal and suppression, Gross and John's research(2003) in social psychology connected individual use of emotion control strategies to peer reports of individuals' emotional expression in daily life. Teachers' mood regulation techniques in the classroom are likely to be linked to students' views of teachers' emotional expressions. As a result, understanding how students perceive their teachers' feelings and how their impressions relate to their teachers' descriptions of emotion control techniques is critical, and this was investigated in the current research.

### **2.3 The Concept of the Well-Being of the Teacher**

Butler and Kern (2016) defined the well-being concept by referring to several theories established by PP academics. The well-being research was divided into two systems: subjective well-being and psychological well-being (PWB), which were evaluated using hedonic and eudemonic techniques, respectively (Keyes, 2002). Even though both have values in research on the well-being of teachers, the hedonic perspective, especially apparent in research on subjective well-being, contends that well-being fixates principally on expanding delight and diminishing agony, and will, underscore outer impacts on sensations of well-being instead of inner sources, including inspirations, yearnings, and wants of the teachers. As opposed to the hedonic perspective, the eudaimonic one deals with human thriving, which is characterized as a psychosocial development that incorporates fulfillment and good connections, feeling skillful and certain, and accepting that life is significant and intentional and underscores both satisfaction and seriousness (Diener et al., 2010).

Flourishing is the objective of PP that refers to well-being using great levels of PERMA in life, which as stated by Seligman (2018), signifies positive emotion (P), engagement with actions that consider powers of the individual (E), increasing constructive personal relationships (R), finding meaning by helping a reason further than oneself (M), and identifying parts of achievement and success (A). According to this paradigm, happiness has emerged from the relationships of positivity in all of these components, which is known as the eudemonic perspective of happiness. (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). Teaching-related well-being has been examined in terms of teachers' job happiness and the emotions that are brought on by their work experiences. (Collie et al., 2016). Diener (2009) suggested extending the field of study into the area of work that alludes to an individual's good functioning in their workplace. Coleman (2009) argues that it makes little sense to manage the emotional health of students in a school without also managing the emotional health of the staff, which makes the importance of well-being for the teaching profession obvious. The effects of teachers' well-being on students and schools are notable; for instance, teachers who experience poor workplace well-being may be less effective and more likely to quit their jobs. (Boyd et al., 2006).

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Participants**

The present cross-sectional survey was conducted on 380 English language teachers, but a sample of 349 English language teachers participated in this study. Others did not answer the questionnaires. Using



two questionnaires with convenience sampling produced almost a large data set. The participants were from Kerman Province and four of its counties (Zarand, Shahbabak, Rafsanjan, & Jiroft). These counties were chosen because of the researcher's ease of access. 225 participants (64.5%) were female, and 124 participants (35.5%) were male. 147 teachers held B.A.s (42.1%) and 154 (44.1%) teachers had M.A.s, and 48 teachers held Ph.Ds. (13.8%). As a schoolteacher, the researcher had direct contact with teachers.

### **3.2 Instruments**

#### **3.2.1 Teachers' Emotion Regulation Questionnaire**

The Gross and John (2003) teachers' emotion regulation questionnaire was used to see how well English language teachers controlled their emotions. This scale takes into account a person's capacity to manage and regulate their emotions (Gross & John, 2003). The questionnaire divides emotion regulation techniques into two main categories: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression.

The first of the six items in the cognitive reappraisal checklist is "When I'm in a stressful situation, I force myself to think about it in a way that keeps me calm. One of the four components of expressive suppression is "When I am experiencing positive emotions, I take care not to express them. The scores for the questions ranged from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") on a five-point scale. Cronbach's alpha was .86 in this study, indicating high internal consistency.

#### **3.2.2 Teachers' Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire**

The Warwick-Edinburgh psychological well-being questionnaire was used by the researcher to look at teachers' psychological health (Tennant et al., 2007). Five Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5, were included in this questionnaire.

There are 14 items in the questionnaire that demonstrate how happy and content teachers are at work. The internal consistency of this scale was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was 0.89, ensuring its dependability. Four specialists in education and research evaluated the questionnaires for face and content validity.

#### **3.2.3 Semi-Structured Interview**

The researcher used semi-structured interviews to examine instructors' viewpoints and attitudes toward the techniques they employ to control their feelings. For the participants to feel more at ease and for their words

to be more fully understood, the interview sessions were conducted in Persian, their native language. The researcher had to create the crucial components in each interview to grasp each participant's mood regulation technique before starting the analysis. As a result, the researcher began by reading and making notes on the interview records. The researcher then used open and pattern coding to examine the data and identify the major groups and subcategories (Creswell, 2008). The interpretative and Vivo codes linked to emotion control techniques were emphasized through open coding, which was at the core of the study. Similar codes served as the foundation for a group or pattern code through continuous comparison between the open codes. The ultimate consensus between categories was later reached through mutual conversation between the scholar, the supervisor, and the adviser.

The scholar employed "consistency checks," also referred to as "peer review," to increase the reliability of the conversations. Researchers requested two additional researchers to examine the study's data separately. (they had some familiarity with the topic or field of study). The conversations were also transcriptionally and linguistically translated after being audio-recorded using a Sony ICD-UX560F speech recorder. The conversation transcripts were first converted into Persian, then back into English. Both the transcription and translation were reviewed by a competent multilingual coworker to reduce errors and discrepancies. By "member checking," which involved the researcher officially verifying the correctness of their knowledge with participants during the data-gathering process, credibility was further established. Additionally, the researcher used member checking during interviews by repeating, rephrasing, and asking for additional clarity when a respondent's remarks were unclear. The interview questions were:

- 1) When instructing this class, do you ever attempt to restrain, manage, or conceal your emotional experiences?
- 2) How can you feel happier when you're instructing this lesson, for example?
- 3) How can you control your unpleasant feelings while instructing this class?
- 4) Why do you make an effort to restrain, regulate, or conceal your emotional feelings when you're in a classroom setting?

### **3.3 Procedures**

The current mixed-methods study, a cross-sectional survey, looked at the connection between English language teachers' emotional control and well-being at a specific time (February-June 2021). All interested teachers were scheduled for meetings to discuss procedures and technical issues

after the research project was introduced in staff meetings of the participating schools. Using the moral standards of the Ministry of Education as a guide, prior approval was gotten from school administrators. More than 380 EFL teachers were given the two surveys in person, electronically via email, or for those who were geographically far away from the researcher, a link to the surveys that had already been created in a Google Doc. 349 EFL teachers answered the questionnaires, though some remained hesitant to divulge their thoughts and declined to do so. The researcher and participants developed a trusting relationship because the researcher had direct contact with the majority of the teachers while participating in the research society. After providing an overview of the study's goals, methodology, and restrictions, participants were asked to voluntarily participate. Pseudonyms were used in place of any identifying information to protect the privacy of the participant's data. Every survey was handled in an anonymous manner. And 35 teachers, or 10% of the entire sample, were invited to semi-structured interviews in order to study their perspectives and reflections on their emotion regulation strategies. A safe sample for qualitative data analysis, according to Creswell (2008), is 10% of the entire sample.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Quantitative Analysis

Before examining the research questions, the normality of the distribution of research variables was examined; There are several ways to check the normality of variables, one of them is Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Considering the significance level of less than 0.05 in all variables (Table 1), it can be concluded that the distribution of variables in this research is not normal and therefore, non-parametric tests were used to investigate the research questions.

Table 1. *Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

Variables	df	Statistics	P-value
Emotion Regulation	349	0.072	0.000
Cognitive Reappraisal	349	0.099	0.000
Expression Suppression	349	0.081	0.000
Well-Being	349	0.078	0.000

To investigate the first research question, Is there any statistically significant relationship between teachers' emotional regulation and psychological well-being? the Spearman correlation was run. Based on

the results presented in Table 2, regarding the P-Value that is lower than 0.01 (P-Value= 0.01), it can be said with more than 99% confidence that there is a meaningful correlation between Emotion Regulation and Well Being, with increasing Emotion Regulation, Well Being increases. ( $r = 0.186$ ,  $n=349$ ). Regarding R Square ( $R^2=0.040$ ), it means that Emotion Regulation predicts 4% of Well Being variance.

Moreover, regarding the P-Value that is lower than 0.01 (P-Value= 0.01), it can be said with more than 99% confidence that there is a meaningful correlation between Cognitive Reappraisal and Well Being, with increasing Cognitive Reappraisal, Well Being increases. ( $r = 0.324$ ,  $n=349$ ). Regarding R Square ( $R^2=0.098$ ), it means that Cognitive Reappraisal predicts 10% of Well Being variance. As Table 2 shows that there is no correlation between Expression Suppression and Well Being, Also, according to the amount of Sig ( $p>0.05$ ), it is observed that the relationship between these two variables is not significant.

Table 2. Spearman correlation analysis between Emotion Regulation and Well-Being

Variables	Well-Being		
	Spearman Correlation	P	R square
Emotion Regulation	0.186	0.00	0.040
Cognitive Reappraisal	0.324	0.00	0.098
Expression Suppression	-0.051	0.340	-

To answer the second research question, Which strategy of emotion regulation predicts the psychological well-being of teachers better?, considering 2 components of Emotion Regulation, the Multiple Linear Regression Enter Method was run. Based on the results in Table 3, this model of regression was valid enough at the level of 0.01 ( $F = 20.118$ , P-Value of  $F<0.01$ ).

Table 3. Analysis of variance or ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	2011.487	2	1005.743	20.118	.000
	Residual	17297.163	346	49.992		
	Total	19308.650	348			

Considering the results in Table 5, among 2 variables entered this model, Cognitive Reappraisal ( $\beta = 0.315$ , p-value of  $t<0.01$ ) predict Well Being meaningfully but Expression Suppression (P-Value of  $t > 0.05$ ) couldn't. Regarding the adjusted R Square in Table 5 (Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.10$ ), it can be said that Cognitive Reappraisal predicts 10% of Well Being variance. Therefore, it can be concluded that the most effective

component of Emotion Regulation in predicting Well-being was Cognitive Reappraisal.

Table 4. *R square or the coefficient of determination*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.323	.104	.099	7.07049	1.438

Table 5. *Results of Simultaneous Regression of Emotion Regulation Factors on Well Being*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	42.512	2.736		15.538	.000	37.131	47.894
1 Cognitive Reappraisal	.633	.102	.315	6.195	.000	.432	.834
Expression Suppression	-.171	.121	-.072	-1.412	.159	-.409	.067

To answer the next question, what are emotion regulation and psychological well-being positions among English language teachers? emotion regulation was divided into 3 categories of low, medium, and high among Kerman language teachers Table 6. Then, the chi-square test was used, which according to the value of this test and its significance level ( $\chi^2=135.26$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) can be said with more than 99% confidence that emotion regulation among Kerman language teachers was significantly different from each other in different classes (or there was a difference between the observed and expected frequency) and this type of variable was in the average level in most of the language teachers (210 people: 60%).

Table 6. *Chi-square test of Emotion Regulation among Kerman language teachers*

The amount of Variable	Observed N (percent)	Expected N	Chi-squire	df	P-Value
Low	45(13%)	116.3	135.26	2	0.000
Medium	210(60%)	116.3			
High	94(27%)	116.3			
Total	349(100%)				

Moreover, the results of Table 7 showed that the value of this test was 323.29 ( $\chi^2 = 323.29$ ,  $df = 1$ ) and with a significance level of less than 0.01 (P-Value = 0.000), with more than 99 The percentage can be said that the ranking of emotion regulation (cognitive reappraisal and expression

suppression) in language teachers is different. Thus, among the 2 types of Emotion Regulation, the highest rank was related to cognitive reappraisal (Mean Rank = 1.98), and the Second rank was related to Expression Suppression (Mean Rank = 1.02).

Table 7. *Friedman test for ranking Emotion regulation*

Strategies	Mean Rank	Priority	Chi-square	N	df	P-Value
Cognitive reappraisal	1.98	The First	323.29	349	1	0.000
Expression Suppression	1.02	2 <sup>nd</sup>				

To describe psychological well-being, first, this variable was divided into 3 categories: low, medium, and high among Kerman language teachers Table 8. Then, to answer the last question of the research, the chi-square was used, which according to the value of this test and its significance level ( $\chi^2=112.46$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) can be said with more than 99% confidence The level of Well-being in Kerman language teachers was significantly different from each other in different classes (or there was a difference between the observed and expected frequency) and the Well-being in most of the language teachers (221 people: equivalent to 63%) was average. Table 8

Table 8. *Chi-square test to check the variable state of Well-being Questionnaire in Kerman language teachers*

The amount of Variable	Observed N (percent)	Expected N	Chi-square	df	P-Value
Low	40(12%)	116.3	112.46	2	0.000
Medium	221(63%)	116.3			
High	88(25%)	116.3			
Total	349(100%)				

## 4.2 Qualitative Analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data is supported by quotations from the participants of the present study. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed four main categories based on Gross's (1998a, 1998b) model of emotion regulation for teachers' emotion regulation strategies which will be looked at more thoroughly in the following sections.

### 4.2.1 Situation Selection

Situation selection refers to accepting or refusing some people or situations to control your emotions (Gross, 1998a, 1998b). Refusing to talk to students and leaving the classroom were mentioned by some teachers. They explained the reason for their class leaving when their anger was controlled.

*“Whenever I felt angry, I left the classroom and tried to make myself calm. Then, I returned and told them what made me angry. This made them quiet the rest of the day”.*

#### 4.2.2 Situation Modification

Some changes in the routine norms of the classroom can help teachers regulate their negative emotions. Some teachers asked the students with misbehaviors to walk outside the classroom and talk with them. Some other teachers used classroom breaks to control negative emotions.

*“When I was angry, I asked the students to walk outside the classroom and I talked with them concerning the classroom problems. It makes them understand I am serious.”*

*“When I am not feeling well, I have a break for five or ten minutes. I let them do whatever they like during the break.”*

#### 4.2.3 Attention Deployment

Attention deployment refers to changing emotions by centering or distracting attention away from situations and people (Gross, 1998). Some teachers regulated their emotions by considering the students’ participation, change, and success.

*“Since they are old enough to discuss different issues, a classroom discussion with their participation makes me forget the classroom problems.”*

*“When they ask me questions and show themselves motivated, I feel I can control my hidden anger.”*

#### 4.2.4 Cognitive Change

Cognitive change refers to the individual’s understanding of a situation to control potential emotions (Gross, 1998). Two strategies mentioned by teachers are self-talk and empathy.

*“When I feel annoyed or tired, I stop, think, and talk with myself and try to understand and accept that feeling. This makes me feel better.”*

*“I understand my students since I can remember my school’s dull and hard days. It is not hard to understand their behavior. I try to help them have better memories.”*

## **5. Discussion**

Examining the link between instructors' emotional control and psychological well-being was the study's first goal. Since the normality conditions were not satisfied, the Spearman correlation was used in this case. Emotional control and its subscale (cognitive reappraisal) were found to favorably associate with instructors' well-being. Numerous academics who have focused on the significance of teachers' mood regulation in school settings and its effects on teachers' well-being have backed up this finding. (Sutton, 2004; Xiyun et al., 2022; Yin, 2016). One could say that teachers' coping mechanisms may strengthen the link between mood control and psychological well-being. For instance, teachers who use better emotion control techniques may feel less anxious about messy learning environments and students' inappropriate behavior because they are better equipped to deal with the stresses that arise in the classroom. As a result, teachers who feel capable may experience greater levels of psychological well-being, which enhances their prospective level of job satisfaction and classroom performance. However, when teachers are unable to control their feelings, they are unable to cope with the difficulties in the classroom and may therefore find their job to be emotionally taxing. Additionally, instructors who have the ability to control their emotions are better able to create plans that fit their psychological needs and build a strong bond with their students.

From the positive psychology perspective, this study confirms that English language teachers' emotion regulation and well-being in Iran, as two examples of emotional experience, are significant issues in the language teaching profession (Dewaele et al., 2019; Gabrys-Barker & Gałajda, 2016; MacIntyre et al., 2016). It is clear that controlling emotions is linked to work success because several studies have found a positive association between emotional regulation and job involvement (e.g., Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017; Zhu Liu et al., 2015) and fatigue (e.g., Bagheri Nevisi & Alasadi, 2022). Additionally, a number of studies on the subject of language teaching have highlighted the significance of mental control and general well-being for language instructors' productive performance and professional growth. (e.g., Arizmendi Tejada et al., 2016; Benesch, 2017, 2018; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Chahkandi et al., 2016; Gregersen et al., 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2019).

In particular, the two subscales of emotion regulation, namely, suppression (an antecedent-focused factor aimed at changing the way a situation is construed to decrease its emotional impact) and reappraisal (a response-focused element targeted at inhibiting the outward signs of inner feelings) do not have identical associations with well-being. The results



extracted from some studies such as Rey and Extremera (2011), O'Toole and Friesen (2016), and Satybaldina et al. (2015), confirming this study's results, show that the ability to perceive, understand and regulate one's own emotions and that of others is necessary to develop to achieve better emotional and personal well-being. It can be inferred that language teachers are more likely to become emotionally, cognitively, and psychologically engaged in their educational tasks if they can better control their emotions. Moreover, by being able to successfully assess, manage, and regulate their emotions, such teachers are more energetic and motivated to put fruitful efforts into their teaching activities to achieve their occupational goals and have a sense of pride, importance, and inspiration in their teaching profession.

According to Pena et al. (2012), practitioners who had better emotion control demonstrated a high degree of devotion, bodily and mental drive, vitality, engagement, and motivation. In the same manner, the study demonstrated that instructors who have emotional control are better able to manage the causes of stress at work. (Benesch, 2017, 2018; Pena et al., 2012; Zhu Liu et al., 2015).

The present research, in accordance with the work of Benesch (2018), verified the importance of teachers' feelings as an agent of activating and invigorating teaching activities with regard to emotions in the area of English language teaching. The findings of this research also partly agree with those of Saks (2006), who discovered a link between workers' engagement and well-being as well as their feelings of satisfaction and emotional and mental dedication to their work. Research examining the link between work engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being shows that positive emotions like satisfaction can contribute to one's optimal occupational operation through broadening thought-action ranges and building the required competencies, as exemplified in the theory of broad-and-build, thereby fostering psychological well-being (Fredrickson, 2001). According to Buric and Macuka (2018), Higaard et al. (2012), and Xanthopoulou et al. (2012), this important connection is reciprocal.

Partially in parallel to other studies working on the interplay between EFL/ESL teachers' well-being and their career reactions (Parker et al., 2012; Parker & Martin, 2009), the research revealed that emotion regulation was a strong predictor of teachers' well-being which is justified in the light of the effective role of well-being in mental, emotional, and occupational performance of teachers in educational contexts in general and language education, in particular (Gregersen et al., 2020; Kidger et al., 2016; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Perez Valverde et al., 2016; Roffey,

2012). Drawing on Ryff's (1989) model of well-being, maturity, and mental health, teachers set and follow their professional objectives, paving the way for their further personal and occupational growth, self-regulate their emotions, and engaging cognitively and emotionally in their profession, which in turn, affects their well-being and achievement (Shuck & Reio, 2014).

The results illustrated how teachers' cognitive evaluations of circumstances and occurrences can aid in their ability to control their emotions, supporting Frenzel's (2014) model of teachers' emotion regulation guided by appraisal theory. Teachers used scenario selection, situation modification, focus deployment, and cognitive shift to control their feelings, according to the qualitative research. In research by Sutton (2004) and Gong et al. (2013), teachers were reported to use similar strategies to alter circumstances and control their negative feelings. These strategies included talking with students outside the classroom or taking a break. Focusing on the good qualities of pupils was a strategy used by some instructors to control their emotions, which is also mentioned in Cross and Hong's (2012) research. In addition to self-talk and sensitivity, the instructors used cognitive shifts to control their feelings. In a similar vein, teachers in Sutton's (2004) study described self-talk as one of the cognitive change-related mood regulation techniques. In Cross and Hong's research (2012)., instructors also used empathy.

## **6. Conclusion**

The results of this study are useful for academics studying emotions and well-being in a variety of ways. The most significant one is that these results are consistent with the notion that the learning environment is an amalgam of different circumstances: According to Ben-Eliyahu and Linnenbrink-Garcia (2013), some classes are engaging for students while others are boring, necessitating the use of various management techniques by instructors. For instance, it was discovered in the current research that teachers who used cognitive reappraisal techniques were better able to control their negative feelings and feel psychologically well. However, it should be noted that the application of expression repression strategies was not used in this research among English language teachers because these techniques are fictitious and would ultimately cause teachers to feel emotionally worn out. It should be mentioned, though, that the use of expression repression strategies was not employed in this study of English language instructors because these strategies are hypothetical and would eventually lead to teachers feeling emotionally exhausted. Teaching is comprised of "human nurturing, connectedness, warmth, and love,"

according to Hargreaves (1994, p. 175). In order to create a welcoming and positive learning environment in the classroom, educationalists, policymakers, and instructors themselves should consider this significant element of teaching. The current study's results add to the body of knowledge regarding the significance of mood regulation techniques in the context of well-being for EFL teachers.

The outcomes of the current study can add to the body of knowledge already known in this area, but they must be interpreted in light of the study's constraints. The comparatively small group size was the first of this study's limitations. Even though the researcher was able to acquire a sizable number of EFL instructors in Kerman, more data is still required to improve the study's generalizability. Second, the participant's answers to the self-report questionnaire used in the present research to assess teachers' well-being may not have accurately mirrored how they would actually feel or act. Third, it is impossible to draw conclusions about the timing correlations between these factors due to the convenience sampling methodology of this research. As a result, it was neither random nor representative because it was practically impossible to compile a roster of all instructors to enable a random selection of participants.

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