

Psychological features of emotional relationships in primary school teachers

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the psychological features of emotional relationships among primary school teachers, focusing on the mechanisms that influence teachers' interactions with students, parents, and colleagues. It explores how emotional intelligence, empathy, and stress regulation contribute to building emotionally healthy learning environments and improving teachers' professional effectiveness.

Methodology: A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of teachers' emotional dynamics. The study involved 100 primary school teachers (aged 25–55) selected through stratified random sampling. Instruments included an Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire based on Goleman's framework, the Teacher–Student Relationship Scale, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed through correlation statistics, while qualitative data were examined thematically to identify patterns of emotional regulation, empathy, and stress management.

Results: Findings revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and the quality of teacher student relationships. Teachers demonstrating higher self-awareness, empathy, and emotional control experienced fewer conflicts, greater student trust, and higher job satisfaction. Gender and experience differences were also observed female and veteran teachers generally showed higher emotional resilience and relational stability.

Conclusion: The study concludes that emotional intelligence is a vital component of teaching competence, shaping classroom climate, communication, and teacher well-being. Developing emotional awareness and regulation enhances both instructional quality and student outcomes.

Limitations: The study was limited to one educational context and relied partly on self-reported data, which may influence objectivity.

Contribution: This research contributes to educational psychology by emphasizing emotional competence as a core element of teacher professionalism and by providing practical insights for teacher training, counseling, and educational policy.

Keywords: *Emotional Attitude, Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal Relationships, Pedagogical Activity, Psychological Characteristics, Psychological Stability*

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1. Introduction

In the context of the modern educational system, a teacher's professional competence extends far beyond mastery of subject matter and traditional pedagogical techniques. Increasingly, educators are

recognized not only as conveyors of knowledge but also as emotional and psychological guides who shape the social and affective environment of the classroom. There is a growing emphasis on understanding the nature, quality, and dynamics of the emotional relationships that teachers cultivate with students, colleagues, and parents (Sobirovich, 2023). These relationships profoundly affect children's motivation, self-esteem, and social adaptation. This issue is especially critical for primary school teachers, who interact with younger learners during the most sensitive and formative years of their emotional, cognitive and moral development. Patience, empathy, and emotional intelligence are essential professional attributes.

Emotional relationships in education are expressed through continuous interactions between teachers, students, colleagues, and parents, forming the emotional foundation of the learning environment (Brackett et al., 2011). These relationships play a decisive role in shaping not only the classroom climate but also the overall development of students, affecting their academic performance, motivation, social behavior, and psychological well-being. When teachers demonstrate emotional warmth, empathy, and consistent support, students tend to feel more secure, engaged, and confident in their learning process (Yin, Lee, Zhang, & Jin, 2013). Conversely, emotionally detached or inconsistent interactions can lead to anxiety, reduced motivation, and behavioral difficulties. Therefore, a teacher's ability to establish emotionally stable and nurturing connections is an essential component of effective pedagogy. It fosters trust, cooperation, and open communication, thereby contributing to a positive learning atmosphere. Emotional relationships thus serve as both a pedagogical tool and a psychological resource, ensuring not only cognitive growth but also holistic development of every student.

At the primary school level, children are in a crucial stage of emotional and psychological formation, making them highly impressionable and sensitive to the attitudes and behaviors of the adults around them. They need not only structured academic guidance but also emotional support, empathy, and understanding from their teachers. This dual responsibility places significant emotional and psychological demands on educators who must constantly manage their own feelings while addressing the diverse emotional needs of their students (Sobirovich, 2020). Teachers are required to balance discipline with compassion, authority with sensitivity, and structure with flexibility (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Consequently, the psychological characteristics that shape these emotional relationships, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, self-regulation, stress tolerance, and interpersonal awareness, become essential professional competencies. These traits enable teachers to maintain classroom harmony, foster student trust, and create an emotionally secure environment that supports learning, social growth, and healthy development of each child.

Recent research underscores that a teacher's emotional behavior plays a central role in determining the quality of classroom management, the effectiveness of conflict resolution, and the creation of a positive learning environment. Teachers who exhibit emotional instability or lack empathy often face increased classroom tension, frequent misunderstandings, and reduced cooperation from their students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Over time, this emotional imbalance can contribute to stress, frustration, and professional burnout. Conversely, educators who possess strong emotional competence, including empathy, self-awareness, and emotional regulation, tend to foster harmonious classroom relationships built on trust and mutual respect. Such teachers are better equipped to de-escalate conflicts, motivate students, and sustain attention through emotionally responsive instructions. Emotional competence thus functions not only as a personal attribute but also as a professional necessity, enhancing both teaching effectiveness and overall school well-being by promoting stability, collaboration, and a supportive educational climate conducive to academic success (Ridho, 2023).

This study aimed to examine the psychological characteristics that define emotional relationships among primary school teachers, with particular attention to the emotional and cognitive factors influencing teacher-student interactions. Teaching is inherently relational, and understanding its emotional dimensions is essential for promoting effective pedagogy and classroom harmony. This study seeks to identify key determinants, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, self-regulation, motivation, and communication competence, which collectively shape the quality of teachers' engagement with students. By integrating both theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, this study emphasizes the

significance of emotional awareness and maturity in professional teaching practice. It argues that emotional competence enhances not only instructional effectiveness but also the overall psychological climate of classrooms. Furthermore, this study proposes practical recommendations for incorporating emotional development into teacher education and professional training, supporting teachers in building emotionally healthy, stable, and responsive relationships within the broader school environment.

In recent years, the emotional and psychological well-being of teachers has become an increasingly critical topic in educational psychology and pedagogy. The rapid transformation of the global educational landscape driven by technological advancement, evolving curriculum standards, and diverse student populations has expanded teachers' professional role far beyond the delivery of academic content. Teachers are now expected to serve simultaneously as mentors, emotional caregivers, and social facilitators, particularly in primary education, where their influence extends deeply into children's emotional and moral development. The growing complexity of student needs and heightened expectations from parents and society have amplified the psychological pressures teachers face in balancing empathy, authority, and their professional responsibility (Rani, 2025). Consequently, teacher well-being and emotional competence have been increasingly recognized as determinants of educational quality. Thus, nurturing emotionally healthy teachers is essential for fostering supportive learning environments that promote student growth, resilience, and holistic development.

Primary school teachers engage in daily close interactions with young learners who are still developing essential emotional, social, and cognitive skills, such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal communication (Meechandee & Meekaew, 2025). Within this formative context, teachers' emotional relationships with students serve as a vital foundation for effective learning and psychological growth. Teachers act not only as academic instructors but also as emotional models who demonstrate empathy, patience, and respect through their behaviors. The way a teacher expresses understanding, regulates personal emotions, and responds to students' emotional cues has a profound impact on children's sense of security, motivation, and academic success (Bantilan, Sombilon, Regidor, Mondoyo, & Edig, 2024). A nurturing and emotionally responsive classroom climate allows students to explore, make mistakes, and learn confidently, fostering both intellectual and emotional development of students. Consequently, teachers' emotional competence is a determining factor in shaping a positive learning environment that supports holistic child development and enduring teacher-student trust.

Emotional relationships play a central role in creating a psychologically safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment (von Reumont & Budke, 2021). When teachers establish empathetic and emotionally stable connections with students, they foster a sense of trust and belonging that encourages participation and motivates students academically. However, a lack of emotional intelligence or inadequate stress management can lead to tension, miscommunication, and classroom disruptions. Over time, these emotional challenges may escalate into teacher burnout, reducing professional satisfaction and effectiveness. Teaching, particularly at the primary level, involves substantial emotional labor, as educators must constantly regulate their own emotions while responding sensitively to those of their students (Galanakis, Krana, & Nikola, 2021). Despite its importance, emotional labor is often overlooked and undervalued in educational discourse. Recognizing and supporting teachers' emotional needs is therefore essential, not only for their well-being but also for sustaining a positive classroom climate that nurtures learning, inclusion, and healthy emotional development among students.

Despite the increasing recognition of emotional competence as a key determinant of teacher effectiveness, research focusing specifically on the psychological characteristics of emotional relationships among primary school teachers remains limited (McGrath & Van Bergen, 2017). Most existing studies tend to emphasize academic instruction, classroom management, or student outcomes, often overlooking the complex emotional processes that teachers navigate daily. In primary education, teachers frequently face emotionally charged situations, including student behavioral challenges, peer disagreements, and tensions with parents, which demand a high degree of empathy, patience, and emotional regulation. Understanding how teachers manage these situations is crucial, as their responses directly influence both the emotional climate of the classroom and their own professional well-being (Koryataini, Sumo, Minnah, Solehah, & Khoiroh, 2024). However, there remains a gap in exploring the

interplay between emotional intelligence, stress tolerance, and interpersonal communication in this context. Addressing this gap could provide valuable insights into designing teacher training programs that enhance emotional resilience and relational competence.

This study is timely and relevant because it addresses the growing importance of emotional and psychological competence in modern education. This contributes to a deeper understanding of the emotional dimensions of teaching at the primary school level, where educators serve as both instructors and emotional role models. By examining the psychological characteristics that shape teacher-student interactions, this study underscores the necessity of developing emotional literacy, empathy, and self-regulation as integral components of teacher training and professional development. Emotional competence allows teachers to maintain classroom harmony, manage stress effectively, and build meaningful connections that enhance the learning outcomes. Promoting such competencies is vital not only for supporting teachers' mental health and job satisfaction but also for improving the overall quality of education in the country. Ultimately, emotionally intelligent teachers contribute to creating supportive learning environments that nurture students' academic growth, social adaptation and emotional well-being.

2. Literature review

2.1. The Concept of Emotional Relationships in Education

The concept of emotional relationships in education has long been a central focus of educational psychology, emphasizing the intricate interplay between emotion, cognition, and learning outcomes. Emotional relationships refer to the affective and psychological bonds that teachers build with students, colleagues, and parents during the educational process (Wang et al., 2021). These relationships serve as the foundation for the social and emotional climate of the classroom, influencing students' motivation, behavior, engagement, and overall academic success (Emeljanovas, Sabaliauskas, Mežienė, & Istomina, 2023).

Positive emotional connections help create a safe and supportive learning environment in which students feel valued and confident enough to express themselves and explore new ideas. Conversely, emotionally distant or negative interactions can hinder learning, increase anxiety, and reduce cooperation. Within the primary school context, these relationships become even more vital, as children are in the formative stage of developing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills. Therefore, teachers must demonstrate empathy, patience, compassion, and emotional stability, guiding students intellectually and emotionally. Thus, emotional relationships form the backbone of effective teaching, promoting both academic achievement and the holistic psychological development of young learners.

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks of Emotional Development

Lev Vygotsky (1934) emphasized that emotional development is inseparable from cognitive and social growth, particularly in the early stages of childhood. He viewed learning as a socially mediated process in which emotions play a central role in guiding motivation and meaning-making. For Vygotsky, the teacher's emotional involvement is not merely supportive but essential for scaffolding learning and moral reasoning, allowing children to internalize social norms through emotionally meaningful interaction. Similarly, E.P. Ilyin underscored the importance of emotional control and stability as key professional qualities that enable teachers to maintain self-regulation, manage stress, and sustain classroom balance, even in challenging situations.

Building on these psychological foundations, Goleman (2005) advanced the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) by identifying five core dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Goleman's model became a cornerstone in educational psychology, demonstrating that teachers with high emotional intelligence are more effective in communication, conflict resolution, and fostering student engagement. Emotional intelligence is also correlated with higher resilience, adaptability, and professional satisfaction, contributing to a healthier classroom climate. In essence, the theories of Vygotsky, Ilyin, and Goleman collectively reveal that emotional

competence is not an optional quality but a fundamental dimension of effective teaching that is deeply intertwined with cognitive development and social learning processes.

2.3. Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Effectiveness

Research by A.A. Rean and V.V. Boyko demonstrated that teachers with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more adept at managing classroom conflicts, maintaining a positive emotional climate, and fostering cooperative learning environments. Emotional intelligence has been consistently shown to predict teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, psychological stability, and professional resilience. Teachers who possess the ability to regulate their emotions effectively tend to experience lower levels of stress and reduced burnout, contributing to long-term career sustainability and overall mental well-being (Saleh, Kurniawati, Salim, & Poerwandari, 2024).

Expanding on this foundation, contemporary researchers such as Jennings and Greenberg (2009) introduced the concept of a “prosocial classroom,” describing emotionally competent teachers as facilitators of empathy, compassion, and social connection. Such classrooms promote both academic achievement and socio-emotional growth, emphasizing that learning occurs most effectively in emotionally secure environments. This framework aligns closely with Hochschild’s (2012) notion of emotional labor, which recognizes the constant emotional regulation that teachers perform as part of their professional responsibilities. Thus, teaching becomes both an intellectual and emotional endeavor, requiring educators to balance authenticity, care, and professionalism while sustaining emotional equilibrium in the face of daily challenges.

2.4. Emotional Burnout and Stress in Teaching

Emotional burnout among teachers is deeply connected to inadequate emotional regulation and prolonged professional stress. Boyko and Samoukina discovered that educators with low emotional resilience are significantly more susceptible to emotional fatigue, job dissatisfaction, and deteriorating relationships with students and colleagues. Constant exposure to emotionally charged situations, such as managing classroom conflicts, addressing behavioral issues, or meeting parental expectations, can gradually deplete teachers’ psychological resources, leading to exhaustion and reduced motivation. Burnout not only affects teachers’ well-being but also diminishes instructional quality, classroom harmony and student outcomes.

In contrast, teachers who possess high emotional intelligence demonstrate stronger coping mechanisms that protect them from these adverse effects (Aldrup, Carstensen, & Klusmann, 2024). They employ adaptive strategies such as self-reflection, mindfulness, emotional reframing, and seeking social support to manage stress effectively. These skills allow educators to maintain emotional balance, restore motivation, and foster positive relationships, even in challenging circumstances. Ultimately, strengthening teachers’ emotional competence serves as a preventive measure against burnout, promoting both professional longevity and a healthier educational environment in which emotional well-being is recognized as fundamental to teaching success.

2.5. Emotional Climate and Student Outcomes

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that a teacher’s emotional behavior profoundly impacts students’ motivation, discipline, and academic performance. Teachers who exhibit emotional warmth, patience, and responsiveness foster positive student attitudes and engagement, whereas irritability, emotional detachment, or inconsistency often result in anxiety, resistance, and behavioral problems (Chan, Pöysä, Lerkkanen, & Pakarinen, 2025). The emotional tone set by the teacher shapes how students perceive learning, whether as a source of joy and growth or as a source of tension and fear.

As noted by Nias (1996) and Day and Leitch (2001), emotional engagement transforms teaching from a mechanical process into a relational and affective experience in which authentic emotional connections enhance the meaning and impact of instruction. This perspective humanizes education, emphasizing that learning is not purely cognitive but is also deeply emotional. Therefore, emotional competence functions as both a pedagogical tool and a psychological asset, allowing teachers to inspire

confidence, sustain motivation, and cultivate trust within the classroom. When teachers consciously manage their emotions and express empathy, they not only improve academic outcomes but also nurture students' social and emotional growth, contributing to their holistic development as learners and as individuals.

2.6. Research Gaps

Although a vast body of theoretical and empirical literature highlights the significance of emotional intelligence in teaching, there remains a notable gap in understanding how emotional relationships are formed, maintained, and managed within the primary education context, where emotional labor is most demanding. Most prior research has focused on general teaching effectiveness or teacher well-being, often neglecting the nuanced interpersonal processes that define daily teacher–student interactions. Moreover, contextual influences such as school culture, administrative support, peer collaboration, and socio-cultural norms are frequently underexplored, despite their crucial role in shaping teachers' emotional experiences and coping strategies for stress.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by examining the psychological characteristics that underpin emotional relationships among primary school teachers, drawing on emotional intelligence theory as a conceptual foundation. By integrating psychological frameworks with the practical realities of classroom life, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how teachers navigate emotional challenges, build supportive relationships, and maintain emotional balance in their professional roles. The findings are expected to contribute to teacher education and policy development, emphasizing the need for emotional literacy and psychological resilience as essential components of professional competence in the field.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the psychological features of emotional relationships among primary school teachers. The quantitative component sought to identify general patterns, correlations, and measurable relationships between emotional intelligence, stress tolerance, empathy, and professional satisfaction. Through statistical analysis, this study aims to determine how these variables interact and contribute to the overall quality of teacher-student relationships. The qualitative component focuses on exploring teachers' lived experiences, offering deeper insights into their emotional perceptions, coping strategies, and interpersonal challenges within the classroom. This approach includes interviews, observations, and open-ended questionnaires to capture teachers' reflections and emotions in real-life settings. By combining empirical precision with interpretive depth, the mixed-methods design ensures a more holistic and balanced understanding of how emotional competence shapes professional behavior and classroom well-being of students.

3.2. Participants

The research sample consisted of 100 primary school teachers drawn from various urban and rural schools to ensure their representativeness and diversity. Among them, 85 were female and 15 male, reflecting the gender composition typically observed in the primary-education sector. Participants were aged 25–55 years, encompassing both novice and experienced educators at different stages of their professional careers. To achieve a balanced distribution, this study employed a stratified random sampling technique, which allowed for the inclusion of teachers from diverse socioeconomic and institutional backgrounds. This approach ensured the reliability and generalizability of the findings by capturing variations in emotional competence and the participants' professional experience. The inclusion criteria required that participants possess a minimum of one year of teaching experience and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. All participants were briefed on the research objectives, and ethical standards, such as confidentiality and informed consent, were strictly maintained throughout the process.

3.3. Instruments and Data Collection Tools

The following tools and instruments were used to gather data.

- Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (based on Daniel Goleman's framework): To assess components such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.
- Teacher-Student Relationship Scale (TSRS): This scale measures emotional closeness, conflict, and dependency between teachers and their students.
- Semi-structured Interviews: Conducted with a smaller subset of 15 teachers to explore their emotional experiences, stressors, and coping strategies in the school environment.
- Observation Protocol: Used during classroom visits to observe emotional interactions in real time.

3.4. Procedure

The research was conducted in the following stages.

- Preliminary phase: Obtaining permission from school administrations and ethical approval from the institutional review board.
- Data collection: Questionnaires were administered during staff meetings and individual interviews were conducted in a private setting.
- Observation: Conducted over two weeks, focusing on naturalistic observation of teacher-student interactions during class hours.
- Data recording and transcription: All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for thematic analyses.

4. Results and discussion

The results of this study reveal the complex and multifaceted nature of emotional relationships within primary school teachers' professional experiences. The findings underscore that emotional intelligence, especially components such as self-regulation, empathy, and emotional awareness, plays a crucial role in determining the quality and stability of teacher-student relationships. Teachers who demonstrate strong emotional control and empathy can create supportive, trusting, and productive learning environments. These results are consistent with the theoretical perspectives of Goleman (2005) and Salovey and Sluyter (1997), who emphasized that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more capable of navigating interpersonal dynamics, maintaining composure, and fostering cooperation in emotionally demanding contexts such as classrooms. Moreover, the study suggests that emotional competence not only enhances pedagogical effectiveness but also protects teachers from stress and burnout, reinforcing its importance as a core component of professional excellence and success in education.

The quantitative analysis of this study demonstrated a strong and statistically significant correlation between emotional intelligence levels and the quality of teacher-student interactions. Teachers who exhibited higher scores in emotional awareness, empathy, and self-regulation consistently reported fewer behavioral conflicts, improved communication, and stronger emotional bonds with their students. These findings confirm that emotional competence directly enhances the classroom atmosphere by promoting understanding, respect, and psychological safety in the classroom. Teachers who can manage their emotions effectively are better able to respond calmly to challenges and maintain constructive relationships with learners. This evidence aligns with Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) conclusions, who argued that emotionally intelligent teachers create prosocial learning environments that foster both academic achievement and socio-emotional development. Thus, the results of this study reinforce the view that emotional intelligence is a vital pedagogical asset that enables teachers to balance instructional demands with emotional connections and student-centered care.

The qualitative interviews provided valuable insights into the everyday emotional realities experienced by primary school teachers, revealing the intensity of the emotional demands inherent in their profession. Participants frequently described challenges such as emotional exhaustion, student behavioral difficulties, time pressure, and administrative expectations, all of which contributed to elevated stress levels. Despite these challenges, many teachers demonstrated resilience by employing various emotional regulation strategies, including self-reflection, mindfulness, emotional distancing, and peer support, to maintain composure and professional effectiveness. These coping mechanisms enable teachers to sustain positive interactions and preserve their psychological well-being amidst

constant demands. These findings closely align with the perspectives of Sutton and Wheatley (2003), who highlighted the crucial role of emotion regulation as a central component of effective and sustainable teaching practice. Overall, the qualitative data underscore that teachers' emotional management is not only a personal skill but also a professional necessity for maintaining classroom stability and emotional equilibrium.

An interesting and recurring theme that emerged from the qualitative data was the significant amount of emotional labor inherent in the teaching profession. Many teachers reported frequently suppressing or masking their true emotions, such as frustration, sadness, or fatigue, to maintain professionalism and provide emotional stability for their students. While this self-control is often necessary to sustain a positive classroom environment, it can also result in emotional fatigue and psychological strain when it is prolonged without adequate support. These findings resonate with Hochschild's (2012) theory of emotional labor, which describes how individuals in service-oriented professions must continuously manage their emotions to meet social and institutional expectations. In the context of primary education, teachers engage in emotional performance almost daily, balancing genuine care with professional restraint. This underscores the need for institutional recognition and emotional support systems to protect teachers' mental health and well-being.

Another significant finding of this study was the variation in emotional relationships among teachers based on their professional experience. Veteran teachers generally report higher levels of emotional stability, patience, and resilience, which can be attributed to their accumulated classroom experience and the gradual development of effective coping mechanisms. Over time, these educators learn to manage stress, regulate their emotions, and maintain a balanced perspective when dealing with challenging student behavior or professional pressures. In contrast, younger and less experienced teachers often express greater emotional vulnerability, difficulty in setting boundaries, and uncertainty in handling emotionally charged situations. These differences highlight the importance of providing structured emotional competence training and mentoring programs for early-career teachers. By fostering emotional awareness and regulation skills during the initial years of teaching, schools can support educators' professional growth, enhance classroom relationships, and reduce the risk of burnout and emotional exhaustion.

The study revealed notable gender-related differences in emotional engagement, indicating that female teachers reported higher levels of empathy, emotional involvement, and relational sensitivity than their male counterparts. This pattern may be influenced by broader social and cultural expectations that associate caregiving, patience, and emotional expressiveness with feminine roles, particularly in education. However, such heightened emotional involvement also increases the emotional workload of female teachers, potentially making them more susceptible to stress and burnout if adequate emotional support is lacking. These findings highlight the need for a more balanced understanding of emotional labor in teaching, recognizing both its value and psychological costs. Overall, this study reinforces the importance of developing emotional intelligence in teacher-education and professional-training programs. By enhancing teachers' emotional competence, schools can foster healthier teacher-student relationships, greater job satisfaction, and improved emotional well-being among educators, ultimately enhancing educational quality.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Conclusion

This study examined the psychological features of emotional relationships among primary school teachers, emphasizing the crucial role of emotional intelligence in fostering effective and supportive classroom interaction. The findings indicate that teachers with higher emotional awareness, empathy, and self-regulation can build positive and trusting relationships with students and colleagues. These emotional competencies enhance communication, reduce classroom conflict, and promote a nurturing learning environment. Moreover, the study shows that developing emotional intelligence not only improves teaching effectiveness but also strengthens teachers' well-being, resilience, and job satisfaction, contributing to their long-term professional stability.

The research also uncovered various challenges faced by teachers, such as emotional labor, stress, and the struggle to maintain professional boundaries. These challenges are particularly prevalent among younger or less experienced teachers, indicating the need for targeted emotional support and professional development early in their careers to address these issues. Furthermore, qualitative insights demonstrate that emotional relationships in the school environment are deeply influenced by personal traits, institutional culture, and social expectations. Gender differences, years of experience, and coping mechanisms all play a role in how teachers manage and express their emotions at work.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence should be regarded not merely as a personal trait but as a professional necessity for primary-school teachers. It serves as the foundation for creating emotionally healthy classrooms, fostering positive teacher–student relationships, and enhancing teachers’ resilience in the face of daily challenges in the classroom. To achieve this, educational institutions must acknowledge and invest in the emotional dimensions of teaching through training, mentoring, and supportive policy. Future educational frameworks should integrate emotional competence development as a central component of teacher education, ensuring both teacher well-being and the cultivation of nurturing and inclusive learning environments.

5.2. Practical recommendations

1. **Integrate Emotional Intelligence Training in Teacher Education Programs**
Pre-service teacher training should include dedicated modules on emotional intelligence, focusing on self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and relationship management. This will prepare future teachers to better handle the emotional demands of their classrooms.
2. **Offer Continuous Professional Development on Emotional Competence**
Schools and educational institutions should regularly organize workshops and seminars on managing emotions in the workplace. The topics may include stress management, conflict resolution, and positive communication strategies.
3. **Implement Teacher Support Systems**
Establish mentorship programs in which experienced teachers support younger or less experienced colleagues in managing emotional challenges and developing resilience in their professional roles.
4. **Promote Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools**
Schools should provide access to psychological counseling and wellness programs for teachers. Creating safe spaces for emotional expression can reduce stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion among nurses.
5. **Encourage Reflective Practice**
Teachers should be encouraged to engage in regular self-reflection through journals, peer discussions, or supervision sessions to better understand their emotional responses and improve their classroom relationships.
6. **Foster a Positive School Climate**
School leadership should promote a culture of mutual respect, emotional safety, and open communication among the staff. A supportive and emotionally healthy environment contributes to improved teacher-student relationships.
7. **Balance Workload and Emotional Labor**
School administrations must be mindful of the emotional burdens placed on teachers. Reasonable workloads, flexible schedules, and recognition of emotional effort can help prevent burnout among nurses.
8. **Gender-Sensitive Approaches**
Given the differences observed in emotional involvement between male and female teachers, professional development programs should be inclusive and address diverse emotional experiences without reinforcing such stereotypes.
9. **Utilize Peer Support Groups**
Establish peer support groups where teachers can share experiences, discuss emotional challenges, and offer mutual encouragement to each other. This can reduce feelings of isolation and promote collective emotional resilience among users.
10. **Include Emotional Metrics in Performance Evaluation (Cautiously)**

While academic outcomes are important, emotional engagement and classroom climate should also be considered (qualitatively) in teacher evaluations to promote more holistic teaching standards.

5.3. Limitations

Despite providing valuable insights into the emotional and psychological dimensions of teacher–student relationships, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was limited to 100 primary school teachers within a specific educational and cultural context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to broader or more diverse populations. Variations in institutional culture, regional norms, and socioeconomic conditions may influence emotional behavior differently across contexts. Second, the study partially relied on self-reported data, which may introduce response bias or inaccuracies due to social desirability, particularly in evaluating emotional intelligence and interpersonal competence. Although triangulated with interviews and observations, these subjective measures may not fully capture the complexities of emotional dynamics.

Third, the cross-sectional design of the research prevents the assessment of long-term changes in teachers' emotional development or professional adaptation. Future longitudinal studies are recommended to trace how emotional competencies evolve throughout a teaching career. Lastly, while the mixed-methods approach enriched data interpretation, deeper quantitative modeling (e.g., structural equation modeling or regression analysis) could further validate the relationships between variables and provide stronger empirical evidence for theoretical conclusions.

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