Investigation of EFL Student Teachers' Emotional Responses to Affective Situations during Practicum

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Abstract: This study investigates the emotional responses of EFL student teachers to various affective situations during practicum and their coping strategies to enhance positive emotions and reduce negative emotions. Seventy female EFL student teachers participated in this study. To collect quantitative and qualitative data, two instruments were used: an emotional reflective diary and semi-structured interviews. The results of the study revealed that the practicum is an emotionally positive experience. The frequency of occurrence of pleasant affective situations was more than that of unpleasant ones. In the decreasing order of frequency, the most frequent emotional responses were happy, angry, and stressed and the least frequent ones were lost, influential, and shamed. Furthermore, the results indicated that student teachers adopted many regulation strategies to manage their emotions. The study recommends that teacher education programmes increase the focus on teachers' emotions and training student teachers to manage their emotions to build future professional identities.

Keywords: *Teachers' emotions, practicum, regulation strategies.*

Introduction

Human beings are unique since they are characterized by their abilities to think, rationalize, justify and make decisions based on logic. However, humans are both rational and emotional beings. Accordingly, emotions play an important role in human existence. Emotions help human beings fulfill essential biological functions and manage life tasks. They also influence their decisions, conduct, attitudes, actions and reactions. Therefore, humans find it impossible to separate emotions from actions and base their acts on logic alone (Rodrigo-Ruiz, 2016; Smith & Firth, 2018; Arizmendi Tejeda, Gillings de Gonzalez & Lopez Martinez, 2016). Benesch (2017, p.16) stated that "emotions are innate but originate in the brain and allow human beings to respond to the challenges of their daily life. Emotions can be viewed as common to all human beings regardless of geography, history and social identities".

Emotions Definitions

A review of the literature reveals that studies do not agree on the definition of emotions. In general, however, emotions can be defined as "feelings connected to ideas, perception, cognitions, and to the social and cultural contexts in which it makes sense to have those feelings ad ideas" (Miller, 1997, p.8). Lazarus (1999) described emotions as the demonstration of internal states and opined that they are linked to physical and sensory feelings. Other researchers have considered emotions to be intense, short-lived active states that occur in response to particular stimuli (Do & Schallert, 2004). Furthermore, Schutz, Hong, Cross & Osbon (2006, p.344) defined emotions as "socially constructed, personally enacted ways of being that emerge from conscious and/or unconscious judgements regarding perceived successes at attaining goals or maintaining standards or beliefs during transactions as part of social-historical contexts". Some researchers have considered emotions to be "a basic phenomenon of human functioning, normally having an adaptive value enhancing our effectiveness in pursuing our goals in the broadest sense" (Nyklicek, Vingerhoets, & Zeelenberg, 2011, p.1). Agudo (2018, p.386) described emotions as "subjective, evaluative judgements through which we attempt to interpret the situations we find ourselves in".

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Scherer, Schorr and Johnstone (2001) clarified that although there is no unified scientific definition of emotion, there is a reasonable consensus that emotions affect the manner in which people think, behave and express themselves. These reactions are attributed to situations that significantly affect an individual's goals (Parrott, 2001). Similarly, Izard (2010) (as cited in Toraby & Modarresi, 2018) asserted that although the concept of emotion remains controversial and thought-provoking to this day, there is agreement to some extent on the structure, function and components of emotions. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) explained that an emotion comprises five components: appraisal, personal experience, physiological change, facial expressions and action tendencies. They noted that although these components may influence one another, they do not automatically follow each other. Kalat (2012) specified three components of emotions including cognition (the assessment of events or situations), actions (decision-making for the assessment process), and feelings (outcomes of actions).

Teaching and Emotions

Teaching is an undeniably an emotional profession (Hargreaves, 1998) and emotion is an integral dimension of the teaching profession. Pekrun (2014, p. 6) stated that "the classroom is an emotional place" that generates academic emotions. The term "academic emotions" refers to the emotions that are experienced and practiced in an academic setting and that are associated with classroom instruction and students' achievements. In fact, teachers work in a very complicated environment that includes students, colleagues, administrators, parents and stakeholders with different perspectives and backgrounds. Therefore, teachers experience various pleasant and unpleasant emotions associated with teaching and different types of workplace relationships. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) stated that psychologists classify emotions into positive and negative emotions. Positive emotions, such as happiness, love, and optimism are experienced when an individual progresses towards achieving a goal. Negative emotions such as anger, sadness, and frustration arise from goal inconvenience. In academic settings, teachers may experience happiness, pleasure, satisfaction, and pride during teaching in situations where their instructional objectives are realized, students make progress or follow instructions, colleagues are supportive, former students visit the school to talk to them, or parents appreciate their efforts. Similarly, they may experience disappointment, frustration, anxiety and anger when they fail to respond to students' needs, students struggle to understand a concept, students violate the rules of good conduct, and support from colleagues or the school administration is lacking (Cubukcu,2013; Erb,2002; Hargreaves,1998; Hatch,1993).

Research has shown that the manner in which teachers respond to emotional situations affects their cognition, motivation, quality of teaching, pedagogical practices, behaviour, health, and relationships with others, as well as the development of their professional identities. Emotions significantly affect teachers' goals, self-efficacy, beliefs and are also related to teachers' psychological well-being, burnout risk and retention in the teaching profession (Cubukcu, 2013; Frenzel, Goetz, Stephens, & Jacob, 2009; Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2015; Kaplan, Gheen & Midgley, 2002; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Teacher Emotions

Teacher emotions strongly influence the academic lives of students because they either enhance or inhibit teachers' abilities to effectively teach students. Frenzel (2014) explained that the positive emotions of teachers have considerable implications for enhancing the quality of teaching, and the overall school climate, whereas negative emotions may be detrimental to the instruction and professional behaviours of teachers. Teachers' emotional competence fosters an attractive learning environment and creates a healthy and encouraging atmosphere for their students (Garner, 2010). Positive emotions help teachers develop creative teaching strategies that promote their students' engagement and motivation, whereas negative emotions undermine teachers' creativity and affect learning outcomes (Frenzel et al., 2009). Positive emotions supposedly stimulate autonomous supportive teaching behaviours, which, in turn, enhance the teacher's role as a guide within the classroom and encourage the development of students' internal motivation (Perlman, 2011). Classrooms that foster positive emotions among teachers and students throughout the processes of teaching and learning are highly likely to provide the best circumstances for promoting students' academic development and achievement (Yan, Evans, & Harvey, 2011). In addition to influencing students' academic lives, teachers' emotions noticeably affect their relationships with students. Earlier studies have indicated that teachers' emotions are associated with students' perceptions of their teachers. Yoon (2002) found that students' negative perceptions of their teachers were attributed to the negative emotions displayed by teachers. Furthermore, previous studies on students' perceptions of teachers' emotions have indicated that students are aware of their teachers' unhappiness when they make mistakes (Perry, VandeKamp, Mercer, & Nordby, 2002). In their study, Phelan, Davidson, and Cao (1992) observed that high school students reported that caring teachers gained their students' cooperation in learning, whereas those who were considered to be non-caring did not facilitate their low-performing students completing their schoolwork.

Emotions in Second / Foreign Language Teaching

Emotions significantly influence second/foreign language teaching and learning. Earlier research has indicated that language learners experience both positive and negative emotions during language learning. Unsurprisingly, the emotional aspect of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) remains an unexamined topic in both teacher education and ongoing teacher development programmes (Cowie, 2011). The literature on the impact of teachers' emotions on TEFL has mainly focused on learners' emotions or affective factors, particularly the impact of negative emotions, such as fear and anxiety, on students' proficiency and has not sufficiently examined the importance of positive emotions (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Research on the emotions of second language learners started with the popularization of the humanistic approach and teaching methodologies such as the Silent Way, Suggest opedia and Community Language Learning (Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013).

A review of the language teaching literature indicated that studies on teachers' emotions started appearing in 2010 (Cowie, 2011). Prior to this period, research covered issues related to teachers' stress levels and burnout (Crandall, 2000) or non-native language teachers' anxieties related to their lack of competency (Horwitz, 1996) rather than teachers' emotions. Today, foreign language teachers' emotions are receiving extensive academic attention. Golombek and Doran (2014) provided evidence for the close relationship between cognition and second language teachers' emotions because emotions are considered a motivating factor and functional component in the development of teachers'cognition.

Emotions in Teaching Practicum

The teaching practicum is the most significant aspect of teacher education programmes. It is considered an emotionally challenging experience in which student teachers undergo emotional ups and downs. Research on emotions during experiences of learning to teach has not been conducted and researchers know very little about the role of emotions during this period (Golombek & Doran, 2014; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). During field training, student teachers are expected to learn to teach in a real classroom setting. They expend considerable effort to gain the knowledge and skills that will shape and facilitate their future teaching practices. Student teachers are expected to learn how to teach and which teaching methods, strategies, techniques, and styles to use in various situations. They attempt to successfully manage their classrooms and their students' behaviours and establish healthy relationships with their students, placement school staff, and supervisors (Abou-assali, 2013). Therefore, they often encounter a wide range of affective situations and concerns that may evoke several positive and negative emotional responses. Previous research has revealed that during practicum, the focus of student teachers' emotions is on themselves and their relationships with students, mentoring teachers and supervisors, rather than on the broader context of teaching (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2012; Yuan & Lee, 2015). Abou-assali (2013) explained that the student teachers' concerns originate from the duality of roles they performed during practicum as both students and teachers, which creates stress and uncertainty in their attempts to manage the responsibilities and challenges of each role. Furthermore, Poulou (2007) reported that one of the main concerns of student teachers is to match theory with practice and teaching ability with performance. Another essential factor stimulating student teachers' emotions is the evaluation to which the practicum period is always equated, which places student teachers under pressure to perform according to the evaluation criteria rather than to develop the professional quality required to work as effective teachers (Brandt, 2006; Nguyen, 2014).

Similarly, previous studies have shown that the positive or negative emotions experienced by student teachers are caused by various situations such as professional relationships and interactions within the school community, gaps between student teachers' expectations and classroom realities, development of the competency to assume the role of a teacher, and the necessary adaption to institutional norms and principles (Hascher & Hagenauer, 2016). Huberman (1993) stated that excitement and enthusiasm are common emotions felt by beginner teachers about obtaining their own classrooms and students. Cowie (2011) found that the warmth expressed by teachers is a result of the care and affection they feel for their students, which is developed through their talks and shared jokes outside of the classroom.

On the other hand, as stated by Erb (2002), beginner teachers may often experience negative emotions such as anxiety because of the complexity of the requirements of the teaching profession and teachers' uncertainty regarding the achievement of goals. Timostsuk and Ugaste, (2012) indicated that disappointment and anxiety are considered the most prevalent emotions among student teachers. Furthermore, Bibby (2002) stated that shame is among the most common emotions felt by student teachers during their initial teaching experiences, since, at the time, they are not fully familiar with the information and knowledge of the subject matter they are required to teach. Farrell (2001, p.54) pointed out that student teachers who encountered job isolation due to a lack of support provided by school staff, as well as to poor communication and unfriendly relationships with colleagues might feel "left out from the process completely". Nguyen (2014) noted that student teachers experienced negative emotions such as frustration and disappointment while working with authoritative and unsupportive cooperating teachers who insisted on using traditional pedagogies or provided them with poor feedback. Similarly, Cowie (2011) found that EFL teachers felt angry and frustrated when confronted with different viewpoints regarding teachers' responsibilities towards their students' needs, abilities, and interests. In addition to the lack of collaboration among colleagues due to their vested interests; the

absence of trust between student teachers and administration; non-provision of support and positive feedback by head teachers; and student misconduct including lateness, absence, and disturbance in the class are a few other situations that make student teachers angry. Said (2014) stated that ESL teachers experienced stress when the administration wanted them to perform a massive amount of work within a limited amount of time.

Riesky (2013) attributed the creation of negative emotions to challenging situations encountered by student teachers during practicum, such as the low competency levels, carelessness, noise, impoliteness, lack of motivation, and uncooperative attitudes of students. Yuan and Lee (2015) noted that preservice teachers could become tearful when encountering unexpected situations, such as making mistakes in front of their students or being unable to answer the questions asked by students. The results of Canh's (2014) study revealed that EFL teachers often felt shocked by the unfriendly bahaviour, poor classroom engagement, and low proficiency levels of their students in English classes. Mahmoudi and Ozkan (2016) discussed the stress caused by demanding practicum requirements, such as dedicating time and energy, fear of not satisfying one's supervisors, understanding mentoring teachers' expectations, worries pertaining to evaluation, establishing good relationships with the placement school staff, and managing annoying student behaviours in the classroom. Martinez Agudo and Azzaro (2018) discussed some personal factors that contribute to student teachers' emotions, such as limited proficiency in communication; the inability to teach; the apprehension of being misunderstood by students; and the desire to be respected by students, appreciated by parents, and supported by mentoring teachers.

Some researchers have opined that negative emotions arising from relationships within the school community may prevent student teachers from applying the theoretical knowledge gained from their preparatory programmes to teaching settings. For example, Farrell (2008) reported that some preservice teachers modified their methods of teaching to conform to those of their cooperating teachers to satisfy the latter's assessment standards. Trent (2013) illustrated that some ESL preservice teachers had to use teaching methods that were incompatible with their preferred teaching methods since their cooperating teachers did not agree with the methods they were applying.

Understanding teacher Emotions

Understanding teachers' emotions is an essential component of teaching effectiveness. Chang and Davis (2009) stated that teachers require significant awareness and understanding of their emotions to establish and maintain supportive relationships within the school environment. The extent to which teachers are capable of understanding their own emotions and the emotions of their students and colleagues reflects their capacity to lead teaching and learning processes. On the other hand, any failure in understanding their emotions may cause burnout and emotional exhaustion (Carson & Templin, 2007) and result in ineffective teaching and classroom management procedures (Macdonald, 1999). Moreover, the manner in which teachers respond to emotional situations is considered a step towards learning how to manage their emotions. For example, positive responses to challenging situations often foster career professionalism and personal development (Nguyen 2014). However, negative responses to emotional experiences are expected to increase teachers' attention so that they become better prepared to face similar situations in the future, provide learning opportunities to solve conflicts, and help teachers construct experience and form their professional identities (Dang, 2013; Pillen, Beijaard & den Brok, 2013; Sutton & Wheatly, 2003).

Coping with Emotions

In addition to understanding their own emotions, competent teachers should find an emotional balance. Teachers are required to have the ability to competently regulate or cope with various emotional demands and challenging situations to ensure successful teaching and smooth interaction with the people around them (Lee & Yin, 2011). Emotion regulation refers to having the ability to control emotional experiences and expressions (Gross, 1998). Similarly, coping refers to the application of strategies enabling an individual to control a problem that occurs as a result of his or her interaction with the surrounding environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The ability to cope with or regulate emotions is one of the most powerful abilities that human beings possess, and it reflects the flexibility and diversity of human behaviours (Baumeister, Tawenge & Nuss, 2002, p.57).

Preventive and responsive strategies are the most commonly applied emotional coping or regulation strategies. Preventive (antecedent- focused) strategies aim at amending or modifying internal or external situations prior to emotional outset, such as engaging students in the learning process, diverting their awareness away from the situation, and introducing well-prepared lessons, whereas responsive (response-focused) strategies are employed after the outset of an emotion to amend, intensify, reduce or prolong the situation, such as engaging in self talk, telling jokes, or ignoring the situation (Sutton, 2004).

John and Gross (2004) stated that some selected coping strategies might be more effective or healthier than others. Furthermore, individuals regulate or cope with their emotions in different ways since they differ by cultural backgrounds and personality traits. For instance, empirical studies have proven that emotional intelligence (Gross & John, 2002) and self-efficacy (Schwarzer, Boehmer, Luszczynska, Mohamed, & Knoll, 2005) are strong predictors of emotion regulation and coping behaviour levels, as well as persistence in overcoming difficult problems. Difficulties in

emotion regulation, or poor emotion management, are linked to psychiatric disorders (Derryberry & Reed, 2003) and result in physiological reactions, including hypertension, fatigue, pain, poor diet, and sleep disturbances (Abbass, 2005). Although, coping with or managing one's emotions is necessary while engaging in the teaching practice, experienced teachers often find it difficult to manage their emotions; the situation is more complex for student teachers since they lack experience and preparation. Woolfolk Hoy (2013) stated that student teachers are not prepared to meet their career demands, which may sometimes cause them to quit the profession. Therefore, teacher preparation programmes that offer knowledge and training on understanding, managing, and regulating teachers' emotions will be helpful in emotionally preparing student teachers to overcome teaching challenges.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching practicum is a challenging experience in which student teachers encounter broadly diversified affective demanding situations that evoke both positive and negative emotions. Student teachers usually use strongly emotional expressions such as 'happy', 'enthusiastic', 'stressed' or 'lost' to describe their initial teaching practice experiences (Malderez et al., 2007). The majority of language student teachers' positive or negative emotions are experienced during the following situations: experiencing a gap between teacher education courses and classroom realities; applying teaching practices; identifying communicative competence in the classroom; satisfying the needs of students with various abilities; managing unmotivated and uninterested students; handling supervisors' comments and evaluation; performing classroom management; understanding the learning environment; and establishing sound relationships with students, parents, colleagues, supervisors, and administrators (Darby, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2004; Premier & Miller, 2010; Yan, Evans & Harvey, 2011).

For many years, emotionality of TEFL has been considered absent in the literature on teacher education for several reasons. (1) The subjective nature of emotions makes them complex to understand in a meaningful manner. It is difficult to ensure that two individuals feel the same emotions in a particular situation, because people react differently towards various situations. (2) Emotions have been considered a feminine attribute and, therefore not a worthy research topic. (3) Emotions have been equated to irrationality and considered rudimentary and childish rather than civilized and mature aspects. (4) Furthermore, a reliable instrument to accurately measure emotions was lacking (Becker, Geotz, Morger, & Ranellucci, 2014; Frenzel et al., 2009; Fried, Mansfield, & Dobozy, 2015; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Despite the recent enhanced interest in the literature on teacher emotions and the significance of these emotions in the present-day education of both teachers and students, research on this area is limited in teacher education, in general, and the EFL context, in particular. Furthermore, earlier research on teacher emotions lacked depth, a theoretical framework, and connectivity to the professional lives of teachers. The majority of the existed studies have focused on the stress, well-being, and burnout experienced by teachers. Similarly, research on teaching practicum has focused on issues such as practicum-related concerns and student teachers' knowledge, attitudes, motivation, thoughts, and beliefs. Unsurprisingly, student teachers' emotions during practicum are the least investigated topic (Abou-assali, 2013; Akbari, Samer, Kiany & Tahernia, 2017; Nguyen, 2014; Sutton & Wheatly, 2003; Zembylas, 2003). To address this research gap, the current study aims to expand the literature on EFL teachers' emotions by investigating the emotional responses of EFL student teachers to various affective situations encountered during practicum and the coping strategies they use to enhance positive emotions and reduce negative ones.

Research Questions

To achieve the research objective, the study addresses the following questions:

1. Which affective situations (pleasant or unpleasant) do EFL student teachers experience more during practicum?

2. Which emotional responses (positive and negative) do EFL student teachers have to affective situations (positive / negative) during practicum?

3. In which situations do EFL student teachers experience positive emotional responses during practicum?

4. In which situations do EFL student teachers experience negative emotional responses during practicum?

5. How do EFL student teachers enhance their positive emotional responses and cope with the negative ones during practicum?

Methodology

Sample

The participants of the study were 70 EFL graduates enrolled in the Educational Diploma Program during the second semester of 2017/2018 at Taibah University in Almadinah city, Saudi Arabia. All the participants were female with ages ranging from 23 to 27 years. Further, all participants had to complete 16 weeks of teacher training in a placement school.

Data Collection and Procedures

A mixed method was applied to collect quantitative and qualitative data with two research instruments. The quantitative method provided data for descriptive statistics on the frequencies of occurrence of the student teachers' positive and negative emotional responses. On the other hand, the qualitative method was selected as the most appropriate method to stimulate participants to reflect on, describe, and write about the affective situations that evoked various emotional responses (positive/negative) during practicum.

First, the emotional reflective diary, which involved a self-reflective description for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, was used to encourage student teachers to think and mediate on and describe in paper and pencil diaries the daily affective situations that they encountered during the practicum period, which lasted for 16 weeks, and to record their emotional responses to those situations. Prior to the practicum period, student teachers were trained on using their diaries. During practicum, they were instructed to make diary entries right at the moment they were experiencing an affective situation either within the classroom or in the school setting and record their emotional response or mixed emotional responses to the situation.

Furthermore, student teachers' emotional responses were classified into two main categories: positive and negative. Positive emotional responses encompassed six dimensions (happiness, optimism, love, enthusiasm, confidence, and influence), as did negative emotional responses (stress, anger, fear, sadness, shame, and loss). Some of the selected emotional responses, such as stress, anxiety, and happiness have been mentioned by earlier studies (Hascher & Hagenauer, 2016), and the remaining emotional responses were added by the author for this study since they were considered to prevail during a person's first teaching experience. An open-ended question was included to encourage student teachers to record any affective situation that stimulated an emotional response that was not included in the list of 12 dimensions.

The emotional reflective diary method supposedly provides the most appropriate estimate since it enables student teachers to directly capture emotional responses and report on momentary affective situations rather than recall past emotions. The participants' affective situations were documented in this moment-by-moment diary to avoid memory lapses and improve their critical reflective skills. The author developed the emotional diary based on the instruments used in the by Frenzel et al. (2016), Chen (2016) and Jiang, Vauras, Volet and Wang (2016). Although the instruments used in these studies were characteristically different because they were questionnaires or scales, the emotional diary followed a similar classification of emotions into two categories and several dimensions.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted once the 16-week teaching practicum was completed to collect qualitative data on how student teachers enhanced their positive emotions and coped with negative ones during the practicum period. The interviews (N=30) were recorded, transcribed and analysed by two researchers, the author of this paper and a colleague.

Data Analysis

To analyse quantitative data, descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS (20). For qualitative data, the content of the written reflections and semi structured interviews were analysed by the researcher on the basis of qualitative content analysis using the following techniques: data organization, coding, classification, analysis, interpretation and reflection.

Results and Discussion

With respect to the result of the **first** research question, the quantitative analysis of student teachers' reflective diaries revealed that teaching practicum presents an affective period during which student teachers experience pleasant and unpleasant situations. The participating student teachers rated their practicum period as an emotionally positive experience. The mean score and percentage of pleasant affective situations were higher than those of unpleasant ones (see Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Affective Situations

Affective situations	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Percentage%
pleasant	70	21.5000	8.26158	55.80
unpleasant	70	17.0286	9.24383	44.20

To determine whether there was any significant difference in student teachers' general experiences during practicum in terms of the average mean scores of pleasant and unpleasant affective situations, a one-sample t-test was conducted. The result (see Table 2) indicated a statistically significant difference at the 0.00 significance level in the average mean scores of pleasant (M= 21.5000) and unpleasant (M= 17.0286) affective situations. The difference was in favour of pleasant affective situations, indicating that the practicum period is generally characterized by emotionally positive experiences.

Table 2. One-Sample Test

Affective situations	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
pleasant	21.773	69	.000	21.50000	19.5301	23.4699
unpleasant	15.413	69	.000	17.02857	14.8245	19.2327

The **second** research question was addressed by the results of the quantitative reflective diary analysis, which found that student teachers showed both positive and negative emotional responses to affective situations. The descriptive statistics of emotional responses were computed and ranked according to the mean frequency of occurrence scores (see Table 3).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Responses

Emotional Responses	Mean	SD	Rank
happy	5.8286	2.16675	1
optimistic	3.5571	1.88538	4
loved	3.5571	1.86994	4
enthusiastic	3.2286	1.65215	6
confident	3.3286	1.61264	5
influential	2.0000	1.44463	10
stressed	3.7429	1.98316	3
angry	4.0000	2.21981	2
afraid	2.4857	1.72570	8
sad	3.2143	2.04226	7
shamed	1.2571	1.66538	11
lost	2.3286	1.69159	9
others	.4143	.49615	12

The emotional response that was ranked first among mean scores was 'happy' (M= 5.8286). This indicates that the most frequent emotional response of student teachers was positive. The emotional responses that were second and third in terms of frequency were both negative, i.e, 'angry' and 'stressed' respectively. The two positive emotional responses 'optimistic' and 'loved' assumed the fourth rank (M = 3.5571). The emotional responses 'confident' and 'enthusiastic' ranked fifth and sixth respectively. The negative emotional responses 'sad' 'afraid' and 'lost' were assigned seventh, eighth, and ninth ranks, respectively. The least frequently experienced emotional responses according to the mean scores were 'influential' and 'shamed'. Other responses that student teachers showed came twelfth in rank. Examples of such responses were (neglected, tired, disappointed, shocked, grateful, and bored).

In response to the **third** research question, which examined student teachers' positive responses to affective situations, a qualitative data analysis was conducted on student teachers' reflections (from their reflective diaries). The results indicated that the participants experienced positive emotional responses to pleasant affective situations, such as those depicted in Table 4.

Table 4. Affective Situations That Provoked Positive Emotional Responses

Emotional Responses	Pleasant Affective Situations
happy	<u>*Student teachers felt* 'happy' *in the following situations:*</u> On finding that the placement school was my old school, the headmistress and teaching staff welcomed us on the first day of practicum, I entered my class and saw my students for the first time, my students thanked me at the end of the class, my students called me "teacher" for the first time, I understood my students' first impression, a student greeted me whenever she saw me, a student told me something very personal, students shared their dreams and interests with me, the school's teachers invited us for coffee and breakfast, my students expressed their love and appreciation to me, the school teachers prepared a farewell party for us at the end of the practicum, students gave me flowers and gifts on the last day, the school administration honoured us on the last day.

Table 4. Continued

Emotional Responses	Pleasant Affective Situations
optimistic	*Student teachers felt* 'optimistic' *in the following situations:* I discovered that the school staff was supportive and cooperative, I found that my students' proficiency level in English was excellent, I helped a student to overcome shyness, I saw that the classrooms were not crowded, I found the classrooms to be well-equipped, I understood that my students were motivated to learn English, I found that my supervisor is cooperative, I found that my students respect rules and instructions, I helped some students stop using their native language in English classes, some naughty students behaved politely, a sleepy class became more active.
loved	*Student teachers felt* 'loved' *in the following situations:* my colleagues supported me, a teacher helped me arrange my class during supervisor visits, a school maid prayed for me and asked me about my day, students requested me to teach them in place of their teacher, students cried because I completed practicum, some students always smiled whenever they saw me, students gave me flowers, candy, written letters, and handmade gifts, I received appreciative notes during Teachers' Day celebrations, a school teacher invited me to have coffee with her, a student dedicated a song to me, a student gave me her pen so that I will remember her whenever I use it.
enthusiastic	*Student teachers felt* 'enthusiastic' *in the following situations:* I participated in different activities and celebrations at school, school teachers shared their teaching experiences, I checked my students' notebooks, I prepared my first lesson, I noticed improvement in my students' performance, I designed new games and competitions for students, I helped my students learn new things, low performing students asked me to take additional classes for them, I evaluated my students for the first time.
confident	*Student teachers felt* 'confident' *in the following situations:* students said that I have a native-like accent, I handled an unexpected situation, I answered students' questions, I controlled students' behaviours, I received positive feedback from my supervisor, students told me about their personal problems, a school teacher praised my explanations, I smoothly conducted lessons as per my planning, my students participated and engaged themselves in their studies, a school headmistress described me as a professional teacher, students obtained good scores on their examinations, I managed time, students achieved their learning objectives, I came well-prepared to a class.
influential	*Student teachers felt* 'influential' *in the following situations:* students stopped taking as soon as I entered the classroom, students cleaned their classroom after I commented on how messy it looked, a colleague followed my advice on using some teaching strategies, a student told me that she had learned much from me, a student informed me that I had changed her negative attitudes towards English, I successfully solved the conflicts between two students.

The results depicted in Table 4 are interpreted as follows:

1. All situations that evoked happiness were very emotional. These situations were not related to classroom instruction; rather they pertained to the development of positive relationships among the students and school staff. Student teachers felt happy when their students or the school staff showed them care, love or appreciation. For example, hearing terms such as 'thank you' or a greeting such as 'good morning' or receiving flowers from a student made student teachers happy. Student teachers also felt happy when sharing breakfast or coffee with the school staff, when they gained their students' trust and when students started sharing their personal stories, dreams and interests with them. This finding shows that the highest priority for student teachers was the creation of caring relationships with their students and the school staff. By showing care, love or appreciation, we can offer the greatest support to student teachers in transforming the teaching practicum to a successful experience.

2. Student teachers showed optimism when they found that their experiences in school matched their expectations, such as expecting to gain work experience in a placement school that was well equipped, taught polite students, or enabled cooperative interactions with the school staff. Furthermore, they felt optimistic due to key achievements, such as turning a noisy class into a quiet class or helping students stop use their native language in English classes.

3. Student teachers felt 'loved' when their students sincerely expressed feelings of love or exerted significant effort in studying English and when their students gave them gifts, letters, flowers, and candy. School staff showed their love by

attending to small details, such as asking student teachers about their day, inviting them to have coffee or food, helping them in their activities or even praying for them.

4. In the situations that evoked optimism, student teachers may have felt enthusiastic due to the opportunity for a new life experience with new roles and responsibilities. The transition of student teachers from their role of university students to that of school teachers made them enthusiastic about the new life experience. Student teachers were very interested in carrying out some duties for the first time, for instance, participating in various celebrations and activities along with the school staff, delivering lessons, correcting notebooks, preparing tests, and designing academic activities.

5. Student teachers showed confidence when they received positive feedback from their supervisors, the school staff, or their students, for instance, feedback on successful classroom instruction and maintaining well-managed classrooms. They also experienced confidence when realizing their competencies and strengths and doing their best develop themselves.

6. Student teachers felt 'influential' in situations where they effectively impacted others or when others sought their help or advice.

To address the *fourth research question*, a qualitative analysis of the reflections of student teachers was carried out. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Affective Situations that Provoked Negative Emotional Responses

Emotional Responses	Unpleasant Affective Situations
stressed	*Student teachers felt 'stressed' in the following situations:* I entered the school on the first day of practicum, I met my students for the first time, I knew about my supervisor's visit, I faced technical problems during explanation, a supervisor attended my class, I had many duties to perform, students asked me to use their native language to facilitate their comprehension of the foreign language, my sleep was disturbed on the night before my class, I ran out of time before I could cover the lesson, I prepared and explained my first lesson.
angry	*Student teachers felt 'angry' in the following situations:* I saw a student chewing gum, a student insulted her classmate, a student laughed out loudly, students did not follow my instructions, students showed no respect to a student with special needs, students did not do their assignments, students were very noisy, the class teacher ordered me to do many things in one class, a student left the class without my permission, a student ate while in class, a student slept while I was explaining the lesson, a student interrupted my explanation and asked silly questions, a student made fun of her classmate, a student cheated on the examination.
afraid	*Student teachers felt 'afraid' in the following situations:* a student had a fever and the nurse was absent on that day, I saw a student who was crying and whose breathing was affected, I started thinking about classroom management, a student was sick and I did not know what to do, I did not know how to end a conflict between two students, I was not able to deal with students' individual differences, I thought about my duties and responsibilities as a teacher, the fire bell sounded during my class.
sad	*Student teachers felt 'sad' in the following situations:* I saw the school poor facilities, the supervisor advised me to work more on classroom management, I finished my practicum, I saw a teacher shouting at a student, students told me they got bored and that I could not help, a teacher refused to help me, I saw a teacher ignoring students with learning difficulties, an excellent student got a low mark on an examination, I discovered that one of my students had a serious family problem, I came to school while my son was sick, a teacher did not welcome us to her class, I saw teachers crying due to the death of another teacher, the supervisor criticized my teaching style, a student hurt by me criticizing me harshly.
shamed	*Student teachers felt 'shamed' in the following situations:* I could not answer unexpected question immediately, a mentor teacher scolded me about using Arabic, a student was punished because of a colleague's error, the classroom teacher made me cover the course content without caring about students' comprehension, I ignored a student completely in class because she was naughty, I responded to a teacher's order to ignore some skills and activities included in students' textbook, I made some spelling mistakes on the board, I pronounced a word incorrectly

Table 5. Continued

Emotional Responses	Unpleasant Affective Situations
lost	*Student teachers felt 'lost' in the following situations:* I entered the school for the first time, I realized the responsibilities of the teaching profession, I planned my first lesson, I received two contradictory comments from the classroom teacher and my supervisor, the classroom teacher ordered me to follow her own teaching style and methods, I had too many duties to perform as a teacher and a student, I prepared an exam for the first time, I forgot some activities during the lesson, there was a technical problem with my projector and I did not know how to solve it.

The results obtained from table 5 can be interpreted as follows:

1.The emotional response 'stressed' occurred due to the heavy load managed by student teachers during practicum as a result of the dual roles they had to perform and the experience of doing tasks for the first time, such as preparing and explaining their first lessons and preparing for the first supervisors' visits. Technical problems, the inability to manage time properly, and poor sleep also increased their stress levels.

2. Student teachers experienced anger when students broke the rules, showed disrespect or unfriendly behaviour, wasted class time, or forgot to do their homework.

3. Student teachers felt 'afraid' when they faced serious or emergency situations and did not know what to do, such as attending to a sick student in class, solving conflicts between students, and responding to a fire alarm.

4. The emotional response 'sad' was trigged when the student teachers felt that their efforts were ignored, they were unfairly recognized, the school teachers overused their authority, their students experienced problems in their home lives, and situations did not work out as planned or expected.

5. The emotional response 'ashamed' occurred when student teachers committed mistakes, such as providing incorrect pronunciation, making spelling and grammar mistakes, and recognizing their inability to cover content or activities.

6. Student teachers felt 'lost' when they did something for the first time and when they received orders to do something that they did not agree with or that they could not do because they had many responsibilities as part of their dual roles as teachers and students.

Regarding the *fifth* research question, the results obtained from analysing the content of the structured interviews with 30 EFL student teachers revealed that student teachers employed various regulating or coping strategies to enhance positive emotions and reduce negative emotions, such as engaging in positive self-talk, or self-motivation; thinking about the positive aspects of teaching; convincing oneself that this time will pass; avoidance of talking with negative personalities; avoiding confrontation; finding ways to solve problems; exerting effort to be accepted by students, such as using games or rewards; establishing interpersonal relationships with the school staff; being well-prepared; having alternative plans; designing appropriate activities; masking emotions or keeping facial expressions under control; suppressing anger; taking timely breaks from work; performing deep breathing; exercising; going for walks; maintaining a balanced life style; seeking the advice of one's family; consulting supervisors; and asking help from experienced teachers.

Unsurprisingly, the regulation strategies employed by student teachers in this study are similar to those used by teachers in earlier studies by Sutton (2004), Riesky (2013), and Jiang et al. (2016). The participants in this study reported that constituted their initial teaching experience, and due to their lack of experience, they did not know which regulation strategies were more effective than others or which strategies would work best in particular situations. They also added that, in a particular situation, they tried various strategies until they succeeded in finding a strategy suiting the situation. Unfortunately, the same strategy might not work well when confronting a similar situation in the future with different students or in different classrooms. This conclusion is supported by Cubukcu's (2013) view that there is no right or wrong way of using coping strategies. The most effective strategies depend on one's capacity to understand and manage oneself in various situations.

Furthermore, student teachers stated that the teacher education programme courses did not prepare them emotionally to cope with the demands of the teaching profession. The knowledge of the coping strategies they employed were gained from psychology books or papers, emotional intelligence sessions, supervisors, and experienced teachers. They concluded that coping strategies was effective in handling their emotions and that these strategies helped them attain emotional balance, which is essential in delivering successful lessons and effectively interacting with others.

Conclusions

Considering the significance of the emotional dimension of the teaching profession, this study aimed to deepen our understanding of the affective situations experienced by student teachers during practicum, as well as their responses to various situations and the strategies they employed to manage or regulate their emotions. The results obtained from analysing the reflective diaries of 70 student teachers revealed that the practicum is, in general, an emotionally positive experience. This result is in line with those of Hascher and Wepf (2007), Keller, Chang, Becker, Goetz and Frenzel (2014), and Hascher and Hagenauer (2016).

The frequency of occurrence of pleasant affective situations was more than that of unpleasant affective situations. Overall, the most commonly reported emotional responses according to the rank of frequency were 'happy', 'angry', and 'stressed'. The responses that followed according to decreasing frequency ranks were 'optimistic', 'loved', 'confident', 'enthusiastic', 'sad', and 'afraid'. The least frequently reported responses were 'lost', 'influential', and 'shamed'. Other emotional responses, such as 'neglected', 'tired', 'disappointed', 'shocked', 'grateful', and 'bored' were also reported, albeit far less frequently than previously mentioned emotional responses. These results are confirmed by earlier studies, as well, which reveal that happiness is one of the most frequently reported positive emotions (Chen, 2016; Erb,2002; Hagenauer & Volet,2014), and that anger is the most frequently reported negative emotion (Goetz et al., 2015; Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura, 2011; Keller et al., 2014; Shapiro, 2010).

All documented affective situations (both pleasant and unpleasant) were attributed to factors such as student teachers' relationships, responsibilities, overload of duties, and working conditions. Analysis of the situations related to the most frequent emotional responses (happy and angry) revealed that student teachers felt happy as a result of their students' love and appreciation, colleagues' care and support, and school leaders' recognition. This finding is in agreement with those of Erb (2002), Cowie (2011), and Chen (2016). Furthermore, situations related to students' misbehaviour were the major source of student teachers' anger. Similar results were reported by Sutton and Wheatley (2003) and Frenzel and Gotz (2007). Therefore, it can be concluded that emotional situations related to students are a key trigger of happiness or anger in student teachers. This result is in line with those of Cross and Hong (2012) and Timostsuk and Ugaste (2012).

In analysing student teachers' reflections, the author noted that the practicum is a highly emotional experience and that a single affective situation contributes to the creation of multiple interwoven and contradictory emotional responses. For example, student teachers may simultaneously feel happy, stressed, lost and enthusiastic when delivering their first lessons. Furthermore, an affective situation may stimulate various physical and behavioural responses since each student teacher interprets the situation from one's own particular perspectives. For example, a supervisor's negative feedback is a situation that may trigger stress and, accordingly, elicit various responses. Physically, a stressful situation may make one student teacher tearful while disturbing the sleep of another student teacher. Behaviourally, one student teacher may practice relaxation exercises, and another may choose to spend time with family to seek support.

Accordingly, it is important to help student teachers understand their own emotions, teach them that emotions can be regulated, and discuss different emotion regulation strategies with them. Providing them with knowledge on emotions and training them to adopt effective regulation strategies are expected to help them recognize that teaching is a profession that requires them to behave in conformance with the social rules assigned to this profession. Hence, student teachers should learn to work with their emotions and respond to particular affective situations.

Failure to regulate or manage emotions may reduce the well-being of student teachers and cause job dissatisfaction, health symptoms, and emotional exhaustion, which are considered the fundamental causes of labour burnout or dropout from the profession (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). This emphasizes the growing need for teacher education programmes at universities to pay more attention to the practical aspects of practicum. Unfortunately, teacher education programmes put more emphasis on preparing student teachers to maintain the increased accountability of the teaching profession than on preparing them to regulate their emotions to cope with the requirements of the profession. The study recommends that teacher emotionality should be included and addressed in the accompanying courses in teacher education programmes to help student teachers acquire knowledge on the essential concepts and components of teacher emotions. Student teachers should be prepared and trained to handle their emotions, as well as the emotions of others, which is considered the first step towards the formation of their future professional identities.

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