



# Teacher-perpetrated emotional violence in the classroom: A study based on pre-service teachers' perceptions

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## Abstract

Emotional violence is a phenomenon that produces profound negative consequences in the lives of children and adolescents. It is well established that children and adolescents are exposed to emotional violence not only within their families and broader social environments but also in school settings, where they spend a significant portion of their time. The current study aims at examining teacher-induced emotional violence and reactions of students in the classroom based on the observations and perceptions of pre-service teachers during their school practice experience. The research was carried out within a qualitative research design, and the data were gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with pre-service teachers. The obtained data were analyzed using content analysis method. The study results reveal that teacher-induced emotional violence occurs in various forms such as humiliating expressions, mockery, ignoring, and excessive criticism. Pre-service teachers stated that such practices negatively affect students' academic motivation, self-esteem, and classroom participation. The study results put forth the importance of increasing awareness regarding emotional violence in teacher education programs and the necessity of training aimed at developing effective communication skills in the classroom. In this context, the current study aims to contribute to teacher training processes and educational policies.

**Keywords:** Children's rights; Emotional violence; Pre-service teachers; School practices

## 1. Introduction

The school environment is regarded as one of the fundamental institutions where not only the academic but also the social, emotional, and personality developments of children and adolescents are shaped (Eccles & Roeser, 2015; Scharpf et al., 2022). The quality of this environment directly affects the active and healthy participation of students in educational processes (Lombardi et al., 2019). Teachers are figures who play a key role in determining the classroom atmosphere and directing student development. Teachers are expected to encourage intrinsic motivation and positive feelings of achievement by meeting students' psychological needs and providing autonomy support. On the other hand, behaviors (sarcasm, belittling, etc.) of emotionally abusive teacher hinder these needs and lead to negative emotions and academic burnout (Gusfre et al., 2023; Li et al., 2025). The communication style, understanding of discipline, and general attitudes used by teachers can have negative effects on students and may even turn into behaviors that possess the characteristics of abuse (Ali, 2019; Kahveci, 2023).

In the classroom environment, teacher-induced emotional abuse behaviors can be encountered (Norman et al., 2012; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Emotional abuse is defined as a type of violence that includes verbal and behavioral actions such as humiliating, belittling, threatening, rejecting, or neglecting, which hinder the emotional development of the child (Mwakanyamale et al., 2019). Although such behaviors do not leave physical marks, they can seriously damage the child's self-esteem, sense of belonging, learning motivation, and the relationship of trust established with the teacher (Agir, 2019; Çakar & Uzun, 2021; Nearchou, 2018). Emotional abuse in educational settings may occur in forms such as the constant criticism of the student within the classroom, making the student's mistakes a subject of mockery, humiliating the student in front of their classmates, being ignored by the teacher, or the disregard of their achievements (McEachern et al., 2008; Naicker et al., 2014).

While not all teachers inflict emotional violence on children, most teachers establish positive relationships with their students that support academic success and personality development, thus

contributing to the student. However, it is observed that some teachers inflict psychological violence on students without being aware of the impact of these behaviors (Roorda et al., 2011). Some students are exposed to a number of different emotional and abusive behaviors by their teachers in classroom settings (Arslan & Kanak, 2022).

Emotional violence in the classroom environment can lead to students giving excessive reactions, becoming aggressive, experiencing anxiety, school anxiety, social withdrawal from peers, loss of motivation, a miserable or depressed appearance, and academic difficulties (Aras et al., 2016; Lamghari et al., 2025; McEachern et al., 2008). While emotional abuse refers to the relationship between the child and the caregiver where harmful interactions are consistently repeated, excluding sexual or physical abuse, it carries the potential for emotional abuse in all environments where the child interacts (Glaser, 2002). The school environment is at the forefront of these environments (e.g. Aras et al., 2016). Teacher-induced emotional abuse is defined as a pattern of verbal and non-verbal behaviors, without physical or sexual abuse content, that can lead to emotional, social, cognitive, and somatic consequences on the functionality and adaptation of the student (McEachern et al., 2008). In this context, behaviors such as mockery, belittling, humiliation, shouting, name-calling, insulting, and derogatory comments targeting a student's appearance, personal circumstances, or social background fall within the scope of verbal and emotional abuse in school settings (Hogan et al., 2019; Kahveci, 2023).

It is stated that emotional abuse implemented by teachers encompasses various verbal and non-verbal behaviors (McEachern et al., 2008). Humiliating, isolating, name-calling, intimidating, and inappropriate discipline methods, ignoring, giving punishment to ensure discipline, acting in an authoritarian manner, sarcastic, or discriminatory expressions are addressed as emotional abuse in children (Ba-Saddik & Hattab, 2012; McEachern et al., 2008). Non-verbal abuse includes neglectful behaviors such as ignoring the student and behaviors such as giving homework for the purpose of practicing discipline or applying punishment when the student does not provide the correct answer to an exercise/question (McEachern et al., 2008).

In studies conducted in different countries, it is observed that emotional abuse implemented by teachers covers a wide range of behaviors such as verbal insults, humiliations, scolding, labeling, and exclusion. Longobardi et al. (2018) stated that 98% of middle school students in Italy perceive abusive behaviors. In Greece, it has been stated that physical and emotional abuse by teachers towards their students is widespread in primary schools (Nearchou, 2018). Teachers may often perform such behaviors without being aware, for the purposes of *ensuring discipline, increasing motivation, or setting boundaries for the student*. However, such negative approaches create some traumatic effects on students in the long term, make the classroom climate negative, and decrease motivation for academic success (Dimitropoulou et al., 2025; Sipahioğlu et al., 2023). Brendgen et al. (2006), in their longitudinal study, stated that teacher-induced verbal abuse affects the adaptation processes of primary school-age children and that teachers' verbal abuse is related to antisocial behaviors and attention problems in the early period, and to criminal behaviors and academic difficulties in the adolescent period. Research shows that such behaviors are associated with school refusal, aggression, social isolation, and psychosomatic disorders in students, as well as low academic success, school adaptation difficulties, anxiety and depression (Li et al., 2025; McEachern et al., 2008). Similarly, the link between emotional abuse perceived from the teacher and peer bullying has also drawn attention in the school-violence literature (Durasu et al., 2024; Kahveci, 2023). Students who are subjected to emotional abuse by their teacher do not ask for help from the teacher regarding the problems they experience with their peers at school (Aceves et al., 2009; Strohmeier et al., 2024).

Emotional abuse damages the child's psychosocial and educational development, and its negative effects may continue into adulthood (Alem, 2020; Altakhayneh, 2023; Omoponle & Dwarika, 2025). Although studies focus intensely on emotional abuse implemented by peers in the family environment or school environment, it is observed that emotional abuse implemented by teachers has not been sufficiently focused on (Nearchou, 2018). In this study, the reflections of teacher-induced emotional abuse within the classroom are examined from the perspective of pre-

service teachers who are doing their internships in schools. While much of the existing literature has focused on student-reported experiences of emotional abuse of teachers, there is a lack of research exploring how pre-service teachers' perceptions during their practical training. Addressing this gap, the aim of the study is to investigate pre-service teachers' observations on emotional abuse in the classroom. The research questions of this study are as follows:

RQ 1) How do pre-service teachers perceive teacher-perpetrated emotional abuse within classroom contexts?

RQ 2) How do pre-service teachers perceive of students' responses to these emotionally abusive behaviors?

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

In this study, a qualitative research design was used with a hybrid content analysis approach that combines directed and conventional content analysis. Directed content analysis is appropriate when prior research guides the development of coding categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The categories of teacher-perpetrated emotional violence were identified considering the relevant literature before the data collection process. Then, interview data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed. In the first phase, transcripts were coded deductively according to the predetermined categories. Directed content analysis allows to validate and extend existing frameworks while remaining open to new insights (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). For the second research question, participants' perceptions and descriptions of students' reactions to emotional violence were analyzed inductively. Conventional content analysis was used, allowing categories to emerge directly from the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Similar codes were grouped into broader themes to understand perception of participants.

### **2.2. Participants**

The participants of the study were included to the study with the purposive sampling method. Accordingly, the selection criteria were identified as being a senior pre-service teacher who has completed or is currently performing teaching practice for at least one semester and has had the chance to observe the teacher in a classroom environment, as well as being a volunteer to participate in the interview and to have consent for voice recordings. The participants of the study are 36 pre-service teachers (Female: 20, Male: 16). The ages of the participants range between 22 and 24 ( $M = 23.05$ ,  $SD = .78$ ). All of the participants are senior students at education faculty of a public university. Considering the researcher perception model, researchers terminate the data collection process when they think that no new information was obtained.

### **2.3. Data Collection Tool**

A semi-structured interview form was designed to gather information regarding the teacher-induced emotional abuse observed by the participants in the classroom environment. The theoretical framework and related research were reviewed for the purpose of preparing the interview form. A draft interview form included demographic and open-ended questions. The opinions of two faculty members from the department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance who are experts in the field of child neglect and abuse were taken. After obtaining expert opinions, 5 pilot applications were carried out to test the comprehensibility and validity of the questions. Feedbacks led to minor wording adjustments and the addition of examples to help participants better understand the open ended questions. The form was designed to explore both the types of behaviors observed and the perceived impact on students. The form consisted of open-ended questions covering four main themes: humiliation and devaluation, emotional manipulation and control, social isolation and discrimination, and labeling and stigmatization. Sample items of the study - "Have you ever observed a teacher engaging in behaviors that may have humiliated or devalued a student? If so, could you explain?, Have you observed teachers labeling students negatively? If so, could you explain?."

## 2.4. Data Collection Process

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the university's ethics committee. During the interviews, verbal information was provided to the participants regarding the purpose of the research, confidentiality principles, voice recording, and anonymity, and their informed consent was obtained. In-depth interviews were carried out face-to-face. The interviews lasted approximately 15-40 minutes. The interviews were conducted in quiet environments where only the researcher and the participant were present, where they would feel comfortable, and where confidentiality would be protected.

## 2.5. Data Analysis

The data obtained in the current study were analyzed via the content analysis method. During the coding process, the data were continuously compared, and expressions containing similar meanings were combined under themes. In this process, the researchers came together regularly to ensure that the emerging themes represented the participants' expressions in the best possible way. Throughout the analysis process, attention was given to ensuring credibility and consistency. The coding process followed systematic procedures recommended in qualitative content analysis literature (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Discrepancies in coding were resolved through discussion, and themes were refined to ensure conceptual clarity.

## 2.6. Positionality Statement

The researchers conduct academic studies on child neglect and abuse and have experience in qualitative research. Furthermore, both of the researchers are individuals who have practices with parents, children, and adolescents in school environments and have experience in their professions. In addition, the researchers have been giving courses at the faculty of education, guiding the classroom practices of pre-service teachers and conducting the supervision process regarding school practice. This diversity in the personal backgrounds of the researchers may have enriched the awareness in understanding teacher-induced emotional violence in the classroom environment and influenced how the interview questions were structured.

## 3. Results

The current study examined the types of teacher-induced emotional violence observed by the participants in the classroom environment. When Table 1 was analyzed, teacher-induced emotional violence in the classroom environment has a multi-dimensional structure.

Table 1  
*Main Themes of Observed Emotional Violence*

| <i>Theme</i>                        | <i>Description</i>                                                           | <i>Representative Examples</i>                       | <i>Sample Quotes</i>                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Humiliation and Devaluation         | Behaviors that undermine students' dignity and self-worth                    | Name-calling, mockery, belittling expressions        | "Some teachers use humiliating language in front of the whole class, which makes students feel worthless." |
| Emotional Manipulation and Control  | Behaviors aimed at exerting psychological pressure and control over students | Threats, blaming, punishment                         | "Teachers sometimes threaten students with grades or disciplinary actions to control their behavior."      |
| Social Isolation and Discrimination | Exclusionary or discriminatory practices directed at students                | Ignoring, social exclusion, discriminatory treatment | "Certain students may be ignored or excluded by teachers during classroom activities."                     |
| Labeling and Stigmatization         | Assigning negative identities or stigmatizing attributes to students         | Ethnic exclusion, negative labeling                  | "Students may be labeled as 'lazy' or 'problematic,' which affects how they are treated in class."         |

The observations of participants show that the emotional violence behaviors implemented by the teachers were observed in different forms. The obtained data were gathered under five main themes: (1) Humiliation and Devaluation, (2) Emotional Manipulation and Control, (3) Social Isolation and Discrimination, and (4) Labeling and Stigmatization.

### **3.1. Humiliation and Devaluation**

In the current study, it was observed that the most frequently expressed teacher-induced emotional violence behaviors by the participants are name-calling, belittling, making the student feel inadequate, using verbally humiliating expressions, and non-verbal humiliating behaviors. Teachers' scolding of students in an embarrassing manner within the classroom environment, mocking them over their failures, or using belittling facial expressions were identified as emotional violence by the participants. One participant expressed this situation as below:

The teacher said to the student, 'If you cannot solve such a simple question, you should quit mathematics.' When a student tried to solve a problem using their own method, the teacher scolded them by saying, 'Who taught you this way? Mathematics is not done like this.' The teacher was constantly embarrassing students in this manner. One student, before taking an exam, expressed hopelessness by saying, 'I will already be unsuccessful anyway.'

Moreover, it was noted that a teacher constantly used slang words towards a student and laughed in the classroom. While the student was initially surprised and then became accustomed to it, their self-confidence decreased and they became very upset when their peers also began to use these expressions.

### **3.2. Emotional Manipulation and Control**

The participants stated that some teachers frequently utilized behaviors of intimidation, blaming, and restriction/punishment for the purpose of ensuring authority in the classroom. In these cases, it is observed that teachers attempt to discipline the students by frightening or punishing them. It was emphasized that such behaviors increase the level of anxiety in students and damage the relationship of trust with the teacher. One of the participants shared this situation as follows:

The teacher called the student over and said, 'Should I beat you like your mother, would your father beat you?' The student only looked at the opposite wall, did not establish eye contact with the teacher, and it was as if he was not listening.

### **3.3. Social Isolation and Discrimination**

One of the remarkable findings of the research was that teachers exhibit emotional violence in the form of social exclusion through behaviors of discrimination, leaving the student alone, and ignoring. The participants stated that teachers ignored some students while being more interested in others, which created a sense of exclusion, particularly in students with low achievement or those who are quiet. One pre-service teacher described this situation as follows: "The teacher only listened to the successful children in the class." This finding indicates that teacher behaviors create a status difference among students in social relations within the classroom. One of the participants said that;

I observed that the teacher skipped a student without giving him a turn to read while making students read in order. It was clear from the teacher's looks that this was intentional rather than a case of forgetting.

### **3.4. Labeling and Stigmatization**

The participants stated that teachers labeled students according to various characteristics. Labeling was observed in the forms of physical, academic, personality traits, emotional characteristics, and others (familial/ethnic characteristics). One participant expressed this as follows:

The teacher calls the student 'lazy' in front of everyone and embarrasses the student. The teacher had given a nickname 'chubby' to an overweight student. It seemed cute to the teacher, but the student's friends were constantly making fun of the child.

Some participants stated that teachers made negative insinuations or comments regarding the

students' family backgrounds or ethnic identities. For instance, one of the participants shared that the teacher ignored foreign students who did not know Turkish and did not make any effort to include them in the lesson.

### 3.5. Reactions Observed in Students Exposed to Teacher-Induced Emotional Violence

The participants observed not only the behaviors of the teachers but also the behaviors of the students and shared their observations regarding this issue. It was seen that students react in many different ways such as emotional, behavioral, physiological, academic, not observable, and social reactions (see Table 2).

First, emotional responses refer to affective reactions of students, such as feelings of fear or shame. Emotional responses of students were not limited to visible expressions but also include internal feelings that may influence behavior, attention, and engagement to classroom activities. Participants described students' emotional reactions using statements such as, "The student seemed ashamed in response to the teacher's bullying behavior" and "For example, I could see on the child's face that he was scared when the teacher shouted at him."

Secondly, behavioral responses refer to observable reactions of students towards emotional violence, such as avoiding eye contact, reduced peer interaction, or social isolation. Behavioral responses were observable actions reflecting students' reactions to teacher behavior, or emotional experiences. Unlike emotional responses, behavioral responses can be directly seen by teachers, peers, and participants. Participants exemplified this with statements such as, "The student withdrew from her classmates after being criticized by the teacher" and "For example, when the teacher asked the criticized student to open his book, he did not do so; I interpreted this as an act of resistance or a passive response."

Third, physiological responses refer to physiological reactions reflecting the student's internal distress, such as blushing, freezing, etc. These responses were the bodily reactions that reflect a student's internal emotional or psychological state in response to teacher behavior. Unlike behavioral responses, which are observable actions, physiological responses often appear automatically and unconsciously. For instance, one of the participants indicated that, "One of the students blushed in response to the teacher's condescending remark and lowered their head, not wanting to make eye contact with his classmates".

Fourth, academic responses are the academic reactions of the students toward emotional violence, such as giving up, not participating in class, or not listening to the lesson. Academic responses refer to the ways in which students' learning behaviors and engagement with academic tasks. Academic responses were directly related to motivation, attention, and participation in classroom activities. One participant illustrated this point with the following statements: "I think the students who were criticized or humiliated may not have disrupted the class and may have remained silent, but they were not truly engaged in the lesson" while the other indicated "I do not think the child, whom the teacher labeled as lazy that day, went home motivated to do homework that evening. The student became demotivated."

Not all of the reactions of the students were observable. While some reactions to teacher behaviors were visible through actions, gestures, or verbal responses, some of the reactions were internal and subtle, not directly observable. This was not meant students did not experience strong emotions. Students might consciously or unconsciously mask their emotions to cope with the violence. According to the participants, some students' reactions seemed as if nothing had happened. One participant explained this reaction in an analytic way by stating "I think the student was, as a defense mechanism, simply waiting for the moment to pass and pretending as if nothing had happened in order to cope with the situation."

Lastly, social responses refer to disruption of the students' social relationships, such as peer bullying or conflict with peers. Social responses capture how students navigate relationships, communication, and social participation in the classroom when faced with criticism, humiliation, or conflict by teacher. Unlike, emotional or physiological reactions, social responses are visible in classroom settings in terms of social networks. One participant observed, "From what I saw,

children who were criticized and belittled by the teacher appeared to regard similar belittling by their peers as unproblematic."

Table 2

*Observed Student Reactions to Teacher-Perpetrated Emotional Abuse*

| <i>Reaction Category</i> | <i>Observed Behaviors</i>                                                   | <i>Sample Quote</i>                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Emotional Responses      | Fear; Shame; Emotional numbing; Indifference                                | "When teachers humiliate students in class, some of them become visibly embarrassed or silent, as if they are afraid to respond."              |
| Behavioral Withdrawal    | Social withdrawal; Appearing not to listen; Avoiding eye contact with peers | "Some students avoid eye contact and withdraw from interaction with their classmates after being criticized by the teacher."                   |
| Physiological Indicators | Blushing; Focusing on a fixed point (e.g., the wall)                        | "After being scolded, the student stared at the wall and appeared flushed, showing visible discomfort."                                        |
| Academic Disengagement   | Giving up (discontinuing academic effort)                                   | "Following repeated negative comments from the teacher, the student stopped participating in the lesson and appeared to give up academically." |
| No Observable Reaction   | No observable reaction                                                      | "In some cases, students show no visible reaction and remain completely silent when exposed to such behavior."                                 |
| Social Consequence       | Exposure to peer bullying                                                   | "When a teacher mocks a student, classmates sometimes start teasing that student as well."                                                     |

When Table 2 was examined, it was observed that the most frequently observed reactions in students exposed to teacher-induced emotional violence were giving no reaction, not looking at their friends' faces, and blushing. These findings revealed that students mostly develop inward-oriented, passive, and avoidant reactions in the face of emotional violence. Especially reactions such as giving no reaction and desensitization indicated that students withdraw emotionally over time and might develop learned helplessness.

Furthermore, the finding regarding exposure to peer bullying suggested that teacher-induced emotional violence was not limited only to teacher-student relationships; it also negatively affected peer relationships as making students more fragile. This situation revealed the decisive role of teacher behaviors on the classroom climate and the indirect effects of emotional violence.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The current study highlighted that teacher-induced emotional violence in the classroom environment was a multi-dimensional construct. According to the observations and perceptions of pre-service teachers, the forms of emotional violence implemented by teachers were gathered under the themes of humiliation and devaluation, emotional manipulation and control, social isolation and discrimination, and labeling and stigmatization. It is well-known in the literature that emotional abuse implemented by teachers encompasses various verbal and non-verbal behaviors (Hogan et al., 2019; Kahveci, 2023). Similarly, Yusri et al. (2025) underlines the verbal abuse of teachers such as labeling, raising their voices in educational settings.

In the current study, the most frequently reported forms of violence by the participants were discrimination and exclusion. It was observed that teachers evaluate some students in different ways according to their academic success, social status, or personal characteristics, and this situation leads to negative emotions such as exclusion, hesitation, and shame in students. It was noticed that such behaviors also damage the relations among children. This finding supported the research results emphasizing the relationship between emotional abuse perceived from the teacher and peer bullying (Nearchou, 2018).

Another behavior observed as teacher-induced in the classroom environment is labeling and stigmatization. While labeling refers to the process of defining the individual with a permanent

identity attribution based on a specific behavior or characteristic; stigmatization encompasses exclusionary and discriminatory attitudes that emerge as a result of this label being accepted by the social environment and the individual being evaluated with this identity (e.g. Link & Phelan, 2001). The use of general expressions such as "naughty," "unsuccessful," "lazy," or "problematic" by teachers in educational settings can lead to students internalizing these labels and defining themselves accordingly. The frequent use of adjectives such as "hardworking," "lazy," or "problematic" affects students' self-perceptions (Feng & Wang, 2018) and reflects negatively on learning processes. The frequent occurrence of "academic labeling" shows that the excessive emphasis on success can create psychological pressure in the classroom (Feng & Wang, 2018).

The most fundamental determinant of the quality of the educational environment is positive teacher-student relationships. Children's attitudes towards school, the motivation they develop towards learning, and their classroom adaptation are greatly affected by teacher behaviors (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Scharpf et al., 2022). In the primary and middle school periods, the teacher is a figure who is modeled, provides emotional support, and is the director of the learning process (Pianta, 1999). Research shows that teachers' positive and supportive behaviors strengthen students' school commitment, self-efficacy perception, and academic performance (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Wentzel, 2002).

In contrast, as consistent with the findings of this study, negative teacher behaviors exhibited in the classroom reduce students' learning motivation, increase anxiety levels, and can lead to behavioral problems (Kızıltepe et al., 2020; McEachern et al., 2008; Nearchou, 2018). In early adolescence, the individual deals with identity development, peer relationships, and emotional fluctuations in addition to academic obligations (Ragelienė, 2016; Steinberg, 2017). Therefore, the supportive or negative approaches of the teacher can directly shape the student's attitude towards school. Wentzel (2002) reports that the fair, supportive, and consistent behaviors of the teacher strengthen the social adaptation of students and ensure a decrease in behavioral problems. Conversely, the negative attitude of the teacher can result in anxiety, loss of academic self-confidence, and alienation from school in the student (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). As seen in the research findings, the indifferent attitudes given by some students show that such behaviors are not effective in developing desired behaviors in students and lead to the continuation of negative behaviors (Kazak & Koyuncu, 2021). Dissociative reactions such as shame, fear, withdrawal, or staring blankly at the wall observed in students point to negative emotions such as anxiety and fear (Rudy et al., 2022; Vonderlin et al., 2023). Especially in the adolescent period, when students' emotion regulation skills are developing, such expressions may create permanent negative effects on students' self-perception. Furthermore, teacher-induced emotional abuse behaviors may create negative effects on students in the long term, affect the classroom climate negatively, and decrease motivation for academic success.

The participants' observations regarding students' reactions to such behaviors of teachers also is supported by the literature. According to the findings, these attitudes of teachers lead to behaviors in students such as shame, anxiety, giving up, not wanting to work, moving away from lessons, and withdrawing within the classroom (Blazar & Kraft, 2017; Kahveci, 2023). Research shows that teacher-induced labeling and stigmatization behaviors damage students' self-confidence, decrease school belonging, and increase susceptibility to psychological problems (McLeod et al., 2012). Especially risk behaviors in high students are reported as positively correlated with teacher bullying (Kerere et al., 2024). Teachers' biased beliefs and low expectations can reinforce educational inequalities by shaping unfair judgments, limiting supportive interactions and learning opportunities, and thereby undermining students' equitable educational opportunities (Doyle et al., 2023; Rubie-Davies & Hattie, 2024). It is known that insinuations and references made regarding students' family backgrounds or ethnic identities damage the sense of inclusiveness in the school climate (Sue et al., 2007). Students coming from low socioeconomic levels, having a disadvantaged family structure, or belonging to ethnic minority groups may be more exposed to the prejudiced attitudes of teachers (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). Research reveals that the expectations teachers develop about students are often affected by socioeconomic and cultural

indicators; such behaviors cause inequality within the classroom (Jussim & Harber, 2005).

The effects of such emotional violence experiences on students are multi-dimensional. Research shows that low self-esteem, alienation from school, loss of academic motivation, anxiety, and depressive symptoms are more common in students exposed to discriminatory and humiliating teacher attitudes (Civitillo et al., 2024; Jiang et al., 2023; McKown & Weinstein, 2008). In addition, it is stated that negative attitudes towards ethnic identity weaken students' sense of school belonging and reduce trust in the education system (Benner & Graham, 2013). Additionally, the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by teachers are influential on the students relationship with each other (Thapa et al., 2013). According to Social Learning Theory, children learn aggressive or oppressive behaviors by observing authority figures and reproduce these behaviors in their social relations (Bandura, 1977). Research shows that in classrooms where negative and hurtful attitudes dominate teacher-student relationships, peer bullying and aggressive behaviors are more common (Graham & Bellmore, 2007). Teacher-induced emotional violence is not only an individual problem but a structural problem that directly affects the school climate.

Geiger (2017) says that it is common for students to blame themselves as the reason for their teachers' behaviors. Emotional abuse experiences can have serious consequences for individuals' cognitive and emotional development. Many studies in the literature emphasize that emotional violence has a negative effect on the ability to use emotional intelligence (Katzman et al., 2021; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The purpose of teachers turning to some negative behaviors may carry the aim of correcting undesirable behaviors they see in their students (Hogan et al., 2019; Longobardi et al., 2018). Teachers may generally be unaware of the behaviors they perform. In this living space, teachers have the responsibility to create a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning climate through the interactions they establish with students.

This study has some limitations. First, the data are based on pre-service teachers' subjective evaluations of teachers during their practicum experiences. Therefore, the findings are limited to participants' perceptions. Additionally, since the study was conducted with a specific sample group, the results cannot be generalized to different school types or general educational contexts. The findings reflect participants' experiences and are not based on direct measurement.

The prevention of teacher-induced emotional violence requires systematic and multi-level preventive approaches beyond individual attitudes. At this point, with a multiple perspective, subjects such as children's rights, emotional abuse, classroom communication skills, and inclusive education should be included in teacher training and in-service training programs. It is quite important to focus on emotional awareness, communication skills, and reflective teaching practices in teacher education programs (Choquette et al., 2024; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Teachers realizing how their own prejudices, stress levels, and cultural acceptances reflect on classroom behaviors is one of the basic steps of the preventive process. In addition, it is imperative for school administrations to develop clear policies and guidelines regarding the creation of a school climate free from violence. They should establish monitoring, feedback, and supportive supervision mechanisms for teacher behaviors. Furthermore, the teacher's influence in the fight against increasing peer bullying in schools should be handled carefully. Strengthening psychological counseling and guidance services and providing support systems for teachers where they can manage their emotional burdens in a healthy way is also an important step of preventive studies. In addition, creating safe application channels where students can feel safe and report emotional violence can increase the effectiveness of protective-preventive approaches. In terms of providing equality of opportunity in education and supporting students' psychological development, it is an inevitable necessity to increase practices and research aimed at preventing teacher-induced emotional violence.

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**Data availability:** The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

**Declaration of AI-assisted technologies in the writing process:** In this study, AI tools were used only in the correction of academic language and translation processes, and in the text improvement stages. AI tools were not used in any data generation or text writing functions.

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