



## Review

Virtual special issue on teachers and emotions in *Teaching and teacher education (TATE)* in 1985–2014<sup>☆</sup>Minna Uitto<sup>\*</sup>, Katri Jokikokko<sup>\*</sup>, Eila Estola<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The number of articles on teachers and emotions has increased radically over the past decade in *Teaching and Teacher Education (TATE)*. In a search for teachers and emotions published in *TATE* from 1985 to 2014, 70 articles were found. These articles were classified into seven main themes: 1) emotions in teacher identity and professional learning, 2) emotional exhaustion among teachers, 3) teachers, emotions and relationships, 4) teachers' emotions in historical, political and societal contexts and educational reforms, 5) teachers' impact on students' emotions, 6) teachers' emotional intelligence, skills and knowledge, and 7) teachers' emotions and regulation of emotions. Nine of the 70 articles that represent the main themes were selected for closer examination. This review analyses the diversity and significance of the research that *TATE* has published on teachers and emotions, describes the changes that have happened in the field and illustrates the trends and gaps, as well as future directions for research on the topic.

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## 1. Introduction

A heavy emphasis on the mind, cognition and rationality in teaching and learning has left aside the consideration of emotions (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Researchers who have emphasised the significance of emotions have expressed concerns about emotions not receiving much-needed attention in teachers' work, in schools, in educational administration and policy, as well as in educational research (e.g. Boler, 1999; Hargreaves, 2000; Nias, 1996; O'Connor, 2008; Zembylas, 2007b). The marginal role of emotions in research is illustrated in the current handbooks: the *International Handbook of Research on Teachers and Teaching* includes one chapter on how teachers regulate their emotions (Sutton & Harper, 2009). Elsewhere in the handbook, emotions are scarcely mentioned,<sup>2</sup> similarly to the *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, McIntyre, & Demers, 2008). However, the

situation is gradually changing. Pekrun and Linnenbrink-Garcia (2014) argue that since the 1990s educational science is experiencing an affective turn. This growing interest in emotions is visible in the form of a first handbook about emotions in education (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014) and in numerous special issues in journals devoted to the topic (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007): for example *TATE* published a special issue, *Emotions, teacher identity and change* in 2005 (vol. 21, no. 8).

This review concentrates on articles that are related to emotions in teachers' work and lives.<sup>3</sup> It analyses the diversity and significance of the research that *TATE* has published on teachers and emotions, describes the changes that have taken place in the field and illustrates the trends and gaps, in addition to describing future directions for research on the topic.

According to Nias (1996), emotions are fundamentally important for teaching and teachers for three major reasons: 1) teaching involves interaction among people, 2) teachers' personal and professional identities are often so inseparable that classrooms and schools become sites for their self-esteem, fulfilment and vulnerability, and 3) teachers have profound feelings about their work, since they invest so much of themselves in it, particularly with their values. These viewpoints are presented in different ways in the articles of this review.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to teachers working at different levels in various schools (including higher education), student teachers are also included in this review.

<sup>☆</sup> This review article also serves as the Editorial for a Teaching and Teacher Education Virtual Special Issue on Teachers and Emotions available online at: <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/teaching-and-teacher-education/virtual-special-issues/teachers-and-emotions-in-teaching-and-teacher-education-tate/>.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the subject indices.

**Table 1**  
Number of articles published in *TATE* on teachers and emotions in 1985–2014.

Period of time	Number of published articles
1985–1990	0 articles
1991–1996	3 articles
1997–2002	6 articles
2003–2008	23 articles
2009–2014	38 articles

However, defining what exactly is meant by emotion is not straightforward. There is an ongoing debate about the nature of emotions (Schuman & Scherer, 2014). Zembylas (2007b) is one of the few scholars who has, based on a review of the literature, distinguished different theoretical approaches to studying emotions in education. Each of the approaches he identified views emotions differently: 1) *psychodynamic approaches* acknowledge emotions as private, individual and physiological phenomena; 2) *social constructionist approaches* see emotions determined not primarily by individual characteristics, but by relationships and social contexts; and 3) *interactionist approaches* (especially feminist and poststructural theories) transcend both of the previous perspectives by aiming to bridge their differences and emphasising emotions not simply as language-laden, but as embodied and performative.

The writing of this review began by searching for articles published in *Teaching and Teacher Education* that included the term emotion\* OR feeling\* OR affective\* OR mood\* in the title, abstract or keywords. We used these theoretically differing concepts to ensure we found all the articles discussing the multifaceted phenomena of emotions. We used the ScienceDirect search engine, with the help of a library information specialist, and we located 149 articles.<sup>4</sup> After examining their abstracts, or in unclear cases the entire article, we excluded 79 articles because emotions played only a marginal role, or the article did not discuss teachers as such. This process yielded a total of 70 articles that included emotions in the title, abstract or keywords, which indicates emotions occupy a significant position in the article.

On the basis of these 70 articles, Table 1 was created to illustrate the number of articles published in *TATE* about teachers and emotions in six-year periods. The amount has increased radically during the past decade, as Table 1 demonstrates. There were only a few articles on the topic at the end of the 20th century. These very first articles discuss the impact of particular background variables on teacher burnout (including emotional exhaustion) (Byrne, 1991), teaching and guilt (Hargreaves & Tucker, 1991) and student teachers' experiences of teaching practice and students' emotional needs (McNally, Cope, Inglis, & Stronach, 1994).

Our interest in emotions arises from our research into teachers' and students' stories in the theoretical frameworks of relationships, moral practice, intercultural learning and narrativity. This research emphasises love and caring at the heart of teaching (Estola & Syrjälä, 2002) and illustrates the relational and emotional dimensions in teachers' identities as part of the micropolitical context of the school (Uitto, Kaunisto, Syrjälä, & Estola, 2015). In addition, our research depicts students' emotions towards their teachers, as well as students' interpretations of their teachers' emotions (Uitto & Estola, 2009). Furthermore, the role of emotions in teachers' intercultural learning processes has been studied (Jokikokko, 2009). Currently, our research focuses on the emotional dimension in beginning teachers' work.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Main themes of teachers and emotions

We individually analysed each of the 70 articles inductively to determine their research focus. Since our emphasis was on emotions, this focus could differ from the main focus stated by the authors of the articles. The emotional focus was determined based on the title, abstract and keywords. We then compared the focuses we had identified, aiming to achieve a common understanding. In unclear cases, the whole article was re-examined. Next, we combined articles with similar focuses under broader themes. These themes were specified and reformulated during the process of analysis.

Table 2 summarises the final main themes and the number of articles in each theme. The geographical research context refers to the location(s), in which the research was conducted (hence, the location is not necessarily the same as the author's affiliation). If the research context was unclear or irrelevant (e.g. in the case of theoretical articles), the author's affiliation was stated as the location.

Next, we will take a closer look at the 70 selected articles via the main themes. The order in which the themes are discussed is determined by the number of articles in each theme; the theme with the highest number of articles is discussed first.

### 2.1. Emotions in teacher identity and professional learning

The articles in this main theme are all loosely related to the significance of emotions for teachers' identities and professional learning. The articles share a common understanding of teachers' work as holistic and emotional by nature. The diversity within this main theme is visible in the different theoretical perspectives, such as: caring (O'Connor, 2008); professional growth (Day & Leitch, 2001); professional development (Golombek & Doran, 2014); emotional identity (Shapiro, 2010); a sense of belonging to the teaching community (McNally et al., 1994); power relationships (Schmidt, 2000; Zembylas, 2005); teacher resilience (Gu & Day, 2007); classroom motivation (Mansfield & Volet, 2010); teachers' professional goals (Thomson & Palermo, 2014); and emotional burnout, its relation to teacher identity and teachers dropping out of teaching (Hong, 2010). Some articles focus on the meaning of emotions for professional learning and reflection (Evelein, Korthagen, & Brekelmans, 2008; Shoffner, 2009), learning strategies (Wittmann, 2011) and one-on-one tutoring (Hedrick, McGee, & Mittag, 2000) during teacher education or initial teaching experiences.

Twelve of the articles are qualitative, one is quantitative (Wittmann, 2011), one employs mixed methods (Hong, 2010), and one theoretical essay utilises the author's personal teaching experience (Shapiro, 2010). The articles deal with beginning teachers, elementary, primary and secondary school teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators and department heads.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.2. Emotional exhaustion among teachers

The emphasis of the articles in this main theme is to study emotional exhaustion among teachers related to burnout or well-being. In addition, concepts such as job satisfaction, stress, motivation, self-efficacy, depression and engagement are employed. Several articles use Maslach's (1982) theory as a framework in which emotional exhaustion is one core component of burnout, along with depersonalisation and reduced personal

<sup>4</sup> The result of the search was crosschecked with Scopus search machine.

<sup>5</sup> Disentangling the emotional dimension in beginning teachers' work (EMOT) project.

<sup>6</sup> The levels at which teachers work are referred to differently in different national contexts. We aimed to maintain this diversity in this review.

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