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From emotional outbursts to character learning: teachers' pedagogical responses to temper tantrums in elementary education

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ABSTRACT

Students' emotional outbursts present pedagogical challenges that extend beyond classroom discipline to emotional regulation and character-related learning. This study examines teachers' pedagogical strategies for addressing temper tantrums and explores how these practices provide opportunities for strengthening character education in elementary schools. A qualitative descriptive design was employed, involving 30 participants comprising 10 elementary school teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation to explore emotional experiences, pedagogical responses, and perceptions of character-related learning. The findings identified academic frustration, peer conflict, and perceived unfairness as prominent circumstances associated with emotional outbursts. Teachers described strategies involving preventive instructional adjustments, calm and empathetic communication, emotional support, and reflective dialogue following emotional stabilization. Students emphasized the importance of being heard and treated respectfully, while parents highlighted the significance of consistent communication between home and school. The findings suggest that these practices may create opportunities to develop emotional awareness, practise self-control, and experience responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect. The study contributes a process-oriented interpretation of tantrum management by connecting preventive classroom support, responsive emotional co-regulation, and reflective reintegration with character-related learning opportunities. These findings offer practical implications for emotionally responsive pedagogy without establishing long-term causal effects on character development.

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1. Introduction

Managing elementary school students' emotions is an integral part of the learning process, influencing not only academic achievement but also character development. During elementary school, students enter a transitional phase, a process of transition or development in their ability to recognize and manage emotions, disappointment, frustration, and express emotions. In the context of classroom learning, these situations can influence or trigger temper tantrums, characterized by emotional outbursts expressed through refusal to follow instructions, loud crying, screaming, or mild aggressive behavior. Tantrums are a form of excessive emotional outburst or the result of pent-up feelings in children, which are expressed through various behaviors [1]. Emotional outbursts should not be interpreted solely as disciplinary problems or

indicators of individual failure. Rather, they may reflect difficulties in emotional expression and regulation arising from interactions among children's developmental needs, academic demands, peer relationships, and classroom expectations. This phenomenon is not simply a matter of individual behavior, but rather a pedagogical challenge that requires a professional response from the classroom teacher. When emotionally intense episodes are not addressed appropriately, they may disrupt students' learning participation, interpersonal relationships, and sense of emotional safety. Episodes involving potentially harmful behavior require particular attention to students' immediate safety and support needs. This condition is caused by many factors, including communication, parenting styles, and the child's environment [2]. During the transition period, the teacher's task is to foster curiosity, emotional development, language use, cognitive development, and general knowledge [3]. When students face academic demands, perceived injustice, or conflict with peers, these situations can, in practice, cause students to exhibit temper tantrums. If not handled appropriately, this behavior can disrupt learning concentration, reduce the quality of classroom interactions, and affect the overall learning climate. Therefore, teachers are not only required to manage the classroom administratively, but also emotionally and socially. A teacher's ability to respond to students' emotional situations is part of the pedagogical competency that contributes to creating conducive learning. Based on emotional conditions, a classroom with a negative emotional climate can make students feel uncomfortable, impacting their motivation and engagement in learning. Conversely, a positive climate will bolster students' self-confidence and increase their participation in learning [4]. Teachers' emotion regulation has been associated with teaching effectiveness and classroom conditions [5]. Emotion-focused teaching also involves modelling, responding to, and providing instruction about emotions [6].

From a pedagogical perspective, teachers' responses to emotionally challenging situations extend beyond the immediate restoration of classroom order. Such responses require teachers to interpret students' emotional needs, provide developmentally appropriate support, and facilitate their continued participation in learning. This process is closely related to emotional co-regulation, through which teachers offer interpersonal support that helps students manage emotional experiences while gradually developing their own self-regulatory capacities. Kostøl and Mänty demonstrated that teachers' responses to emotionally intense situations involve contextual interpretation, relational knowledge, and situation-specific decision-making [7]. Similarly, Somerville *et.al,* identified the importance of supportive teacher behavior in relation to children's emotional regulation and well-being in primary classrooms [8]. These perspectives suggest that managing emotional outbursts can be understood as a meaningful pedagogical interaction rather than merely an attempt to control disruptive behavior. Research in early childhood settings further indicates that teachers' emotional support varies according to children's emotional situations and classroom activities [9], [10]. Individualized coaching has also been associated with improvements in teachers' emotion-focused practices [11].

Character education in elementary schools involves the development of moral, social, and self-regulatory dispositions through meaningful educational experiences. Beyond formal moral instruction, character-related learning may occur through teachers' behavioral modelling, supportive classroom interactions, shared expectations, and opportunities for reflection. Brown *et.al*, through a comprehensive meta-analysis, identified positive outcomes associated with character education programmes, although the magnitude of these effects varied across interventions [12]. Meanwhile, Muzakkir *et.al,* highlighted the importance of teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices in integrating character education into primary school learning [13]. These perspectives provide a theoretical basis for understanding emotionally challenging classroom situations as potential opportunities for contextual character-related learning. When teachers respond with patience, empathy, and consistent expectations, students may encounter practical examples of self-control, responsibility, and mutual respect. Nevertheless, such opportunities should be distinguished from evidence that character-related dispositions have been permanently internalized. Character education also requires conceptual clarity regarding the values and dispositions being developed [14]. Its implementation may be influenced by contextual and institutional conditions that shape everyday pedagogical practices [15].

Previous research provides complementary perspectives on children's emotional regulation, teachers' classroom practices, and character education. Kostøl and Mänty examined teachers'

interpretations and decision-making during emotionally intense classroom situations, highlighting the importance of relational knowledge and contextual judgment [7]. Somerville et al. investigated associations among teacher support, children's emotional regulation, and well-being in primary education [7]. García-Rodríguez et al. identified the significance of teacher–student relationships for children's emotional and educational adjustment [16]. At the programme level, Cipriano et al. synthesized evidence on school-based social and emotional learning, demonstrating positive outcomes while identifying substantial variation across interventions and educational contexts [17].

Previous reviews have similarly identified positive outcomes of school-based social-emotional learning while highlighting unresolved questions about implementation conditions [18]. Studies in Korea and preschool education have also identified variation in intervention quality and programme characteristics [19], [20]. Teacher preparation and supportive interactions remain important considerations in implementing social-emotional learning [21]. In character education research, Brown *et.al,* examined programme effectiveness, whereas Muzakkir *et.al,* emphasized the role of teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices [12], [13]. Collectively, these studies establish the importance of emotional support, teacher–student relationships, social-emotional learning, and character development. A meta-analysis further identified associations between personality characteristics and the quality of teacher–student relationships [22]. Other studies have linked teacher–student relationships with children's loneliness and highlighted the importance of examining these relationships from students' perspectives [23], [24].

Despite these contributions, a more specific pedagogical question remains insufficiently explained: how do teachers' immediate responses to students' emotional outbursts become opportunities for character-related learning in everyday classroom interactions? Existing scholarship provides valuable insights into emotional co-regulation, teacher-student relationships, and character education, but the connections among emotionally challenging situations, teachers' pedagogical decision-making, instructional adaptation, post-episode reflection, and opportunities to practise character-related dispositions require closer examination. Furthermore, understanding these experiences through the complementary perspectives of teachers, students, and parents can illuminate both shared interpretations and differences concerning the educational significance of teachers' responses. Accordingly, the present study addresses an explanatory and empirical gap by examining tantrum management as a situated pedagogical practice connected to character-related learning rather than as behavioral control alone.

Based on the identified research gap, this study aims to explore teachers' pedagogical strategies for addressing students' temper tantrums and examine how these strategies provide opportunities for character-related learning in elementary education. Specifically, the study addresses three research questions: (1) How do teachers, students, and parents describe the manifestations, circumstances, and consequences of students' emotional outbursts?; (2) What pedagogical strategies do teachers employ to prevent, respond to, and reflect upon emotionally challenging classroom situations?; and (3) How do teachers, students, and parents perceive the relationship between teachers' pedagogical responses and opportunities for character-related learning? Using a qualitative descriptive design, the study seeks to develop a contextual understanding of these educational experiences without presuming causal relationships between specific practices and long-term character development.

The contribution of this study lies in its process-oriented interpretation of teachers' responses to emotional outbursts as pedagogical practices that may support character-related learning. Rather than considering tantrum management and character education as separate educational concerns, the study examines the relationships among preventive instructional support, responsive emotional co-regulation, reflective dialogue, and students' opportunities to practise character-related dispositions. Empirically, the study draws upon the perspectives of 10 teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these experiences. Conceptually, it proposes a provisional three-phase analytical framework comprising preventive classroom support, responsive emotional co-regulation, and reflective reintegration into learning. This framework offers an explanatory interpretation of how emotionally challenging situations may become opportunities for practising self-control,

responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect. Its contribution is therefore contextual and interpretive rather than a claim of experimentally demonstrated effectiveness.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative design to examine teachers' pedagogical strategies for addressing students' temper tantrums and their implications for character education in elementary schools. The design was selected to obtain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and responses to emotionally challenging situations during classroom learning. The study examined the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents, focusing on emotional experiences, pedagogical decision-making, instructional adjustments, and character-related learning. This design was appropriate for identifying patterns and variations in participants' experiences without testing predetermined hypotheses or causal relationships [25]. The study involved 30 participants, comprising 10 elementary school teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents, selected through purposive sampling based on their direct experiences with students' emotional outbursts and related educational interactions. Teachers were selected for their experiences in managing emotional outbursts and implementing pedagogical strategies, students for their experiences of emotional challenges and teacher support, and parents for their knowledge of children's emotional behavior and school–home communication. These three groups provided complementary perspectives on emotional experiences, pedagogical responses, and character-related learning.

Data were collected over two months through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation studies [10]. Interviews lasted approximately 20-30 minutes per participant and were documented through audio recordings and field notes. The interview guides addressed four areas: the dynamics of temper tantrums, teachers' handling strategies, the integration of emotional support into learning, and character education. Classroom observations were conducted during regular learning activities, lasting approximately 60 minutes per session, focusing on students' emotional responses, teacher–student interactions, and pedagogical adjustments. Teacher observation notes and classroom activity records were examined to complement the interview and observation data. Data analysis was conducted iteratively through data reduction, initial coding, categorization, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Codes were organized into three analytical areas: emotional outburst dynamics, teachers' pedagogical responses, and character-related learning. The credibility of the findings was strengthened by comparing information from teachers, students, and parents with observation and documentation records to identify consistencies and differences across sources. Findings were interpreted in relation to social-emotional learning and character education. Ethical considerations included maintaining participant confidentiality, obtaining research permissions and consent, and protecting children's emotional well-being. Student involvement remained limited to non-clinical educational experiences.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings are presented in three interconnected sections corresponding to the research questions. The first examines the forms and circumstances of students' emotional outbursts based on the experiences of teachers, students, and parents. The second explores teachers' pedagogical strategies, including preventive support, immediate responses, and post-episode reflection. The third examines how these practices may provide opportunities for character-related learning through emotional support, pedagogical modelling, reflective interaction, and communication between teachers and parents. The analysis integrates complementary participant perspectives while distinguishing reported experiences from broader theoretical interpretations.

3.1. Dynamics of Student Temper Tantrums in Elementary School Learning.

The learning process is never without challenges, one of which is dealing with the dynamics that arise during the learning process, such as dealing with students who throw temper tantrums. The most common forms of temper tantrum behavior in the classroom include verbal, emotional, and physical behavior. Teachers report that students often exhibit loud crying, screaming, yelling, whining, and verbal refusals such as "I can't" or "I don't want to do this." In addition, aggressive behavior such as hitting, throwing objects, and smashing books or

stationery also frequently occurs. Temper tantrums generally occur in specific learning situations, such as when students have difficulty understanding material, feel disturbed or upset, are reprimanded by a teacher, fight with a friend, during lessons involving physical activities or projects, during the transition from study time to recess, and during habituation activities and playtime. Tantrums at school often also occur at home, especially when children are asked to study, are restricted from using gadgets, or don't get what they want. Parents state that children tend to exhibit emotional outbursts when they feel unable to complete assignments or are being compared to their peers. Some parents also acknowledged that differences in parenting styles can affect a child's ability to manage emotions.

Meanwhile, from the students' perspective, they revealed that this behavior arises from difficulty understanding lessons, embarrassment when reprimanded in front of friends, or feelings of injustice in certain situations. Some students stated that they actually want to be heard and helped, but don't know how to express their feelings appropriately, resulting in emotions spiraling out of control. This finding indicates that tantrums are a response to academic and social frustration that cannot be managed adaptively. Theoretically, this situation aligns with Hasan's statement that factors that cause tantrums include thwarted desires, the child's inability to express themselves, unmet needs, parental parenting styles, and the child feeling tired, hungry, or sick [26].

The findings indicate that students' emotional outbursts were associated with different academic, interpersonal, and situational experiences. Teachers described the behavioral manifestations and instructional challenges associated with these episodes, students explained the emotional circumstances they experienced, and parents provided complementary information about emotional behavior outside classroom activities. Table 1 organizes these patterns to clarify the relationships among contextual circumstances, reported experiences, and pedagogical implications.

Table 1. Emotional Outbursts, Contextual Circumstances, and Pedagogical Implications

Contextual circumstances	Experiences described in the manuscript	Relevant informant group	Pedagogical implication
Academic frustration	Crying, task refusal, difficulty completing assignments	Teachers and students	Adjust task demands and clarify instructions
Peer conflict	Anger, verbal confrontation, interpersonal disagreements	Teachers and students	Support emotional expression and conflict resolution
Perceived unfairness	Distress following reprimands or perceived unequal treatment	Students and teachers	Use respectful communication and clarification
Difficulties expressing needs	Emotional escalation and difficulty communicating feelings	Students and teachers	Provide emotional support and guided expression
Family-related frustration	Emotional outbursts during home learning or restrictions	Parents	Strengthen school–family communication

Table 1 indicates that emotional outbursts were associated with diverse circumstances rather than a single behavioral cause. The distinction between visible emotional expressions and the situations that participants associated with them is particularly important. Students' descriptions of embarrassment, frustration, or perceived unfairness suggest that pedagogical responses should consider children's emotional interpretations as well as observable behavior. This interpretation is consistent with Kostøl and Mänty, who emphasized teachers' contextual decision-making when supporting children's emotional regulation [7]. Accordingly, understanding the circumstances surrounding an emotional episode becomes an important consideration in selecting appropriate pedagogical responses. Research has also identified associations between positive teacher-student relationships and disciplinary practices [27]. In preschool settings, teachers' trauma-informed attitudes have been associated with a lower risk of exclusionary discipline among children with low inhibitory control [28]. Beyond informing the selection of appropriate pedagogical responses, understanding the circumstances surrounding emotional outbursts is also essential for examining their implications for classroom learning. Temper tantrums can disrupt the learning process by creating a less

conducive classroom atmosphere, diverting other students' attention, and requiring teachers to divide their focus between managing emotional episodes and maintaining instructional activities. This is consistent with Rusdiana and Mahabbati, who highlighted the difficulties teachers face in maintaining instructional continuity when they must temporarily interrupt teaching to support students experiencing tantrums [29]. Such disruptions may consequently affect learning participation, instructional effectiveness, and the socio-emotional climate of the classroom.

Furthermore, certain forms of temper tantrum behavior may pose risks to children's physical safety, particularly when they involve throwing objects, hitting their heads, or other potentially harmful actions [30]. Dryden distinguished aggressive manifestations of tantrums into outward-directed and inward-directed aggression [31]. However, these behavioral classifications should not be understood merely as descriptions of disruptive conduct, but also as indications of difficulties in emotional regulation that require contextual understanding. Tantrums may additionally generate frustration and embarrassment for children, teachers, and parents [32]. Nevertheless, emotional outbursts can also be understood as expressions of emotional needs that children have not yet developed the capacity to communicate appropriately. Therefore, addressing temper tantrums requires preventive and responsive pedagogical strategies that strengthen emotional regulation, integrate socio-emotional learning, and encourage collaboration between teachers and parents. Within the framework of character education, these strategies should extend beyond reducing disruptive behavior to fostering students' self-regulation, empathy, responsibility, and emotional maturity.

3.2. Teacher Strategies for Handling Student Temper Tantrums in the Learning Process

The challenges faced by teachers require strategies to handle student temper tantrums in the learning process. Based on the interviews, teachers' initial responses to students experiencing temper tantrums were generally characterized by efforts to remain calm and responsive, although some teachers admitted to feeling initially shocked. Teachers tend not to immediately scold the student, but rather give the student time to express their emotions until they are relatively calm, approach the student personally, and encourage other students to pay less attention to the tantrum. This aligns with the statement by Fadila *et.al*, who stated that strategies used by teachers in dealing with student tantrums include identifying the cause of the tantrum, providing space for the child to express their emotions, using simple media, and implementing play methods. Teachers also involve peers and create a conducive classroom atmosphere [33].

In prevention efforts, teachers employ various strategies such as creating engaging learning, providing clear instructions, agreeing on class rules at the beginning of the lesson, adapting methods to students' interests and talents, and establishing intensive communication with both students and parents. When a tantrum occurs, the most common steps teachers take are encouraging students to calm down through simple techniques such as taking deep breaths, moving students to a safer and quieter location, and engaging in face-to-face communication. Once the situation is conducive, teachers consistently follow up with reflective dialogue to explore the causes of the tantrum, provide advice with a gentle approach, coordinate with parents, and provide positive reinforcement and verbal appreciation for students' good behavior. This aligns with Fitriyani and Kriswanto's statement that the most commonly used strategies are gentle verbal communication and non-verbal methods, such as hugs and eye contact. These strategies have an impact on reducing tantrum behavior [32]. Apart from that, Husnul et al stated that teachers try to calm students down from their tantrum behavior by drawing, giving students activities, teachers prepare drawing paper and also colored pencils and crayons for coloring [34]. The strategies used by teachers are generally flexible and adapted to the characteristics, emotional needs of students, learning objectives, and classroom situations, although some teachers consider certain patterns effective enough to be applied repeatedly.

The pedagogical practices described by the participating teachers can be organized into three interconnected response phases. The first phase, preventive classroom support, includes establishing clear expectations, adapting instructional activities, maintaining supportive communication, and creating predictable learning routines. The second phase, responsive emotional co-regulation, involves remaining calm, acknowledging students' emotional

experiences, ensuring safety, and providing appropriate support during emotional escalation. The third phase, reflective reintegration, involves engaging students in dialogue after emotional stabilization, supporting their gradual return to learning, reinforcing constructive communication, and coordinating with parents when relevant. These phases represent an analytical organization of the reported practices rather than a standardized intervention protocol. Research involving elementary school students has demonstrated the relevance of teacher-supported self-regulation for classroom engagement [35]. A meta-analysis also emphasized the importance of implementation support in improving teachers' adherence to evidence-based social-emotional practices [36].

Based on the description above, teachers' strategies in handling temper tantrums are not merely reactive, but rather reflect pedagogical practices oriented toward emotional regulation and individual student understanding. A calm demeanor, allowing pauses, validating emotions, and reflective communication demonstrate the teacher's role as a facilitator of self-control, not simply a controller of behavior. In the context of character education, these practices may provide opportunities for students to experience empathy, practise self-control, and reflect on responsibility through ongoing educational interactions. The flexibility of teachers' strategies also suggests that opportunities for character-related learning emerge contextually and adaptively, in line with students' emotional needs and the dynamics of classroom learning.

3.3. Integrating Temper Tantrum Handling Strategies into the Learning Process:

Most teachers stated that they had adjusted their learning methods and activities when dealing with students experiencing temper tantrums, although some teachers admitted that they had not made specific adjustments. These adjustments were made by changing individual activities to group work, replacing written assignments with more concrete activities involving movement, breaking assignments into smaller parts, and using more varied learning media. Teachers also prioritized handling students' emotions through a personal approach, providing time in a quiet corner of the classroom, and validating feelings before inviting students to return to learning. Although time-out has been discussed as a behavior modification technique, providing students with a quiet space may also serve as a supportive strategy for emotional stabilization when it is implemented without punishment or exclusion. In this context, its pedagogical purpose is to support students' emotional needs before encouraging their return to learning activities.

Once the emotional situation was stabilized, students were gradually re-engaged through simple assignments, verbal appreciation, and self-confidence building, such as asking students to show their work to a friend. To maintain a conducive classroom atmosphere, teachers encouraged other students to stay focused on the task, continue learning calmly, and avoid paying excessive attention to tantrums. These findings were reinforced by interviews with parents, who stated that children became calmer and more willing to share their stories after the teacher used a non-judgmental approach and intensive communication. Meanwhile, students expressed that they felt more comfortable and less embarrassed when the teacher spoke softly, gave them time to calm down, and continued to engage with them without scolding. Research involving parents and teachers has also identified communication gaps that may limit parental engagement in children's social-emotional learning [37].

The strategy of handling temper tantrums in the learning process is an adaptive pedagogical practice that places students' emotional needs as a prerequisite for continued learning. Adjusting learning methods and gradually re-engaging students reflects an inclusive learning approach oriented towards emotional regulation and the sustainability of the learning process. In the context of character education, the practice of empathetic communication, appreciation, and the creation of a safe emotional environment may provide opportunities for students experiencing tantrums and other students in the class to practise self-control, responsibility, and empathy. Thus, teachers' strategies not only help maintain a conducive learning environment but may also support character-related learning through humanistic and contextual pedagogical interactions. The relationship between teachers' pedagogical strategies, students' emotional responses, and opportunities for character-related learning is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that teachers' pedagogical strategies involve preventive, responsive, and reflective practices that address students' emotional needs during classroom learning. These

strategies not only support students in managing emotional outbursts but may also provide opportunities to practise self-control, responsibility, and empathy. Therefore, handling temper tantrums can be understood as a pedagogical practice that connects emotional regulation with character-related learning.

Table 2. Teachers' Pedagogical Strategies, Students' Responses, and Character-Related Learning Opportunities

Pedagogical phase	Teachers' strategies	Students' responses described in the findings	Character-related learning opportunities
Preventive classroom support	Clear instructions, engaging learning activities, classroom agreements, and instructional adjustments	Clear instructions, engaging learning activities, and supportive classroom routines were intended to help students participate more comfortably and manage learning-related frustration.	Responsibility and cooperation
Responsive emotional co-regulation	Calm communication, emotional validation, breathing techniques, and a quiet space	Students reported feeling more comfortable and less embarrassed when teachers responded gently	Self-control and empathy
Reflective reintegration	Reflective dialogue, positive reinforcement, gradual return to learning, and parent communication	Students were described as gradually returning to learning; parents reported calmer behavior and greater willingness to communicate	Responsibility and mutual respect

3.4. Strengthening Character Education through Teacher Pedagogical Practices

Teachers support character-related learning among students experiencing temper tantrums through repeated explanations, simple discussions, conveying moral messages during learning, and modelling appropriate emotional responses. Teachers seek to reinforce the values of patience, responsibility, and mutual respect by directly practicing expected behaviors and establishing agreements with students, such as encouraging students to communicate emotional difficulties to teachers. Some teachers also stated that instilling character values is more effective after students' emotions have stabilized, for example, at the end of a lesson or before school ends. Teachers also reported gradual changes in students' behavior following their pedagogical responses, such as students becoming more able to express their feelings verbally, becoming calmer, and demonstrating increased trust in their teachers. Teacher attitudes and role models play an important role in supporting students' character-related learning, as students may imitate teachers' ways of managing emotions and solving problems. This is consistent with Brown et al. who highlighted the contribution of character education practices to students' development [12].

Similarly, Muzakkir *et.al,* emphasized the importance of teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices in integrating character education into primary school learning [13]. Therefore, teachers' exemplary behavior, particularly patience, empathy, and emotional self-control, may provide meaningful opportunities for students to learn character values through real educational interactions. Parental involvement and student responses suggest that character-related learning may be supported through collaboration between teachers and families. Therefore, handling temper tantrums not only contributes to classroom stability but may also provide opportunities for strengthening character-related learning through consistent emotional support and communication. These findings highlight the importance of teachers' pedagogical practices and parental involvement in supporting students' emotional and social development. Research involving different educational actors has highlighted variations in how character education is understood and implemented [38]. Parental perspectives also provide insights into the relationship between character education practices at school and at home [39].

These findings suggest that character education in the context of managing temper tantrums may occur through contextual learning experiences, not through moral instruction alone. The character-related values supported by teachers' pedagogical practices are summarized in Table 3. Table 3 shows that teachers' pedagogical practices may provide opportunities for character-

related learning through role modelling, emotional support, reflective dialogue, and collaboration with parents. These practices suggest that character education is not limited to the delivery of moral messages but may also emerge through students' experiences of managing emotions and interacting with others. However, these opportunities should not be interpreted as definitive evidence of sustained character development. Research in primary education has also examined moral dilemma discussions as opportunities for developing students' reflective judgment and practical wisdom [40].

Table 3. Character-Related Learning through Teachers' Pedagogical Practices

Character-related focus	Teachers' pedagogical practices	Character-related learning opportunities
Patience and self-control	Teachers model patience and self-control when responding to students' emotional outbursts.	Students may learn emotional regulation through teachers' behavior and supportive interactions, rather than moral advice alone.
Responsibility and emotional honesty	Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their behavior and express emotional difficulties verbally.	Students have opportunities to practise responsibility, openness, and appropriate emotional communication.
Mutual respect and empathy	Teachers establish classroom agreements and engage students in reflective dialogue after emotional stabilization.	Students have opportunities to understand mutual respect, empathy, and constructive conflict resolution.
School–family collaboration	Teachers communicate and coordinate with parents to support consistent emotional guidance.	Collaboration may reinforce opportunities to practise patience, responsibility, and empathy at school and at home.

These findings can be understood through the perspective of social learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of observation and behavioral modelling in children's learning. In the context of character education, teachers' attitudes and responses provide examples that students may observe and imitate during everyday classroom interactions. The findings of this study suggest that teachers' patience, empathetic communication, and emotional self-control offer opportunities for students to learn appropriate emotional and social behavior through direct experience. This interpretation is consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of teachers' pedagogical practices and role modelling in primary school character education [13]. Furthermore, research has demonstrated the broader educational value of character education programmes [12]. Thus, teachers' responses to temper tantrums may contribute to character-related learning not only through moral instruction but also through behavioral modelling and meaningful educational interactions. Recent scholarship has further proposed approaches for integrating character education into classroom instruction, and emphasized the importance of teachers' ethical knowledge in pedagogical decision-making [41], [42].

These findings can also be interpreted through the concept of emotional co-regulation, which emphasizes the role of supportive adult–child interactions in helping children manage their emotions. Previous research highlighted the importance of teachers' understanding of children's emotional needs and their situation-specific decisions during emotionally challenging classroom interactions [7]. Supportive teacher behavior has also been associated with children's emotional regulation and well-being in primary classrooms [8]. In the present study, teachers' calm communication, emotional validation, and reflective dialogue were reported as practices that helped students become calmer, express their feelings, and return to learning activities. Furthermore, the involvement of parents highlights the importance of communication between teachers and families in supporting children's emotional and social learning. Therefore, emotional co-regulation, reflective dialogue, and school/family collaboration may provide complementary opportunities for character-related learning, although their long-term effects cannot be established from the present findings.

Based on the description above, strengthening character education through teachers' pedagogical practices can be understood as part of the process of handling temper tantrums, where teachers not only manage behavior but also provide opportunities for students to learn patience, self-control, responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect through daily educational interactions. Through role modelling, reflective dialogue, habituation, and collaboration with

parents, teachers' pedagogical practices may support character-related learning in a contextual and consistent manner. These findings suggest that handling temper tantrums is not merely a classroom management strategy but also a pedagogical practice that connects emotional regulation with opportunities for strengthening character education.

4. Conclusion

This research shows that temper tantrums in elementary school students are not simply behavioral issues but may reflect difficulties in emotional regulation that affect the atmosphere and quality of learning. Based on the perspectives of 10 teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents, emotional outbursts were commonly associated with frustration, difficulty understanding learning materials, peer conflicts, and perceived unfairness. Teachers play a crucial role in responding to these situations. Through a calm demeanor, empathetic communication, adjustments to learning methods, reflective dialogue, and communication with parents, teachers supported students in calming down, expressing their feelings, and gradually returning to learning. Students reported feeling more comfortable when teachers responded gently, while parents described calmer behavior and greater willingness among children to communicate. These pedagogical practices were organized into three interconnected phases: preventive classroom support, responsive emotional co-regulation, and reflective reintegration. Through these practices, values such as patience, self-control, responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect may be reinforced as opportunities for character-related learning through daily classroom interactions.

Therefore, handling temper tantrums is not only an effort to maintain a conducive classroom environment but may also serve as a meaningful pedagogical practice connecting emotional regulation with character education. The study's theoretical contribution lies in its process-oriented interpretation of how teachers' preventive, responsive, and reflective strategies may support character-related learning beyond immediate behavioral management. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of empathetic communication, flexible instructional strategies, reflective dialogue, and collaboration with parents in supporting students' emotional and social learning. However, the descriptive qualitative design does not establish the causal effectiveness of these strategies or sustained character development. Further longitudinal research is therefore recommended to examine how these pedagogical practices contribute to students' character development over time.

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