

EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL-BASED EMOTIONAL REGULATION INTERVENTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Emotional regulation (ER) is a crucial developmental skill that significantly influences children's and adolescents' emotional well-being, academic achievement, and social functioning. In recent years, school-based emotional regulation interventions have gained increasing attention as effective approaches to support students in managing emotions, reducing behavioural difficulties, and improving overall outcomes. This review examines the effectiveness of such interventions from a cross-cultural perspective, with a focus on widely used approaches including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), psychosocial interventions, and mindfulness-based programmes.

The existing literature suggests that school-based ER interventions positively contribute to students' emotional awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills. However, the effectiveness of these programmes varies across different cultural contexts. Cultural norms, values, and educational environments play a significant role in shaping emotional expression and regulation, thereby influencing intervention outcomes. Programmes developed in Western contexts may not achieve the same level of effectiveness in non-Western settings without appropriate cultural adaptation.

This review highlights the importance of culturally responsive, context-specific intervention design, particularly in regions such as India and South Asia, where research remains limited. It also identifies key gaps in the literature, including the need for longitudinal studies, larger and more diverse samples, and the development of culturally validated assessment tools. Overall, the findings indicate that culturally adapted school-based ER interventions are more effective in promoting sustained emotional and behavioural development among children and adolescents.

Keywords: Emotional Regulation (ER), School-Based Interventions, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Student Well-being

1. Introduction

The concept of emotional regulation (ER) has gained significant popularity in the study of child and adolescent development due to its close connection with psychological adaptation, social skills, and well-being (Sanchis-Sanchis *et al.*, 2020). Emotional regulation refers to the processes through which individuals influence the emotions they experience, the timing of those emotions, and the ways they are expressed across situations (Gross, 2015). ER also

relates to emotional intelligence as it is used in developmental literature, namely the capacity to perceive, comprehend, and regulate emotions in adaptive means (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). These views indicate that emotional functioning is not just the experience of emotions but also the effective use of emotional abilities in daily life (Pena-Sarrionandia *et al.*, 2015). ER can be defined as a developmental ability that helps children cope with stress and frustration in socially appropriate ways, with

significant impacts on emotional states, academic performance, and social progress (Campos *et al.*, 2004).

Children who possess excellent regulation skills tend to adjust more to classroom challenges, concentrate and maintain good peer relations (Thompson, 1991). In comparison, ER challenges can add to impulsivity, behavioural issues, interpersonal conflict, and emotional distress. It is because of this that ER has become a developmental competency of such primacy rather than an incidental outcome of growth (Salovey and Grewal, 2005).

Schools are among the most feasible and effective environments to aid emotional regulation. Schools provide structured, continuous, and socially embedded opportunities for children to learn and practise emotional skills through their everyday interactions and routines (Crawford, 2020). In contrast to clinical services, which typically become more apparent or serious when problems become more noticeable, school-based interventions have the potential to reach broader groups of children in preventive ways. Since children spend a large amount of time in school, the school setting provides repetitive emotional learning due to classroom routines, peer interaction, and teacher guidance (Gross, 1998).

Educators have the ability to model emotional knowledge, to consolidate adaptive responses, and to establish classroom environments that promote emotional safety and self-control. Schools can offer wide coverage of interventions without specialised mental health infrastructure and are therefore particularly applicable in settings with limited formal psychological services. Through this, school-based programmes are more likely to be accessible, continuous, and preventive, thereby playing a significant role in helping children adjust emotionally and socially (Colizzi *et al.*, 2020).

Nevertheless, much of the literature on ER interventions has been produced in Western educational and cultural contexts. Cultural values affect the interpretation of emotions, the expression of emotions that are promoted and the types of regulation that are deemed as right in certain situations (Rubin, 1998). Consequently, western-based models of intervention might not be directly applicable in non-western settings, especially in South Asia and other regions where relational norms, educational expectations, and emotional practices can vary. It also requires a cross-cultural approach to evaluate not only the effectiveness of the school-based ER interventions, but also their contextuality and flexibility (Gross, 2015).

It is against this background that the current review studies school-based emotional regulation interventions for children and adolescents with a

specific focus on their developmental significance, key programme strategies, effectiveness, and cultural adaptation. In particular, the review will attempt to:

1. Examine the developmental significance of emotional regulation in children and adolescents
2. Review the major types of school-based emotional regulation intervention programmes
3. Evaluate the reported effectiveness of these interventions across emotional, social, and educational outcomes
4. Analyse the importance of cross-cultural and contextual adaptation in improving programme relevance and implementation.

2. Method

2.1 Literature Search Strategy

The emotional regulation interventions in children and adolescents were reviewed through a narrative review approach focusing on school-based programmes and their cultural applicability. A literature search across PubMed, PsycINFO, ERIC, and Google Scholar was conducted to identify empirical, review, and intervention-oriented studies on emotional regulation among school-age populations. The search terms were emotional regulation, emotion regulation, children, adolescents, school-based intervention, social-emotional learning, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness, and cultural adaptation, and other terms, such as self-regulation, well-being, and mental health programmes, were used when appropriate. The studies mainly included in the review were published between 2000 and 2024.

2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The studies were incorporated when they focused on emotional regulation in children or adolescents and explored interventions provided in schools or other related learning environments. The sources concerning emotional development, self-regulation, and intervention strategies applicable to school-based emotional regulation assistance were also selected. Studies were excluded when they were exclusively on adults, analysed clinical therapy without educational significance, or involved interventions unrelated to emotional control in children and adolescents. Non-school therapeutic studies were excluded, except when they provided helpful conceptual or comparative information for school-based interventions.

2.3 Narrative Synthesis Approach

The synthesis of the chosen literature was conducted narratively, as studies varied in terms of design, age group, type of intervention, and context. The results were systematised in themes based on the categories of interventions, outcomes, and cultural and contextual relevance issues. It enabled the review to

provide a consistent discussion and capture the diversity of the available literature.

3. Emotional Regulation and School Contexts

3.1 Developmental Importance

The development of emotional regulation is a gradual process that unfolds throughout childhood and adolescence and is characterised by a shift from externally controlled regulation to more self-regulated forms. Emotional understanding is formed in early childhood through recurrent contact with caregivers and sensitivity to social and emotional signals, which form the basis for future regulatory competence (LoBue *et al.*, 2025). In the early years, children rely extensively on co-regulation because adults assist them in overcoming distress, focusing on other things, and interpreting emotionally relevant situations (Jasim *et al.*, 2025). Regulation of emotions has come to be viewed as a dynamic and multifaceted process that entails continuous coordination of emotional experience, cognition and behavioural response rather than a single isolated skill (Thompson *et al.*, 2008). As children get older, these externally directed processes become internalised, enabling children to apply more independent strategies to regulate and adjust their emotional reactions (Santrock, 2008).

The better children and adolescents develop their self-regulatory abilities, the more they can manage stress, focus, and respond adaptively to daily social and academic challenges (Robson *et al.*, 2020). Lack of regulation can predispose to emotional distress, interpersonal problems, and maladaptive behaviour, especially in the adolescent stage when the youths experience heightened emotional intensity, shifting peer demands, and the increased demand to gain independence (Gupta and Gehlawat, 2020). It has also been found that emotional intelligence and emotional regulation are strongly connected among adolescents who face stressful environments, such as bullying, suggesting that regulatory competence is a significant factor in emotional adaptation during adolescence (Agustiningsih and Karimah, 2023).

3.2 Factors Shaping Emotional Regulation

ER is influenced by a combination of factors rather than age. The stage of development is also a significant aspect, as the regulatory skills of children vary with their cognitive, language, self-awareness, and executive functioning development (Sabatier *et al.*, 2017). The age differences reflect broader developmental shifts in the understanding and control of emotions. In contrast, individual differences are further contextualised and relationalised by developmental forces that either enhance or limit adaptive regulation (Patel, 2024).

The family context is particularly relevant to the initial development of ER as children acquire

emotional reactions by observing and emotional coaching as well as through daily contact with their caregivers. Regulatory development may be impaired by inconsistent, stressful, or conflictual environments, but may be enhanced by supportive environments (Walsh, 2013). Peer acceptance, rejection, conflict, and friendship have an effect on self-regulation, as they help children perceive social situations and react emotionally in a group (Hladik *et al.*, 2022).

The school setting is a strong force in emotional development, as it organises the social and emotional experiences through which children learn to pay attention, control their impulses, live without frustration, and adjust to relationships with others. Factors that influence the way children learn to manage emotions in daily situations include classroom climate, teacher support, peer interaction, and institutional expectations (Veiga *et al.*, 2022). In addition to family and school, other aspects of sociocultural influence on ER include norms of emotional expression, restraint, coping, and social behaviour.

3.3 Need for School-Based Response

Emotional dysregulation is a closely related phenomenon to various behavioural and emotional problems in children and adolescents. The challenges in controlling emotional reactions can also play a role in impulsivity, externalising behaviours, stress sensitivity, peer conflict, and the overall mental health issues, and ER deficits are a significant concern to be identified early and addressed (Gill *et al.*, 2020). It was also suggested that emotional problems in children and adolescents became more evident in the post-COVID-19 period, and a significant number of young adults reported more issues regarding emotional and behavioural adaptation (Hen *et al.*, 2022). Alterations in emotional coping under crisis conditions also highlight the precariousness of regulatory processes in cases where children are subjected to stress, disruption, and uncertainty (Mariani *et al.*, 2021).

These issues support the importance of school-based responses since schools are the only suitable place to address emotional dysregulation by prevention, early intervention and systematic interventions. Schools can detect developing issues earlier and offer support in the daily setting of children, unlike specialised services that tend to act only after they aggravate. Since emotional dysregulation is a mental health issue, it also impacts classroom involvement, peer relations, and academic involvement, so school-based intervention enables support to be incorporated into the social and educational functioning of children, instead of being separate. In this light, school-based programmes cannot be viewed merely as convenient delivery solutions, but

rather fundamental preventive and supportive responses to a developmental problem that has direct impacts on the well-being and adaptation of children in a variety of areas (Robson *et al.*, 2020).

4. School-Based ER Interventions

Emotional regulation intervention programmes in schools are the most feasible and replicable tools for supporting the emotional growth of children in the school environment. School-based programmes in this review are conceptualised as organised attempts to enhance emotional awareness, self-regulation, coping and social adjustment using curriculum-based psychosocial, relational and complementary practices, and offering preventive assistance before problems become more complex or enduring (Loss, 2008).

4.1 Universal and Classroom-Based Programmes

The most common methods of school-based work in emotional regulation include universal and classroom-based programmes since these interventions are provided to all students in a regular educational environment. Such programmes normally depend on structured sessions, classroom exercises, teacher guidance and developmentally appropriate resources that assist children in recognising emotional states, making sense of emotional circumstances, and responding in more adaptive manners.

Models of emotion-based prevention are especially significant in this category since initial studies indicated that emotional knowledge and adaptive behaviour can be reinforced in school and pre-school settings through repeated, structured exposure to emotional material and facilitated discussion (Izard *et al.*, 2004). The same results were also observed in the context of pre-school, where prevention-oriented and emotion-focused interventions enhanced children's emotional knowledge and reduced their problem behaviour, suggesting that emotional learning in the classroom can positively affect self-regulation and other adjustment outcomes (Finlon *et al.*, 2015). There is some evidence that structured emotional learning can be helpful for social-emotional competence, behaviour, and classroom adjustment when delivered regularly and in a developmentally suitable manner (Blewitt *et al.*, 2018; Wyman *et al.*, 2010).

4.2 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programmes

One of the most robust and well-established types of school-based emotional regulation intervention is social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes. These programmes include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, and incorporate

emotional learning into the regular curriculum and school culture; thus, ER development is not an isolated event but a continuous process.

As studies have demonstrated, SEL interventions may yield significant improvements in children's social-emotional abilities and adaptive functioning when systematically applied in the educational setting (Hosokawa *et al.*, 2024). RULER is one of the models that has an impact in this field as it encourages schools to be emotionally intelligent by paying attention to the identification, interpretation, description, expression, and management of emotions with the help of overtly stated and comprehensively detailed practices and tools at the school level (Nathanson *et al.*, 2016).

The applicability of SEL is also evident in culturally adaptive school programmes such as Let's Learn About Emotions, which demonstrates how structured learning about emotions can be used in primary school settings and modified to fit a new cultural and educational context (Sourander *et al.*, 2024). This kind of programme is particularly helpful in the given review context, as it demonstrates that school-based ER support is evidence-based and culturally responsive. Altogether, SEL programmes remain at the center of school-based emotional regulation work as they are integrated with curriculum-based instruction, skill development, and ecological integration in the school setting.

4.3 Psychosocial Interventions in School Settings

Another significant type of school-based ER programme is psychosocial interventions, particularly where students are going through emotional or behavioural problems or where they are at a higher psychosocial risk. In school settings, they are modified so that emotional control can be learned through organised lessons, small-group programmes, or school-based support systems.

CBT-based interventions have been accepted as effective for children with problems in emotional regulation, as they help students recognise maladaptive thought patterns, develop coping skills, and rehearse more adaptive responses to affective stress (Castagna *et al.*, 2019). Structured psychosocial interventions have been shown to reduce emotional and behavioural issues and enhance youth emotion regulation across a variety of programme formats and diverse populations, based on review and meta-analytic evidence (David-Ferdon and Kaslow, 2008; Espenes *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, psychosocial support provided to adolescents at school has been found to prevent health-risk behaviour and enhance regulatory coping among at-risk youth, thereby making the application of targeted emotion regulation interventions among adolescents especially promising (Houck *et al.*, 2015).

4.4 Teacher-Supported Approaches

School teachers can also serve as emotional coaches who demonstrate how to respond emotionally, mediate conflicts, and assist students in developing a classroom environment that is safe, consistent, and emotionally intelligent. The character of these interactions could have a powerful influence on how children learn to perceive and manage their emotions in daily life at school.

Even though much of the literature on relational regulation focuses on family processes, it can be applied to school-based programmes as home and school are related developmental contexts, and caregiver support is an important factor in regulatory development in both childhood and adolescence (Morris *et al.*, 2017). Studies of family resilience, parent-focused interventions, and parents' views indicate that emotionally supportive relational contexts may reinforce children's coping and support school-based interventions when implemented appropriately (Everri *et al.*, 2022; Clark, 2023; Kohlhoff *et al.*, 2025). In that regard, school-home cooperation can improve school-based interventions by supporting emotional learning in both environments.

4.5 Complementary Approaches

The mindfulness, yoga, and digital tools, also known as complementary school-linked approaches, are best considered as supportive modalities that supplement engagement, offer additional coping skills, and expand the scope of work on emotional regulation, but not to substitute for the core school-based programmes. Nevertheless, they are not to be primary to the structured universal, SEL and psychosocial interventions, which constitute the primary core of school-based ER support.

The mindfulness and yoga-based interventions have been highlighted for their capacity to enhance self-regulation, emotional sensitivity, and tranquillity among younger individuals when implemented in school programmes (Rashedi *et al.*, 2021). Digital, smart-toy, and game-based strategies, too, offer the potential to strengthen emotional abilities and self-regulation through accessible, developmentally relevant formats (Moltrecht *et al.*, 2021; Theofanopoulou *et al.*, 2019; Kashani-Vahid *et al.*, 2018). They work best when combined with broader school-based systems rather than in isolation. Consequently, they should be considered supportive extensions of the core school-based intervention models, rather than alternatives.

Table 1. School-Based Emotional Regulation Intervention Approaches in Children and Adolescents

Intervention approach	Core features	School-based relevance	Outcomes	Reference
Universal and classroom-based programmes	Structured classroom sessions; emotion-focused activities; age-appropriate materials	Suitable for universal prevention and routine classroom delivery	Better emotional awareness, self-regulation, and classroom adjustment	Finlon <i>et al.</i> (2015); Wyman <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes	Curriculum-based teaching of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills	Supports whole-school emotional learning	Improved emotional competence, peer relations, and school adjustment	Nathanson <i>et al.</i> (2016); Sourander <i>et al.</i> (2024)
Psychosocial interventions in school settings	CBT-based, coping-focused, and emotion-focused support for students with identified needs	Useful for targeted intervention in school settings	Improved coping and reduced emotional and behavioural difficulties	Castagna <i>et al.</i> (2019); Espenes <i>et al.</i> (2024)
Teacher-supported approaches	Emotional coaching, supportive classroom climate, and school-home coordination	Reinforces emotional learning through daily relationships	Better emotional expression, behaviour, and continuity of support	Morris <i>et al.</i> (2017); Kohlhoff <i>et al.</i> (2025)
Complementary school-linked approaches	Mindfulness, yoga, digital tools, and game-based supports	Supplements core programmes by enhancing engagement and access	Better calmness, coping, and regulation practice	Rashedi <i>et al.</i> (2021); Moltrecht <i>et al.</i> (2021)

Table 1 summarises the major school-based emotional regulation intervention approaches, their core features, outcomes, and supporting references.

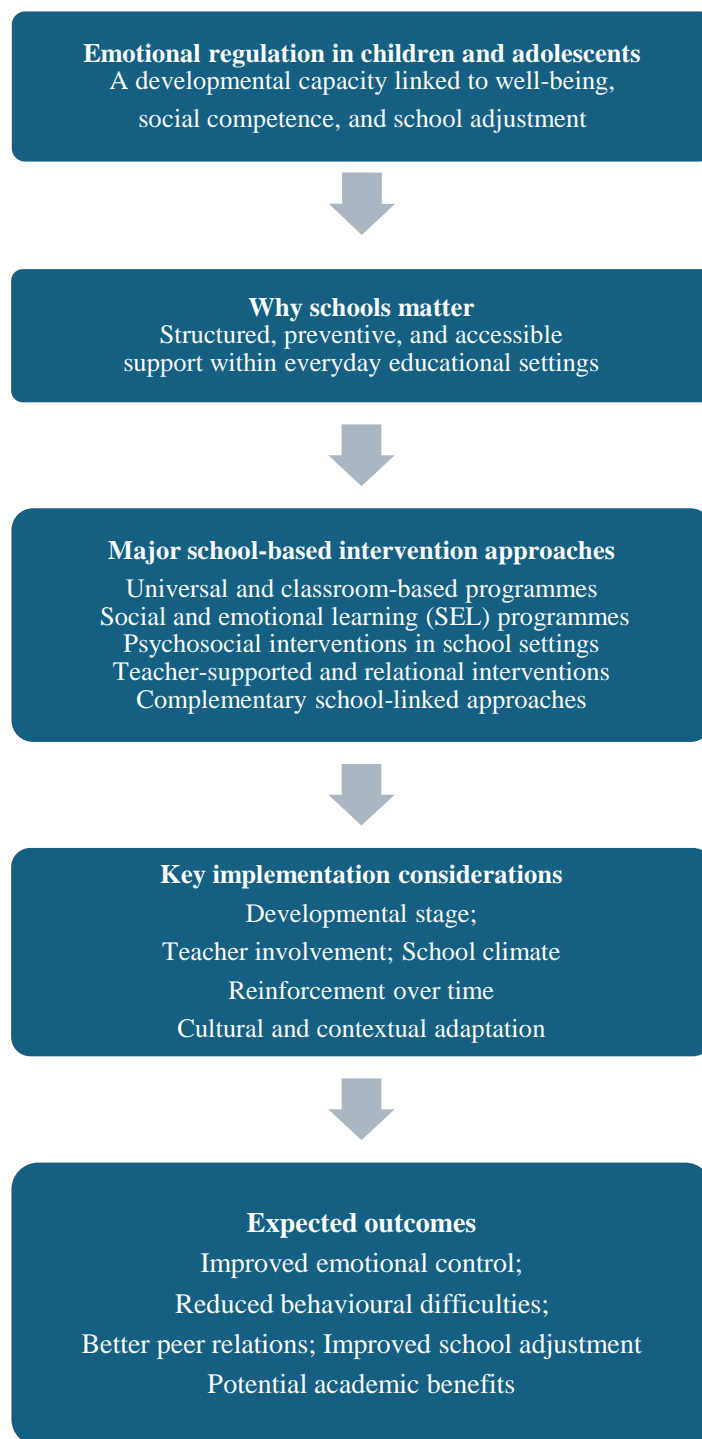


Figure 1. School-based emotional regulation intervention framework

Figure 1 presents the framework of school-based emotional regulation interventions, including major approaches, implementation factors, and key outcomes.

5. Effectiveness of School-Based Interventions

5.1 Key Outcomes

As the existing literature suggests, school-based emotional regulation (ER) interventions can generate significant improvements in the emotional, social, and academic domains. Among the most consistent effects is enhanced emotional control, as shown in children's ability to recognise emotions,

handle distress, and respond to difficult situations in an adaptive manner. Studies of group-based interventions have demonstrated a beneficial impact on emotional regulation and related communication outcomes, suggesting that organised school programmes may enhance intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning (MacEvilly *et al.*, 2024). The same conclusions can be drawn from emotional competence work, which indicates that stronger emotional skills help individuals manage themselves better and engage with others more positively (Fiori and Vesely-Maillefer, 2019).

The other significant outcome is a reduction of behavioural and emotional problems. Intervention programmes in schools incorporating emotional learning, coping skills or mental health promotion elements have been linked to positive outcomes in overall student adjustment and decreases in problem behaviour. Supporting this idea, evidence from a quasi-experimental school mental health programme in Coimbatore showed significant changes in adolescents' mental health traits in the intervention group, indicating that systematic school-based intervention can positively affect emotional and psychosocial functioning in schools (Baskaran *et al.*, 2023).

Programme effectiveness also extends to social outcomes, as improved emotional regulation supports healthier peer relationships, better social communication, and stronger school adjustment. Children with stronger regulation skills are generally better able to manage interpersonal demands and respond more adaptively in peer contexts (Thompson, 1991; Robson *et al.*, 2020). In addition, group-based intervention research has shown improvements in emotional regulation alongside gains in social communication and interpersonal functioning (MacEvilly *et al.*, 2024). The academic benefits of ER are less frequently reported than emotional or social ones. However, better ER may support attention, persistence, classroom engagement, and coping with school-related stress, thereby creating conditions that facilitate more effective learning (Martinez-Garcia, 2022).

5.2 Factors Influencing Effectiveness

The results of school-based ER interventions would be influenced by several interacting factors. Another factor that interventions should take into account is developmental stage, as children and adolescents vary in their emotional needs, cognitive abilities, and willingness to use regulation strategies; programmes that are developmentally matched are more effective (Baskaran *et al.*, 2023). Reviews of digital interventions for emotional regulation in children and early adolescents have reported promising outcomes; however, their effects vary depending on programme design, implementation quality, and the extent to which digital tools are integrated with broader support systems (Reynard *et al.*, 2022).

The role of teachers, peer relationships, and school climate also determine the success of a programme. Teacher reinforcement of emotional learning, support of positive social interaction by peer environments, and emotionally safe and consistent practice and reinforcement in schools are more likely to make interventions effective (MacEvilly *et al.*, 2024). Time-based reinforcement is significant,

as long-term gains usually require recurrent opportunities to practise, receive feedback, and apply the knowledge in different contexts. In this respect, personal variations in emotional style and measurement sensitivity should also be taken into account, as results may differ depending on the method used to measure ER and the conceptualisation of emotional competence in research (Seixas *et al.*, 2021).

5.3 Methodological Limitations in the Evidence Base

The main weaknesses are a relatively small sample, which limits generalizability, and heterogeneous outcome measures, which make cross-study comparisons challenging. Emotional control is measured with a wide range of self-report, observational, and programme-specific measures, which results in the impossibility of cross-study comparability and conceptual inconsistency in a few cases (Seixas *et al.*, 2021).

There is a lack of long-term follow-up, as most studies have reported only short-term post-intervention benefits without demonstrating the ability to extend or generalise to different settings. Such factors complicate the establishment of the long-term growth and education implications of intervention effects. Lastly, the literature remains heavily influenced by Western research settings, even though cultural and contextual factors strongly shape school-based emotional control. Although nowadays studies represent a wider range of geographical diversity, the general evidence base remains insufficiently represented by non-Western contexts, which limits understanding of how intervention models work in culturally diverse educational systems (Reynard *et al.*, 2022). Thus, additional studies with more heterogeneous populations, high-quality longitudinal designs and more consistent methodologies are required to enhance the body of evidence on school-based ER interventions (Martinez-Garcia, 2022).

6. Cross-Cultural and Contextual Adaptation of School-Based Interventions

6.1 Cultural Values and Emotional Regulation

Cultural values greatly determine the effectiveness of school-based interventions in emotional regulation, since emotional expression, interpretation, and regulation are not uniform across societies. Cultural structures shape how people perceive themselves in relation to others, and this plays a significant role in how emotional behaviour is promoted or suppressed in day-to-day life. Emotional openness and self-centred coping mechanisms are more accepted in individualistic settings, where greater emphasis is given to autonomy and self-expression. Emotional

regulation in collectivistic settings, where social harmony, relational sensitivity, and group cohesion tend to be accorded precedence, may be more restraint-oriented, adjustment-oriented, and interpersonal balance-oriented (Kitayama and Markus, 1991).

A study on culture and emotional regulation reveals that culture shapes the types of emotions exhibited, the extent of their expression, and the strategies considered socially acceptable (Mesquita and Schouten, 2024). In the same vein, it has been indicated that emotional adjustment is not only associated with the adoption of regulatory strategies but also with the cultural compatibility of those strategies in a social setting (Matsumoto *et al.*, 2008). Comparative studies have also established that individual preferences for emotional regulation may differ across national settings, with results indicating biological differences in regulatory strategy choices between U.S. and Indian participants (Mehta *et al.*, 2017). In the case of school-based programming, this implies that interventions cannot presume any universal model of emotional expression or self-management, and interventions that focus on articulation, reflection, or discussion may need to be customised where emotional restraint or indirect expression is more culturally significant. Cross-cultural sensitivity is hence vital in case school-based interventions are to be educationally relevant and socially acceptable.

6.2 Programme Adaptation Across Contexts

It takes more than translation of materials or substituting examples to adapt school-based

emotional regulation programmes to different contexts. Successful adaptation entails linking programme content, delivery modality, and interactional expectations with local emotional conventions, educational practices, and broader cultural meanings attributed to emotional behaviour. The social cognitive perspective views learning as a result of observation, modelling, reinforcement, and the environment, all of which imply that the success of an intervention largely depends on the contextual compatibility between the programme's design and local educational practice (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2022).

The examples from Finland show how school-based emotional learning programmes can be adapted to local educational and cultural contexts without altering the main regulatory and social-emotional objectives. These are just a few examples demonstrating that cultural adaptation is not a fringe benefit but a key necessity to successful implementation in any setting. In India, emotional programming in schools, delivered in a culturally responsive manner, is particularly important, as the National Education Policy (2020) has supported holistic development and provides a policy foundation for integrating emotional and social skills into school education in culturally significant forms. The cross-national research on culturally suitable parenting and the emotional learning programmes also demonstrates that with intervention content responsive to local communication patterns and values, the acceptability and engagement may be enhanced through adaptation (Havighurst *et al.*, 2022).

Table 2. Cross-Cultural Considerations in School-Based Emotional Regulation Interventions

Dimension	Individualistic contexts	Collectivistic contexts	Implication for school-based programming	Reference
Emotional expression	Greater emphasis on openness and personal expression	Greater emphasis on restraint and social harmony	Adapt expectations around emotional disclosure	Kitayama & Markus (1991); Matsumoto <i>et al.</i> (2008)
Preferred regulation style	Reflection and explicit discussion are more accepted	Relational adjustment and restraint are more valued	Align strategies with culturally meaningful regulation styles	Mehta <i>et al.</i> (2017); Mesquita & Schouten (2024)
Classroom interaction	More individual participation and self-expression	More respect for indirect and group-sensitive interaction	Adapt delivery to local classroom norms	Kitayama & Markus (1991); Schunk & DiBenedetto (2022)
Role of family and community	Greater focus on individual skill development	Stronger role of family and community values	Include family and community context where relevant	Havighurst <i>et al.</i> (2022); Schunk & DiBenedetto (2022)
Programme adaptation needs	Models may transfer more directly across similar systems	Imported models may require greater contextual adjustment	Preserve core elements while improving local fit	Havighurst <i>et al.</i> (2022); NEP (2020)

Table 2 presents key cross-cultural considerations in the design and adaptation of school-based emotional regulation interventions across educational contexts.

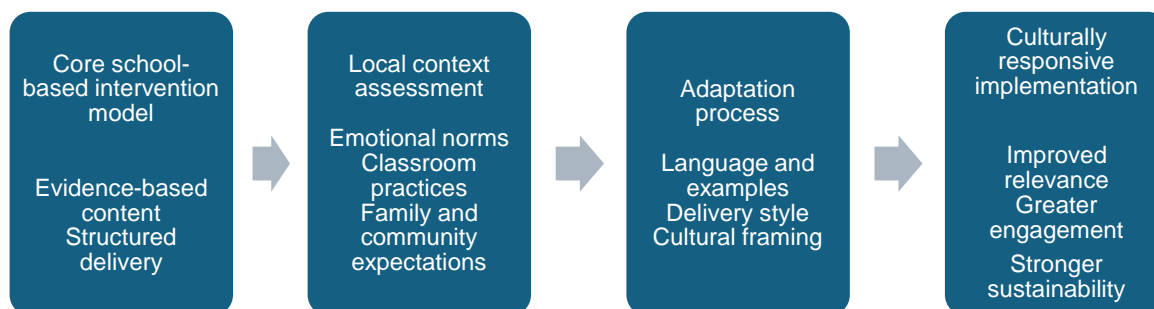


Figure 2. Cross-cultural adaptation pathway for school-based emotional regulation interventions

Figure 2 illustrates how school-based emotional regulation interventions can be culturally adapted while retaining their core evidence-based elements.

6.3 Barriers to Cultural Adaptation

Although it is important, cultural adaptation does not come without challenges. The danger of directly importing Western models of intervention into non-Western education without proper adjustments is a key threat. This transfer can create conceptual discrepancies when assumptions regarding emotional expression, self-disclosure, teacher-student engagement or individual autonomy fail to fit local norms, and interventions may be technically effective but out of social touch with their situations. These challenges will minimise participation, perceived relevance, and diminish the sustainability of outcomes.

The second problem is the risk of over-adaptation. On the one hand, local relevance is crucial; however, excessive adaptation can lead to the loss of key aspects of the intervention and to a decrease in the integrity or efficacy of the initial programme model. It is not aimed at substituting evidence-based elements with practices that are more culturally acceptable in a blind manner, but rather at adapting the central mechanisms while modifying the delivery, examples, communication styles, and contextual framing to make interventions both empirically based and culturally acceptable. Culturally responsive adaptation in the case of school-based interventions should thus be interpreted as a contextualising process rather than mere copying or uninhibited modification.

7. Implications

The evidence presented in this review shows that school-based interventions to regulate emotions are most effective when integrated into broader educational outcomes, including student development, well-being, and adjustment, instead of as separate add-ons. Emotional learning is likely to be more effective when programmes are integrated into classroom activities, support mechanisms, and daily teaching practices, thereby making emotional

learning a normal aspect of student life and providing learners with frequent opportunities to exercise these skills.

The focus of this process is on teacher preparation. Teachers must be well prepared to provide such support because they are relevant in modelling emotional reactions, directing and shaping classroom interactions, and strengthening regulatory measures. Even powerful programmes can be implemented unevenly without sufficient orientation. The training of teachers, therefore, should encompass not only programme content but also emotional awareness, classroom management, and practical methods for fostering emotional regulation during daily teacher-student interactions. Favourable school culture is also critical. Intervention programmes based on emotional regulation will be more effective in settings where students feel safe, stable, and respected. The manner in which children exercise emotional skills, and whether they feel safe enough to do so constructively, is influenced by classroom climate, peer norms, and school-wide expectations. Schools with higher priorities for positive relationships, emotional safety, and student well-being offer a better platform for emotional learning than those where the interventions are not closely tied to the institutional environment.

The review also indicates that the school-family coordination can enhance the value of school-based programmes. Regulation of emotions is a process that occurs within the environment, and children may benefit when coping, expression, and self-management strategies are supported in the school and at home. Although schools are the main setting for the interventions discussed in this paper, family communication can enhance continuity, increase contextual relevance, and help retain emotional skills outside the classroom. These findings imply that effective school-based interventions require a collaborative framework of structured interventions, teacher support, school-wide dedication, and meaningful parental engagement.

8. Future Research Directions

Despite the fact that the existing literature provides encouraging support concerning the school-based emotional regulation interventions, there are several promising future research directions that can further enrich the field. Longitudinal evaluation is one such area. Numerous studies have already shown positive short-term results, and further research can build on this to investigate how far these benefits can be sustained over time and what effects they have on long-term emotional, social, and academic progress. This work would enhance the understanding of the long-term value of school-based interventions. The other constructive direction is related to measurement. The measures of emotional regulation have been evaluated using a vast number of measures and indicators, and it is worth noting that the field is rich but also indicates the need to develop more consistent and culturally responsive measures of emotional regulation. Future research can also play a significant role by advancing the development of sensitive instruments that are developmentally and contextually appropriate, in addition to addressing cultural differences. Better measurement instruments would help increase comparability across research and improve the precision of programme evaluation.

It remains quite possible to broaden the evidence base in South Asia and other non-Western contexts by investigating how school-based emotional regulation programmes work in more heterogeneous cultural and educational contexts. Research in underrepresented areas would not undermine the discipline; instead, it would diversify it by making it more applicable and contributing to the creation of more contextually relevant intervention models. Lastly, further research on implementation in the actual educational context would be desirable to explore how school-based programmes may be optimally incorporated into school practices, teacher practice, and institutional organisation. Implementation would be a focal point that explains the circumstances under which programmes are most feasible, sustainable, and effective. By doing so,

future studies may enhance the practical value of school-based interventions of emotional regulation by bridging the gap between robust evidence and contemporary educational practice.

9. Conclusion

Emotional regulation is an essential developmental ability that shapes the well-being, social functioning, and school adaptation of children and adolescents, and school-based interventions present a significant setting to consolidate these capabilities through systematic daily practice. By providing emotional regulation support within standard educational procedures, these interventions can not only aid emotional development but also promote healthier peer interactions, better classroom behaviour, and increased engagement in learning. The review also shows that school-based emotional regulation programmes are most effective when implemented through multiple complementary approaches. The promotion of emotional competence is facilitated by universal classroom-based models, social and emotional learning programmes, psychosocial interventions, teacher-supported practices, and selected complementary modalities such as mindfulness, yoga, and digital tools in various ways. Another important point of the review is that these interventions are not culturally neutral, and their applicability and effectiveness depend on the emotional norms, relational expectations, and educational structures of the contexts in which they are implemented. A cross-cultural approach is thus necessary to ensure that intervention models are significant and applicable across different school systems, especially in non-Western countries. On the whole, school-based emotional regulation programmes are a viable and necessary trend of facilitating child and adolescent growth. These programmes can play a significant role in education and emotional health when based on evidence, incorporated into school practice, and sensitively responsive to the cultural context.

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