Management of Religion Teachers’ Socioemotional Competencies in Information and Communication Technologies Integration: A Phenomenographic Study

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Management of Religion Teachers’ Socioemotional Competencies in Information and Communication Technologies Integration: A Phenomenographic Study

Abstract
This investigation forms part of a doctoral study that examines the relation between socioemotional competencies (SECs) and teachers’ beliefs on the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs). It addresses religion teachers’ knowledge of SECs during the curricular integration of ICTs, specifically their internal aspects in their pedagogical practice using ICTs (second-order barriers). This study also discusses the characteristics of religion teachers, who have received less attention than teachers of science, language, or mathematics disciplines, partly because religion is not considered a priority area in educational policies. To this end, this study adopted a qualitative approach in the phenomenographic tradition to describe how people experience the phenomena in their environment. The informants were 22 religion teachers from Metropolitan Lima, Peru, who participated in in-depth interviews to clarify their emotional experience with ICTs. The results confirmed the empirical findings of contemporary scientific literature and indicated that teaching with ICTs offers a permanent emotional experience manifested in the planning and development of learning sessions as well as in decision-making for pedagogical purposes. The findings allow for feedback and serve as a catalyst for perseverance and work engagement. However, the informants expressed their desire for better training to carry out quality teaching–learning processes with ICTs in religious education.

Keywords
secondary school teachers, religious education, social, and emotional learning, educational technology, phenomenographic research

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Acknowledgements
This work forms part of a doctoral thesis approved by the Academic Commission of the doctoral program of the University of Extremadura; thus, it follows the recommendations of the Bioethics and Biosafety Committee of the same university. For the development of this study, we had the consent of the informants to whom we are grateful for their collaboration and availability during the collection of information. We also extend our gratitude to the directors and coordinators of the Diocesan Offices of Catholic Education (ODEC), who assisted us to contact the religion teachers.

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Management of Religion Teachers’ Socioemotional Competencies in Information and Communication Technologies Integration: A Phenomenographic Study

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This investigation forms part of a doctoral study that examines the relation between socioemotional competencies (SECs) and teachers’ beliefs on the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs). It addresses religion teachers’ knowledge of SECs during the curricular integration of ICTs, specifically their internal aspects in their pedagogical practice using ICTs (second-order barriers). This study also discusses the characteristics of religion teachers, who have received less attention than teachers of science, language, or mathematics disciplines, partly because religion is not considered a priority area in educational policies. To this end, this study adopted a qualitative approach in the phenomenographic tradition to describe how people experience the phenomena in their environment. The informants were 22 religion teachers from Metropolitan Lima, Peru, who participated in in-depth interviews to clarify their emotional experience with ICTs. The results confirmed the empirical findings of contemporary scientific literature and indicated that teaching with ICTs offers a permanent emotional experience manifested in the planning and development of learning sessions as well as in decision-making for pedagogical purposes. The findings allow for feedback and serve as a catalyst for perseverance and work engagement. However, the informants expressed their desire for better training to carry out quality teaching–learning processes with ICTs in religious education.

Keywords: secondary school teachers, religious education, social, and emotional learning, educational technology, phenomenographic research

The impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the 21st century (Van Veldhoven & Vanthienen, 2022) requires preparing students to meet the challenges of the information and knowledge society. Therefore, it is necessary to transform teaching practices with ICT (Jiménez-Becerra & Segovia-Cifuentes, 2020), expand training opportunities, promote pedagogical leadership and educational innovation (So & Seo, 2020). Along these lines, many governments increased public investment in infrastructure and technological devices for all their students (Agasisti et al., 2023). However, there has been partial success in developing countries. This is partly due to the lack of technical, human and economic resources that limit the development of digital competencies in teachers and students (Haji et al., 2017; So & Seo, 2020). Added to which is the lack of research on the factors underlying the effectiveness, use and integration of ICTs (Prasojo et al., 2019; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015).

In this regard, ICT integration has evolved from a vision of hardware and software acquisition, whose ultimate goal was technology, to an opportunity to meet multidisciplinary...
learning objectives and optimize teaching (Ertmer, 1999; Qaddumi et al., 2021). It can be generally understood as the use of technologies in school activities to achieve learning objectives set out in the official curriculum (Shah, 2022). Tondeur et al. (2008) also called it “basic computer skills,” that is, the use of computers as both information and learning tools.

However, the ICT integration process responds to a complex systemic nature that combines individual and contextual aspects as explained by Bronfenbrenner’s (2002) ecological theory of human development, which identifies first-order determinants pertaining to the educational center’s technological equipment, second-order determinants pertaining to teacher characteristics (Ertmer, 1999) and third-order determinants pertaining to the pedagogical design of educational practices with ICTs (Tsai & Chai, 2012). Of these, second-order attributes consisting of personal factors such as age, gender, personality, affect, emotions, cognitions, self-regulatory patterns, motivation, and values are the most influential in the decision to integrate ICT into pedagogical practices (Aidoo et al., 2022; Bardach et al., 2022). Simply put, if a teacher has no technology devices, lacks an understanding of the technology at their disposal, feels incapable of using it, or disagrees with its purpose, they are likely to avoid its adoption in their curriculum (Hernández, 2020; Vongkulluksn et al., 2018). Figure 1 details the organization of these predictors.

Figure 1
Predictors of ICT use among teachers

Note: Based on Ertmer (1999); Bronfenbrenner (2002); Tsai and Chai (2012); Drossel et al. (2017)

Therefore, this study examines second-order factors (feelings, attitudes, and motivation to use technology), specifically how religious education teachers manage SECs when integrating ICTs curricularly in the public schools where they work. On the one hand, this addresses the need for a deeper understanding of aspects surrounding teacher characteristics that may affect their ability to integrate technology (Ertmer et al., 2015; Jung et al., 2019; Tondeur et al., 2021). Thus, it deals with the concern of how personal (emotions) and contextual (public school) factors, which have sometimes been treated separately, shape technological integration (Sosa & Valverde, 2022). On the other hand, it focuses on the fragmentation between studies on teachers’ emotions and well-being in classroom dynamics relative to specific experiences (in this case, technological integration; Li et al., 2022).

Teaching emotion is regarded as the way of being that teachers construct from their judgments about the exercise of their profession by describing their interpersonal relationships with students, colleagues, and parents (Chen, 2018). Thus, a teacher who is social-emotionally
A competent teacher builds healthy relationships with his or her students, effectively manages their classrooms based on responsible decisions, and implements effective social-emotional learning practices, all of which contributes to a healthy classroom climate that is reflected in favorable academic, social, and emotional outcomes (Cartagena et al., 2021; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). In fact, teachers’ emotions, together along with their cognitions and motivations, are processes involved in the understanding and construction of meanings of the world. Therefore, the management of teachers’ emotions is a source of professional identity (Schutz et al., 2020) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

In the educational field, emotions are known to underlie cognition, forming an inseparable unit. In the case of teachers, cognition and emotions are manifested in the way they teach, reflecting their professional profile (Martinez, 2018). In fact, the teaching profession is characterized by cognitive, social, and emotional demands influenced by external factors such as educational policy and administrative aspects (Luque-Reca, 2022). Hence, teaching has been considered an emotional practice (Hargreaves, 2001) and the classroom an emotional place (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-García, 2014). Without the emotions that unexpectedly arise in classroom interactions, teaching and learning processes could not be realized (Dewaele, 2015), and the real conditions of pedagogical practice would not be known. This implies caring for the psychological and spiritual well-being of the educational agents, facilitating peaceful coexistence and the acquisition of generic competencies necessary for the integral development of individuals. (Morales-Rodriguez et al., 2021; Papoutsi et al., 2022).

These academic emotions, understood as emotions experienced in the school environment during the teaching–learning process (Pekrun et al., 2002), play a crucial role in ICT integration. Moreover, the development of SECs is key in technology-enhanced learning environments for the identification, management, and exchange of emotions (Wetcho & Na-Songkhla, 2022). However, teacher–student relationships in virtual environments are weak (Luckeydoo, 2023); this highlights the importance of the quality of social interactions mediated with technology since it affects the work and emotional bonding of teachers and students (Cohen, 2022), which is evidenced by student performance and satisfaction (Hernández-Sellés et al., 2019). However, the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic (Taufik & Effendy, 2022) affected these processes through tech-fatigue and the difficulty in establishing social and cognitive presence with students (Tzafilkou et al., 2022) despite their interest in using technology in classrooms as well as teachers’ beliefs in their value and competence (Bowman et al., 2022; Shin & Seo, 2022; Uzuntiryaki-Kondakci et al., 2022; Xu, 2022). Thus, Farjón et al. (2019); Burton et al. (2022); Tzafilkou et al. (2022); Xu (2022); Xu and Jiang (2022) considered attitudes, beliefs, motivation, and rewarding and satisfying experiences as determinants of ICT integration.

The literature suggests that when a teacher confronts new teaching practices, their emotions can influence how they understand and perform such practices (Gill & Hardin, 2015). Therefore, the following questions are expected to guide this study: What meanings do teachers attribute to their emotional experiences when integrating ICTs into their learning sessions? How do religious education teachers manage their socioemotional competencies (SECs) during their pedagogical practices with ICTs? Answering these questions requires a phenomenographic approach, which offers greater likelihood for “discovering and systematizing ways of thinking that synthesize the way in which people interpret aspects of reality” (Marton, 1986, p. 180). Therefore, it is important to theoretically ground the relation between teaching emotions, teaching, and ICTs as well as clarify ICT integration experiences in religious education considering the lack of specific ICT equipment and training (Jegede et al., 2021). Concurrently, it is acknowledged that religion is not considered a main curricular content area (Meza-Rueda & Reyes-Fonseca, 2018) from which students can be exempted (Ministry of Education [MINEDU], 2016).
Finally, the field of religious education in Peru is part of its National Curriculum of Basic Education (Ministerial Resolution No. 281 - 2016 MINEDU), which establishes learning standards that adhere to the purposes and principles of Peruvian education and the National Educational Project to 2036. Accordingly, students are expected to understand and value the spiritual and religious dimensions of the life of people and societies (MINEDU, 2016).

Along this line, the use of ICTs in religious education allows for the creation of a novel multimodal learning environment through the use of image, text, audio, or video (Ikwuka & Adigwe, 2017; Karakostantaki & Stavrianos, 2021; Pasaribu & Naibaho, 2021), which can accelerate the pace of learning, promote knowledge management and interest, and efficiently develop creative and divergent thinking according to one’s language. Likewise, Mitsi (2017) and Olivares-Rosado et al. (2022) highlighted the use of technologies to improve academic performance by generating technology-enriched learning environments that motivate and involve student learning. Oluwafeyikemi et al. (2018), Hassan and Aziz (2019), and Pasaribu and Naibaho (2022) also investigated the impact of technologies on the modernization of religious education and the favorable perception that technological resources such as the digital whiteboard and social networks such as TikTok help capture students’ attention and broaden teachers’ vision for teaching religion.

Context of the Study

This work was motivated by the researchers’ interest in studying the emotional dimension of religious education teachers when integrating ICT into the curriculum, due to the low level of priority given to this curricular area. Prof. Cartagena is a religion teacher in a public school in Lima - Peru and a doctoral student at the University of Extremadura. Prof. Revuelta Domínguez and Prof. Pedrera Rodríguez are the directors of the doctoral thesis who follow up the formative activities and have contributed to this work in the revisions and theoretical-methodological contributions for its completion. Finally, Prof. Soria collaborates with Prof. Cartagena in training religious education teachers and is a research professor at several universities in Lima, Peru. She has contributed with methodological guidelines and the translation of the document into English. It should be noted that the ethical protocols of the research have been complied with according to the Bioethics and Biosafety Committee of the University of Extremadura, to ensure the socio-structural representativeness of the informants and the veracity of the results.

Methods

Design, Setting, and Informants

This exploratory study adopted a qualitative approach to examine the emotional dimension of ICT integration. It followed a holistic and reflective perspective to understand the meanings that teachers attribute to SEC management during their integration of ICTs in religious education through the conceptual representations of their opinions (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). To this end, this study used a phenomenographic design, which allows for the identification and qualitative description of the different ways people generally experience various situations in their contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018; González-Ugalde, 2014; Marton, 1986) as well as a discovery and systematization of how people interpret reality (Marton, 1986). Hence, subjects must experience the phenomenon to narrate it (Linder & Marshall, 2003). This way, the researcher can frame such experiences in conceptual categories with the nuances of their own experiences (Trigwell, 2000).
To ensure a balance between the subjective experiences of a phenomenon and the common objective experiences among individuals, González-Ugalde (2014) and Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend working with heterogeneous groups of between 5 to 25 individuals. In this case, we selected 22 religious education teachers (13 males and 9 Females) from the seven Local Educational Management Units (UGEL) of Metropolitan Lima to whom in-depth interviews were applied (See Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ODEC</th>
<th>UGEL</th>
<th>Number of teachers per UGEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lima</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chosica</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>06</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carabaylllo</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>04</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lurin</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These teachers were asked about their experience with the use of ICT before and after the COVID-19 pandemic and how they perceived and managed their emotions in dealing with the different facets of their educational work through technological media. It should be noted that despite the limitations inherent in self-reporting due to social desirability and differences in gender and length of service, theoretical saturation and significant consensus were reached based on the study categories. by observing how the informants expressed similar ideas and, as the interviews progressed, no longer contributed new elements according to the content of the chosen categories.

The teachers were selected through the Diocesan Offices of Catholic Education (ODEC) in the ecclesiastical jurisdictions in Lima, Peru. Dialogue was sought with their respective directors, who helped contact those who presented outstanding profiles for their educational and evangelizing trajectory, taking into account the annual evaluation reports. In this way, we ensure varied opinions of the same conception based on the interpretations that teachers can offer (González-Ugalde, 2014). Therefore, the study sample was nonprobabilistic, purposive, and theoretical (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). To comply with ethical requirements, we consulted the participants via e-mail about their time availability and, during the Zoom interviews, briefed them about the informed consent protocol in accordance with the rules issued by the University of Extremadura. All subjects expressed their acceptance and desire to participate.

Data Collection Procedures

We conducted structured interviews to collect information. This way, we could perform an in-depth inquiry about teachers’ emotional experiences in their pedagogical practice with ICTs. The interview guide was constructed by considering the cross-cultural adaptation of the theories based on the categories proposed by Yoder (2014); the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ([CASEL], 2021); and Schoon (2021) for teacher SECs and the competency model for teachers’ use of ICTs by Suárez-Rodríguez et al. (2018) as presented in Tables 2 and 3.
Table 2
Organization of Socioemotional Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-orientation</td>
<td>Self-awareness (SA)</td>
<td>Ability to evaluate their own emotions, thoughts, and feelings, as well as maintaining a good level of self-efficacy, as well as recognizing how their qualities and limitations affect their teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-management (SM)</td>
<td>The ability to effectively manage their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors successfully in different situations to achieve their goals and aspirations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-orientation</td>
<td>Social awareness (Sa)</td>
<td>The ability to understand others’ perspectives. This entails seeing the world from others’ perspectives and making inferences about other people, including their abilities, attitudes, expectations, feelings, and possible reactions, as well as recognizing, and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-orientation</td>
<td>Responsible decision-making (RDM)</td>
<td>Ability to attend to the needs and behaviors of the whole class while remembering and implementing a lesson plan. This involves examining a range of options to decide which is best in their interactions with students and their reactions to other factors in and out of the classroom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Taken from Yoder (2014), CASEL (2021), and Schoon (2021).

Table 3
Teachers’ Competencies in Integrating Information and Communication Technologies into the Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technological competence (TC)</td>
<td>This knowledge and these skills of teachers enable them to adequately master technological resources in their pedagogical practice. This covers the management and mastery of the use of computers, basic computer applications, multimedia, and presentations, educational software, and the internet for different activities such as information search, communication, or class preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical competence (PC)</td>
<td>This covers the knowledge and skills of teachers to use ICTs in the teaching and learning process in planning tasks, the design of learning environments with technology, innovation, and communication, as well as the ethical and legal management of aspects inherent to the use of ICTs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional use of ICT (PPU)</td>
<td>This refers to the use of ICT for educational tasks without students, among which are the following elements: administrative and management tasks, class preparation, and creation of educational materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT in the classroom with students (UCS)</td>
<td>This involves the use of ICT with students in the classroom, acting as a support to expand the explanations of the learning sessions, including ICT resources in the students’ curricula, generating technology-enriched environments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Taken from Suárez-Rodríguez et al. (2018).

Based on these inputs, we prepared an interview guide that was content-validated by six expert evaluators from the University of Extremadura, Spain (2); University of Oriente, Cuba (1); University of San Ignacio de Loyola, Peru (2); and Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Peru (1). Some comments were received, and academic consensus was observed.
when applying Aiken’s V (Aiken, 1985), obtaining coefficients between .90 and 1 in all items. Table 4 shows the final version consisting of 14 open-ended questions.

**Table 4**  
*Interview guide questions on the emotional dimension of ICT integration in religious education.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Questions</th>
<th>Follow-up questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- What is your full name and location in the school?</td>
<td>1. What is your opinion about ICT before and after the pandemic? Do you think that the pandemic has allowed the curricular integration of ICT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How long have you been teaching at this school?</td>
<td>2. Do you consider that the integration of ICT has been effective for the development of the competencies in your area? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How would you define technology integration? Can you provide any examples.</td>
<td>3. What do you think the use of ICT brings to the area of religious education? Any examples?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. When you use ICT in your classes, do you have a methodological strategy to guide you or a model taken from a colleague, training or trainer? Could you explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Do you consider that you have been able to implement successful pedagogical practices with ICT? What is the most innovative thing you have done with ICT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Has the use of ICT in your classes generated a rewarding and motivating experience? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Has the integration of ICT allowed you to develop social-emotional competencies in yourself and in your students? Some examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Has the implementation of ICTs facilitated closeness to the reality of others? Do you consider that ICTs influence isolation and lack of attention to the needs of others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Do I consider that the relationship with my students and colleagues has improved through the use of ICT? What aspects do I consider outstanding? You can narrate a case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Has the integration of ICT enabled me to better serve the learning needs of my students and at the same time represent a professional development opportunity for me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Does the use of ICTs allow me to get closer to my students’ reality and better meet their emotional and affective needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. What encourages or discourages you to use ICT in your classroom? Do you feel satisfied with integrating ICT in your pedagogical activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. With the use of ICT, have you been able to develop a process of inclusion and fairness in the evaluation by valuing the effort of your students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Do I use models or successful practices to analyze and reflect on the strategies I implement with ICT? Some examples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the itinerary for data collection involved (a) contacting ODEC directors in Metropolitan Lima to present the study and request the profiles of interview candidates, (b) contacting religious education teachers in secondary public schools who wished to participate in the study, (c) coordinating the interview dates and times, and (d) conducting the interview, beginning with a reading of the informed consent protocol to communicate to the participants
the objectives of the study and their role in it. The interviews, which were recorded, were conducted through Zoom between October and December 2022 and took approximately 45 minutes each. These interviews were conducted under conditions of flexibility and cordial relationships between interviewee and interviewer to create an environment for valuing the questions, encouraging reflection, and sincerely communicating the essence of the teachers’ experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; González-Ugalde, 2014; Linder & Marshall, 2003).

Data Analysis

After completing the interviews, we downloaded the videos from Zoom and saved them in a Google Drive folder for transcription, which we performed using the Tactiq extension in Google Chrome. We obtained a total of 100 pages, which we then analyzed using Atlas.ti version 22.1. For this purpose, we followed the criterion of proximity to the participants’ discourse and therefore identified the presence of diverse conceptions organized into themes and subthemes according to what the teachers expressed. This implies a construction process since the experiences and perceptions respond to the participants’ point of view and are not value-neutral (Ormston et al., 2014).

Within this phenomenographic framework, we performed thematic analysis, which allowed us to identify, analyze, and communicate patterns within a dataset (Scharp & Sanders, 2019). This way, the emergent nature of phenomenography was systematized for the study’s purposes (Cresswell, 2013). To this end, we adopted Braun and Clarke’s (2006) iterative pathway, which follows these steps: First is data familiarization through the transcription and rereading of interviews. Second is the generation of coding categories through labeling based on the codes in Table 5, following the structure (D10, SA-TC, UGEL 03, p. 10), where (a) D10 refers to the teacher’s number identification, (b) SA (self-awareness) and TC (technological competence) constitute the relation between the categories referred to in the discourse, (c) UGEL 03 refers to which UGEL the teacher belongs to, and (d) “p. 10” is the page of the transcript where the quote is found.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Socio Emotional Competencies</th>
<th>Responsible decision-making (RDM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Competencies for ICT</td>
<td>Self-awareness (SA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Integration</td>
<td>Self-management (SM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social awareness (Sa)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship skills (RS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological competence (TC)</td>
<td>TC - SA</td>
<td>TC - RDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical competence (PC)</td>
<td>PC - SA</td>
<td>PC - RDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional use of ICT (PPU)</td>
<td>PPU - SA</td>
<td>PPU - RDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT in the classroom with students (UCS)</td>
<td>UCS - SA</td>
<td>UCS - RDM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of ICT in the classroom with students (UCS)</th>
<th>UCS - SA</th>
<th>UCS - SM</th>
<th>UCS - Sa</th>
<th>UCS - RS</th>
<th>UCS - RDM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT in the classroom with students (UCS)</td>
<td>UCS - SA</td>
<td>UCS - SM</td>
<td>UCS - Sa</td>
<td>UCS - RS</td>
<td>UCS - RDM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third step involved the generation of themes, based on the researchers’ interpretation of the selected codes and their interrelations. The codes were grouped into categories resulting in themes and subthemes. Table 6 presents the analysis of the co-occurrences between the study categories. This allowed us to understand the extent to which teachers’ SECs are linked to technology integration competencies from the interrelationship of citations between the study categories.

Table 6

Co-occurrences of citations between SEC and Competencies for the Integration of ICT in Religious Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technological competence</th>
<th>Self-awareness</th>
<th>Self-management</th>
<th>Social awareness</th>
<th>Relationship skills</th>
<th>Responsible decision making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical competence</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional use of ICT</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT in the classroom with students</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth step was a review of themes, which allowed us to avoid ambiguity and duplicity and use the most appropriate terms. The fifth step was defining and naming themes and subthemes (Table 7). Finally, examples were identified through the most representative quotes that represent the essence of each topic and subtopic.

Table 7

Study Topics and Subtopics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Frequency of citations associated with subtopics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Emotional experience with ICT</td>
<td>Emotional reactions to ICT integration</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Labor commitment</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Competencias sociemocionales docentes con TIC</td>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Social awareness</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Relationship skills</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS

The results of this study were obtained by establishing inferences from data analysis (Hammersley, 2023). In this sense, the findings respond to the interview questions and the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), providing us with a clear image of the teachers’ experiences to reach useful conclusions for pedagogical practice. The findings showed that teachers’ emotional management is linked to their technology-supported pedagogical work. One teacher indicated that “ICT does help you in terms of what is new, in terms of what you can think about, you see it created by the students” [D14, RDM - PC, UGEL 01, p. 63] and another mentions that:
My concern is how to find the right ICT tool for them to achieve the competencies and at the same time feel interested, which leads me to train myself and work on myself, that is, to attend to learning, and emotional aspects. [D15, RDM–TC, UGEL 05, p. 65]

This serves as evidence of the value placed by teachers on the possibilities that ICTs offer for the development of curricular competencies as well as the challenge of self-training to meet learning process demands and their students’ emotional needs.

**Theme 1: Emotional experience of religion teachers with ICT.**

**Emotional Reactions to ICT Integration**

Considering the teachers’ opinions, we reflect that teaching practice with ICTs has a high emotional content, especially since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, as mentioned in the following excerpt:

ICT has been a gratifying experience for me, because I have a relationship, a more personal interrelationship, that is to say, a closer relationship with the children when I share experiences of reflection. The children share their reflections and I love that it excites me because I see that they express themselves freely through different media. . .then what is proper to the area is no longer something theoretical but something experiential and it makes them not get bored. [D05, SA–UCS, UGEL 05, p. 10]

This demonstrates how teaching practice and the students’ favorable responses activate in the teachers a passion for their profession. By subjecting the interview transcripts to an analysis of feelings, it was possible to observe that pedagogical practice with ICTs triggers positive, negative, and neutral feelings. Positive experiences refer to one’s satisfaction with their achievements in their classes, which are understood based on their development of technological competencies to offer a better service. A teacher reported,

Being immersed in a digital era that has advanced very quickly during the pandemic and after it, it has become much faster to send surveys, for example, and we can download information and organize it in teams; at the end, we obtained products, and conclusions that each team had and presented. . .it was interesting. [D22, UGEL 07, p. 94–95]

Furthermore, these technological resources have allowed teachers to develop teaching–learning strategies to strengthen their pedagogical skills:

You can work in the following way: you can pose a question and generate a debate. . .you pose the question in a blog or a post and through that blog they reply, reply, and reply. Then, you see how they interact with each other, they do it in real time and it is much faster; it is meaningful because the students are really responding in relation to what they are seeing and it is immediate, so there is no copying. [D22, UGEL 07, p. 100]

This has helped the teachers respond to their students’ emotional and learning needs as pointed out by the following teacher:
I am happy because I have been able to implement learning strategies with ICT, which is very necessary to reach many students. I have also been able to record and post an image and see the results, which generates an interesting emotional experience. [D3, UGEL 03, p. 11]

Meanwhile, the teachers also reported that using ICTs transcends their pedagogical work and allows them to effectively conduct personal and professional activities:

Definitely, one of the things I really is to look for information related to my work, so technology has brought me closer to that, it has provided me with information. It has saved me time and money because I do a lot of things on the computer. [D11, UGEL 05, p. 49]

Overall, for teachers, technology represents a source of satisfaction and well-being because of all the possibilities it offers them and because they feel capable of using it functionally and strategically. Therefore, our analysis counting the words allowed us to determine a scale of meanings associated with the positive emotions that the teachers experienced, including hope, passion, amazement, understanding, satisfaction, pleasure, friendship, empathy, assertiveness, and tolerance. These expressions confirm the diverse experiences that highlight not only the educational experience with technology but also its projection to the needs of others (typical of religion teachers) and the search for a pleasant educational environment.

Meanwhile, teachers’ negative experiences are associated with stress, discouragement, and concern about the success of their work and the response of their students:

This is a disaster, because in the state schools in which I work year after year and sometimes they are different. . .in most schools, the pedagogical innovation classrooms, which is where classes are conducted with technology. . .out of 30 students, out of 38 students, only half of the classrooms had access because half of the computers are useful and the other half are useless, so students do not have access to those computers, to that technological learning. [D15, UGEL 07, p. 63.]

This describes a situation of discouragement that compromises a teacher’s performance as well as the improvement in their technological skills and the achievement of their students’ competencies. The teachers also observed that when their students used technology, they isolated themselves and caused interaction problems that kept them from the expected achievement in the learning session. A teacher stated,

Some students live in their digital bubble. . .they lock themselves in their things and in their cell phone and their machine. it is enough. . .that they forget about the necessary relationship to build knowledge. It is difficult to design a didactic sequence in this way, and it stresses them a little. [D22, UGEL 07, p. 96]

Furthermore, administrative demands caused stress and discouragement: “. . .I would end up stressed. . .I would tell the assistant manager that it could be easier and would not complicate our lives. I came to hate the platform that was acquired, there are too many things to reiterate the same thing, and sometimes with different notes” [D7, UGEL 05, p. 28]. Hence, after analyzing the data via word count, the following negative emotions were identified:
tiredness, frustration, discomfort, stress, distrust, and fear. However, for the teachers, these negative experiences were catalysts to persevere in their work, demonstrating their commitment to their educational goals. A teacher indicated,

I did not hear of any teacher who buckled. Yes, they felt tired, but no one thought of rejecting or abandoning their work. On the contrary, they have been getting stronger, looking for ways to integrate and support each other when they do not dominate. [D01, SA–UCS, UGEL 05, p. 10]

Finally, we observed expressions that reflected neither positive or negative charge but rather a recognition of some uses of ICTs, which made it possible to determine the usefulness value that technology represents for them in their pedagogical work. For example, a teacher stated,

In general, the availability of ICT allows the use of resources. As I noted, games, competitions, and applications that are talked about a lot. They are useful resources for motivation, feedback, and interactive work as well, collaborative among other technical-pedagogical aspects. [D18, UGEL 02, p. 74–75]

However, they also mentioned that despite its the usefulness of technology, competencies are achieved only through its responsible and dosed controlled use is necessary to achieve the competencies of the area:

For me, ICTs are necessary if they are well directed. For example, I use videos in my classes, the children can watch the videos, and we can go deeper into the video. When it is used in class, they go deeper, and we move the subject forward. [D19, UGEL 03, p. 79]

In sum, the systematization of these experiences influences the emotional profile of this teacher group, which can be organized according to Bisquerra’s (2010) emotional rainbow, which proposes ICT integration from a positive point of view characterized by joy (satisfaction, amazement, pleasure), love (understanding, friendship, empathy, assertiveness), and happiness (hope). Meanwhile, negative emotions fall under fear (fear), sadness (frustration, tiredness, distrust), and anxiety (stress and discomfort). In addition, positive and negative emotions coexist in educational work and are recognized and serve to motivate oneself to persevere in their achievement of pedagogical, personal, and professional objectives, which will be deepened through work commitment.

Labor Commitment

The abovementioned emotional experiences are a source of motivation and commitment for teachers. Thus, they perceive that through their educational work, they make transcendental contributions that make them resilient against challenges, awaken their creativity, and strengthen their relationship with their educational community. They argue that the area plays a fundamental role in the training of students:

To a certain extent, I believe that the area should be more open. . .during the pandemic, for example, the course was not given. . .now it has been reestablished, but it is limiting because it is not a main area, and we have discussed this with the directors. However, they do not realize all that can be
contributed, such as emotional support, and moral formation. This can be enhanced with ICT, not only for students but also for teachers. Now, it can be used, but with the classes, it gets a little complicated. [D19, Sa–PC, UGEL 05, p. 82]

With respect to strengthening the educational community, teachers value the formation of professional practice communities to propose initiatives and improve their educational service:

Recently at school, during management week in May, this topic was discussed. The importance of ICT management in the classroom was discussed, and I remember that all teachers were invited to evaluate the effectiveness of ICT and determine to what extent it helps us and makes our pedagogical life more pleasant. We came to the conclusion that it does bring us a lot, it complements us, and it provides good support for the school, which is why we must form work teams, exchange ideas, and innovate in all areas without distinction. [D21, RS–PPU, UGEL 05, p. 92]

Furthermore, teachers of religion not only see their work in technical-pedagogical terms but also consider that it contributes to the mission of the Church. Hence, not only do they fulfill their teaching functions; they also seek to promote values and evangelize with the support of ICT resources:

We have been able to create some images, recreate them in such a way that it has invited the students, even the teachers, to be able to reflect, to be able to do internal work and in this way to be able to evangelize. I think it is healthy to look at how the area of religious education is promoted and strengthened with ICT. [D01, RDM - PC, UGEL 03, p. 01]

In conclusion, teachers acquire their commitment from their positive and negative emotional experiences because they feel that their work has value. In fact, the teachers’ passion and encouragement in fulfilling their duties can be observed in their responses. Therefore, they promote initiatives from their educational communities, creating learning and evangelization opportunities with the support of ICT. The next section examines the management of teachers’ emotions in their pedagogical practice.

**Theme 2: Social-emotional Competences of Teachers with ICTs**

Considering the topics presented in Table 7 regarding SECs with ICT, we analyzed the concepts and words to examine the different aspects of the teachers’ emotional management.

**Self-awareness**

The interviewed teachers recognized that their emotions can be positive and negative and, in that sense, are a source of pleasure. First, with regard to the achievement of the students’ competencies, one teacher pointed out, “I feel satisfied because I have seen that with the use of ICT, the students’ level of achievement improved” (D03, SA-PC, UGEL 03, p. 11). Second, one teacher described good teacher–student relationships:
Yes, because it mostly happens that in the classroom, I arrive to do my class, and we are talking. And they want to continue talking, but about their personal life, for example. They want to know how I am. Sometimes they message me on WhatsApp and I say hello, and a healthy dialog has been generated with all my students. But they mostly use their cell phones, with WhatsApp. This has also extended to the parents. . .I always greet them, and I feel at ease. [D12, SA–RS, UGEL 01, p. 52]

This shows the interest and intimacy on the part of the teachers in the recognition of their educational work. This also implies sharing experiences and understanding others’ situations so that they could help. One educator stated, “Sometimes I have to write them to calm them down because they think that the delivery of an activity is over, you have to understand them” (D02, SA-RS, UGEL 06, p. 5), and another reported, “Even through WhatsApp, they share their very personal experiences, their sometimes painful experiences, and that kind of gives you the opportunity to provide support and makes me feel committed” (D17, SA-RS, UGEL 02, p. 72). Third, one teacher discussed the possibility of evangelizing using technology since the activity does not end at school but rather continues at home:

It contributes a lot to evangelization because the material that is shared with the students also helps their siblings, the parents, and all the members of the family. Therefore, it is a very good evangelization tool, it transmits knowledge of faith and develops competencies, but it goes beyond that. [D08, SA–PC, UGEL 04, p. 32]

Thus, teachers value feeling capable of effectively incorporating technological resources. Similarly, they can create and design resources, as indicated by a teacher:

It encourages me, to be able to create different tools or meaningful activities for my students. It gives versatility to my session, to my activities, if it is a very dense subject, I can dilute it, make it a little lighter, make it more attractive, that is what I like about using ICT. [D22, SA–PC, UGEL 07, p. 98]

In addition, the use of resources can be regarded as a selection process for specific educational purposes with levels of innovation. Some teachers stated, “For example, I like to use Nearpod because it allows me to evaluate in various ways, leave a comment for the student and let them express themselves freely” (D18, SA-TC, UGEL 07, p. 77), or “I include gamification to carry out a process of input, process, and output” (D19, SA-PC, UGEL 05, p. 81). Fourth is the opportunity for self-training. One teacher said that with ICTs, “I have been able to complete a master’s degree, I had virtual counseling. But I can also follow courses that help me, for example, the famous PBL” (D13, SA-PC, UGEL 04, p. 56). Overall, they feel fulfilled in their professional qualification because of technology.

Meanwhile, negative emotions are associated with discouragement and stress due to (1) the lack of infrastructure and technological devices (“it discourages the fact of not having adequate devices or connectivity, you have to manage and that takes time,” D19, SA-TC, UGEL 04, p. 82), (2) the limitations of learning new tools (“they overwhelm us with many documents and schedules that do not give time to create and design resources,” D07, SA-PC, UGEL 05, p. 64), (3) administrative and documentary burden (“they overwhelm us with many documents and schedules that do not give time to create and design resources,” D07, SA-PC, UGEL 05, p. 64), and (4) the indifference and responsiveness of the student (“sometimes I give them an assignment and they take a long time or by WhatsApp they connect, but when I ask
for their opinion, they never respond, so I think I am not doing things right,” D09, SA-PC, UGEL 04, p. 37).

The next section will examine how they engage in this emotional recognition during ICT-supported classroom sessions.

**Self-management**

With regard to self-management, teachers regulate their emotions when using technologies by considering, first, the ability to manage the classroom with a balanced behavior:

If we do not manage our classroom properly, these activities could cause many students to become isolated and individualistic. We have to know how to reach them with our treatment and proposals. . . because we are not always with the same students, they observe us. They behave according to what they perceive of our work. . . if we are friendly, it will give them the confidence to continue. [D06, SM–PC, UGEL 01, p. 23]

For teachers, emotional management depends on others’ responsiveness; that is, one’s personal reactions and those of others are shaped by a balanced and friendly treatment that can serve as a reference for all. Hence, support received from colleagues and managers is an expression of functional maturity and coresponsibility: “when the principal supports everything goes well, one is self-motivated, and feels confident, but sometimes they look at you with a certain distrust” (D16, SM-RS, UGEL 07, p. 70). The second factor is student achievement, as evidenced by the quality of their products and active participation. One teacher stated that “the kids share their reflections and I love that, it excites me, because I see that they are expressing themselves freely” (D03, SM-PC, UGEL 03, p. 9). In addition, the teachers recognized that they were capable of mastering and integrating technological resources in their learning sessions: “I have used a lot the Jamboard theme, the theme of Quizzez, and also Padlet, with that I have created sequences and that achievement encourages me to continue searching, I am delighted to continue learning” (D16, SM-TC, UGEL 07, p. 67). Thus, favorable responses from learners and the awareness of their technological capabilities are beneficial to teacher engagement and well-being. This is complemented by the third factor, which is learning and professional development opportunities:

Yes, I love it, I love experiences of that kind and I find them as a challenge and that leads me to seek information, to review tutorials. I have also participated in several workshops to learn because I have seen that they have an impact, they present the topics that are proposed with precision and attraction. . . so, yes, I am interested, that is a challenge for me and I do it with enthusiasm, even though I may not achieve learning in a total way, but it makes me persist and overcome my limitations. [D17, SM–TC, UGEL 07, p. 73].

Accessible infrastructure and devices are crucial here as well. However, the absence of ICT-enriched environments causes frustration:

I would like to have a tablet or a device to pass the note to a virtual record and no longer be in the tediousness of passing my record back to something virtual and then from the virtual to the template record. Its time consuming, it is
burdensome, we are just not there anymore to go through this and have so much demand placed on us on these things. [D7, SA–PPU, UGEL 05, p. 27]

All these factors are sources of teaching perseverance and motivation. In addition, the teachers used prayer and spiritual formation spaces to promote self-control: “the relationship with God through prayer is a fundamental space to find the meaning of what we do in our classes also with technology” (D21, SM–PC, UGEL 06, p. 90). With regard to linking with other teachers or professional groups, one teacher reported,

Through ICT, we can meet, and colleagues take care of what we write or say, that has generated a better environment and treatment among all...it also happened with the students...many say that we as teachers manage our treatment well...without wanting to get to know each other a little better. . .it has also helped us to integrate as an institution and keep us united. [D07, SM–RS, UGEL 05, p. 29]

A teacher indicated that students’ learning and situational needs must be effectively addressed, and this causes the teacher to assess their reactions and temperament:

It helps me to treat them with more attention, with more affection, because some of them lack affection. A little bit closer to them, not to treat them badly, to listen to them, and to talk to them assertively because children are also quite sensitive. Knowing how to listen to their points of view because some of them are not believers or are compatible with religious thinking, they are not believers, they have other approaches, another point of view. I have tried to develop emotional competencies with the children and also in oneself to complement professional competencies [D03, SM–PC, UGEL 03, p. 10]

Another factor is the physical avoidance of difficult people because of digital media. One teacher pointed out that “when there are people there are always problems... but, for example, Zoom helped to avoid people, and that helps the institutional climate” (D09, SM-RS, UGEL 04, p. 38). One informant discussed the observation of recordings of their classes because “seeing the recordings of the classes, whether you worked with Zoom or Meet, helps to correct not only strategies but also how you respond to students” (D07, SM-TC, UGEL 05, p. 28).

In summary, the findings on emotional regulation focus on identifying personal and equipment conditions that facilitate teaching commitment, which allows teachers to have an emotional quality of life. The next section expands the analysis of the perspective of others, which influences the participants’ emotional experiences.

**Social Awareness**

The ability to understand the reality of teachers and students is acquired, first, by connecting with other teachers through collegial work, which entails not only teamwork but also the possibility of being familiar each other’s personal situations:

Regarding collegial work, which we call the work of teachers in the same area, it has been a help...because each teacher can work from home, send the programming, the units, the learning experiences, and it improves teamwork. . .but it has also allowed us to integrate. . .sometimes they observed something in
their colleague when he/she was connected and then we found out and that way we detected problems and thus helped each other since we are an educational community, not just employees. [D21, Sa–SR, UGEL 06, p. 91]

Teachers feel as though they are part of a community and seek productivity together by managing appropriate interpersonal relationships. Second, informants strive to meet students’ academic and emotional expectations by designing activities relevant to their age and grade level:

For example, last year, we did a “smile with your eyes” activity that integrated some technological resources such as photos and videos that were shared in networks. It consisted in talking about fraternity, in talking about God as the source of joy, in the community, at home, in the family, and at school. Obviously, we did, sessions according to the grade, the readings that God invites us to live together, they made their phrases, posters, and shared them as a family. And why smile with your eyes because we are all in the pandemic with the mask and if you saw someone you only saw the eyes, there the family were integrated, the girls did their activities and ready and that I did because accompanying my sister to get vaccinated, they were outside with smile eyes, the girls dancing . . . to see smiles and they were given a candy. So, I just saw the needs and looked for information. [D18, Sa–PC, UGEL 02, p. 77 –78]

This shows their intention to innovate and develop empathy for the needs of others with activities relevant to the field of religion. They promote a physical or virtual integration with all members of the educational community through images; WhatsApp, Zoom, or Meet calls; virtual or face-to-face counseling; virtual fellowship activities; and face-to-face or virtual spiritual exercises, which are always performed with open-access resources. For example, a teacher pointed out,

For example, at a distance we did what is called spiritual retreats by means of Zoom or Meet. . .with those who could, so the young person internalized, I managed to at least have a moment of peace, of tranquility. Afterwards, in the classroom, we do prayer spaces in class, I use videos that are projected, but I also send them to WhatsApp. . .the themes of these retreats I think about them according to what may happen or they comment to me in messages or directly. Personally, I sometimes follow the Eucharist virtually, which helps me in the most crucial moments. I also talked with colleagues or parents. Right now, it also helps you because you find, for example, if you want a talk to make an Advent retreat, you look for it, and you find it. It is useful for you, if you have the disposition and the time. [D19, Sa–PC, UGEL 05, p. 80]

In conclusion, the teachers showed that they were interested not only in fulfilling their functions but also in responding to others’ needs by understanding their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the following subtheme will describe how the teachers’ social awareness is concretized in their interpersonal relationships.

**Relationship Skills**

With regard to relationship skills through ICTs, the privileged space is identified as the collegiate work allowing for the collective construction of knowledge. One teacher reported
that “with ICT we can work together, for example in the drive, we build something of our own in the area as a group... this way, everyone contributes, and we respect the contributions of others” (D12, SR-PPU, UGEL 04, p. 56). This also creates the opportunity to strengthen their interpersonal relationships:

When we sometimes have meetings, by Zoom with the teachers, we already know each other. . .there can be opinions, or even pleasant jokes through the Zoom chat or Meet. It has generated a space of work and trust, and in the school we all treat each other as a family at the level of teachers and students. [D12, RS–PPU, UGEL 01, p. 52]

However, interactivity in these spaces must be managed ethically and with respect for others. One teacher stated that

. . .from virtuality, it is possible to have pedagogical consultancies with teachers. . .it is necessary to integrate these new relationship spaces. . .I had the experience of accompaniment, I talked with my monitor, and he showed me his screen. The same with my colleagues in the area, we put the learning experience to share and there we all intervened. . .we felt good because there was acceptance, each one contributed what he/she considered freely, and at the end significant work came out. Also, in the training sessions, we worked on a topic with slides, we interacted in groups, we elaborated the conclusions of what we are working on and we sent it to the common room, there is respect for each other's work, the rules of coexistence are respected and the work flows. [D09, RS–PPU, UGEL 04, p. 37]

This way, cooperation awakens one's sensitivity to others through a culture of encounter in virtuality as described by one teacher:

We have been able to somehow reach everyone, even teachers, who were going through hard situations, to give comfort, to communicate, to listen to them, to talk to them, and to some extent, virtual media have helped us a lot. . .we learn about things in a confidential way and we can help. Now, it is useful to connect with the parents, when sometimes you cannot be there in person and attend to their problems. [D19, RS–UCS, UGEL 03, p. 80]

Meanwhile, although technologies have helped maintain and promote good relationships, they can also contribute to the absence and depersonalization of others through the lack of knowledge of nonverbal language and being unsure of others’ presence behind the screen. One teacher pointed out that “sometimes people hide behind the screen and do not say things face-to-face, which generates many interpretations, so it is necessary to combine the face-to-face with the virtual” (D08, RS-PPU, UGEL 04, p. 33)

In sum, ICTs are an adequate means of developing relationship skills but can also facilitate isolation and avoidance of responsibilities, generating discomfort and undermining a good institutional climate. Therefore, educators must make pertinent decisions to achieve work and academic objectives that promote healthy coexistence in both virtual and face-to-face spaces. This will be developed in the last subtheme.
Responsible Decision Making

In this competency, teachers agree that using ICTs allows them to meet learning and behavioral needs efficiently as well as motivate students in their learning:

If you play a song for them they calm down, it gives them tranquility compared to talking to them, it is different if you make them listen to a song, for example, the Hymn of Joy. I have done this and they start to calm down and their spirit becomes calm. The classroom becomes harmonious, and I can develop the class, especially when the topics are reflective. This calmness stabilizes me and engages me in my work. [D12, RDM–UCS, UGEL 01, p. 50]

This highlights the need for creativity ("Here it is the teacher’s hand, his creativity to be able to play with these tools and design relevant activities," D01, RDM-UCS, UGEL 03, p. 1) and preparation by searching for adequate tools and strategies. This makes it possible to create a space for healthy, formative, academic, and experiential open interactions through which students can express their experiences and teachers feel committed. Another teacher stated,

On one occasion, developing the theme of caring for our common home, we did an activity in which we grew some cactus and with the help of technology, we designed a personalized logo. Then, we sold it to generate resources for other initiatives always in this ecological line, as the Pope says. I could see that they liked it very much, not only did they learn, but they were integrated, and I also felt part of their achievements in the preparation and sales, it was not just any activity. They really liked it, they felt it was innovative and they looked happy. [D11, RDM–UCS, UGEL 05, p. 46.]

As can be observed, the use of ICTs has helped build a prosocial classroom in which teachers work as leaders and play an important role not only in terms of their decisions but also their direction. The teachers pointed out that these were achieved through calls, dynamics, games, sentences, images, music, chats, debates, small groups, emojis, and collaborative projects conducted in a virtual or hybrid manner through WhatsApp, Jamboard, Meet, and Zoom:

Through working with WhatsApp, for example, I learned some things to make the class more dynamic. You could combine, giving audio, video, or descriptions. Keeping them awake, for example, I would tell them when I say such and such a word everyone has to send a smiley face, so it was a test to check that the students were permanently active because with virtual media sometimes there is a risk that they are not. [D10, RDM–UCS, UGEL 03, p. 42]

In conclusion, the development of teachers’ SECs implies the achievement of different skills, which can be consolidated and enhanced by using ICTs. In addition, based on the different aspects discussed, religion teachers relate their encounters to their spiritual experiences, which helps them reflect on their behaviors and emotional reactions. This allows them to place at the center of their decisions the search for the well-being of others. For this reason, they are not limited by the workday but are instead attentive to the needs of students, colleagues, and parents in order to help and evangelize them.
Discussion

Methodologically, we intended to understand and build knowledge based on teachers’ lived experiences in their educational context. Therefore, thematic analysis allowed us to examine variations in the informants’ intersubjective opinions regarding emotional management through ICTs instead of merely gathering their views without consideration for their lived experiences (Marton, 1981). Therefore, a priori categories and emergent themes needed to be established, which allowed us to analyze their discourses (Scharp & Sanders, 2019) through open coding (Dabengwa et al., 2023). However, although this procedure follows Marton’s seminal proposal, it opens a methodological debate on the essence of phenomenographic research by sacrificing experience for the hierarchization of topics based on the theoretical framework used (Stolz, 2020).

With respect to the significance of the study, the findings reflect, on the one hand, the effectiveness of ICT in the achievement of curricular competencies and, on the other hand, the emotional burden of technology-supported pedagogical practice. This corroborates the findings of Ikwuka and Adigwe (2017), Karamouzis and Fokides (2017), and Oluwafeyikemi et al. (2018), who showed that ICT use enhances the teaching of religion through the achievement of better academic results, promotion of SECs, and engagement of teachers in their educational work. This educational commitment turns religion teachers into evangelizers who seek to teach about religion as well as to learn from religion (Scott, 2019).

Likewise, pedagogical practice is confirmed as a space and source of emotions for both teacher and student (Dewaele, 2015; Hargreaves, 2001; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-García, 2014). This benefits job satisfaction and promotes a prosocial school climate at the classroom and institutional levels (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) through teachers’ good relationships with fellow teachers and their students (Cohen, 2022; Wetcho & Na-Songkhla, 2022). In addition, emotional management in the classroom is closely associated with the teaching of religion. Greene (2019) considered that socioemotional learning is rooted in religious and moral precepts. For example, this means that in order to teach a person how to be honest or respectful, a teacher must explain the role of religion while also being emotionally balanced (Meehan, 2019). ICTs have contributed significantly to such a task (So & Seo, 2020; UNESCO, 2016). Therefore, the more serious, genuine, and practical religious engagement enhanced with technology, the greater its positive impact on well-being (Spencer et al. 2016) and community outreach.

Contextually, this study contributes to the field by generating a space for research on the integration of ICT in religious education (Jegede et al., 2021), which has not been adequately explored in Peru because of educational policies that consider it as a nonprioritized area as well as the lack of its own epistemological status (Meza-Rueda & Reyes-Fonseca, 2018, MINEDU, 2016). Meanwhile, Esteban (2021) observed a generalized satisfaction on the part of teachers, students, parents, and alumni with the way the course is taught, valuing the religion teacher’s role over other curricular areas. Therefore, through this study, we intended to provide analysis criteria to deepen sources and methods of religion teachers’ SEC management in their integration of ICT (Haji et al., 2017; Prasojo et al., 2019; So & Seo, 2020). This allows for the design of training programs for in-service religion teachers (Ferri et al., 2020), which respond to the learning demands discussed in the interviews and reevaluate their professional development in their mission (Elliott, 2019; Wright, 2019).

The findings highlight a perceived self-diagnosis of the participating teachers’ emotional reactions (Wetcho & Na-Songkhla, 2022), which are important because negative emotions contribute to rejection whereas positive emotions attract and motivate goal achievement (Valderrama, 2015). This is in agreement with Shin and Seo (2022) and Uzuntiryaki-Kondakci et al. (2022), who found that positive or negative emotions influence
technological integration. These emotions are constructed in a sociocultural experience derived from teachers’ interactions with other educational agents and thus regulate their behavior and are shaped by the school’s organizational experiences (Parks & McKay, 2022). Similarly, Bowman et al. (2022) and Xu (2022) argued that expectancy, defined as one’s belief in successfully achieving a goal, and value, defined as the degree to which a task is worth doing because of its usefulness, are combined in one’s intention to continue teaching with ICTs. Therefore, the informants reported that their ICT experiences were pleasant, satisfied their passion, and allowed them to analyze their own behavior (Xu & Jiang, 2022). This way, negative experiences are not determinant and allow them to persist in their work, which they perceive as a space for professional development and growth (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Tzafilkou et al., 2022).

Finally, the findings highlight the need for ICT training at the technological, pedagogical, and social levels, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ferri et al., 2020). While the frequent access and use of technology do not imply its effective integration into educational practices (Azzaro & Martínez, 2018), the participants showed their desire to learn and underlying belief that ICTs lead to student engagement and motivation. However, the integration reported in this study is simple and generic (Farjón et al., 2019) as it focused on content curation, text creation, presentations, and information sources (Fraillon et al., 2013) or followed the directives of the Ministry of Education. Moreover, only a few teachers seemed to integrate advanced technological applications and possess sufficient knowledge of the contribution of specific applications to specific learning objectives (Heitink et al., 2016). These factors, in addition to the lack of resources, contribute to frustration and discouragement (Wetcho & Na-Songkhla, 2022), highlighting training and research challenges regarding ICT use in teaching practices and innovation (Thomas & Rogers, 2020; Tang, 2021) in religious education, which includes standards for SEC development during ICT integration.

Conclusions

First, teaching practice is an emotional experience, especially in the exercise of pedagogical competencies and the use of ICT in classes. Therefore, teachers’ emotional experience is a predictor of ICT integration. Second, teachers’ emotions are representative of their awareness, are situated in the “emotional rainbow” spectrum (Bisquerra, 2010) and allow for the configuration of an emotional profile characterized by positive emotions including joy (happiness, satisfaction, amazement, pleasure), love (understanding, friendship, closeness, assertiveness), and happiness (hope) whereas negative emotions associated with ICTs include fear (fear), sadness (frustration, tiredness, distrust), and anxiety (stress and discomfort). Third, SEC management has been an important element in the development of learning sessions with ICTs, especially during the pandemic and postpandemic periods. In this sense, teachers acquire emotions from their achievement of curricular competencies and the potential for evangelization, and their preferred means of emotional regulation are prayer, spiritual retreats (virtual or physical), Christian music, and religious images. Teachers express their social awareness through the quality of their interpersonal and empathetic relationships with others (students and colleagues), develop their relationship skills in collegial workspaces through the support of colleagues and their membership in communities of professional practice, and make decisions reflecting leadership attributes to capture students’ attention and foster a prosocial environment. WhatsApp, Zoom, Meet, Jamboard, Google Drive, and Google Forms stand out as the most frequently used technological products. Topics that future research could explore include the relation between SECs and moral development, the influence of contextual factors on teachers’ personality during ICT integration, the management and transmission of SECs in virtual environments, and the way SECs constitute teacher profiles and identities.
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