

PREDICTION OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STYLES BASED ON TEACHERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract: The class, as a community of students of the same chronological age, can be organized or chaotic, thus encouraging or hindering the development of students as individuals. Discipline and achievement as well as a positive attitude toward school, have a strong relationship, just as there is a relationship between establishing discipline and teacher stress levels and job satisfaction. Creating a stimulating climate for learning through various teacher approaches to facilitate the learning process, maintain a pleasant atmosphere, prevent inappropriate behaviour, and maintain discipline is united by the term classroom management. Given that the teacher is an irreplaceable link in the system of upbringing and education, it is necessary to direct him to recognise effective interactions for the achievement of educational goals through various segments of professional training. The quality of the teacher-student interaction affects, indirectly, the individual characteristics of the student, his behaviour, academic success, and attitude toward education in general. The aim of this paper and research is to examine the relationship between empathy, burnout at work, competencies, and personal characteristics on the one hand and classroom management styles that dominate teachers on the other hand. The research was conducted in 2019 on a sample of 300 teachers employed in elementary schools. Of all the examined variables, the most significant predictors were empathy, learning and teaching competencies, communication and cooperation competencies, and emotional exhaustion.

Keywords: predictors, empathy, teacher competencies.

Field: Social Sciences and Humanities

1. INTRODUCTION

Managing a classroom poses a challenge for every teacher because, in addition to necessary competencies related to successful implementation of the teaching process, it also requires certain social skills. Classroom management is one of the newer constructs in educational sciences, and the results of numerous studies have proven that the ability of the teacher to manage classroom and organise instruction is a key to accomplishment within the teaching profession (Marzano, 2003, Wang, 1997, Bushaw, 2008, as cited in Owusu&Co, 2021). Djigić believes that the dominant classroom management style of a teacher determines the quality of the atmosphere in the classroom, which includes various aspects. The most important among them are the social atmosphere created by the teacher as a leader, the interaction the teacher establishes by determining the type of communication, the atmosphere of competition or cooperation, and the emotional atmosphere (Djigić, 2017).

The authors Martin and Baldwin (Martin & Baldwin, 1993a, 1993b, as cited in Djigić, 2017) discuss three basic classroom management styles: interventionist, interactionist, and non-interventionist. Each style represents a unique set of beliefs that manifest through corresponding classroom management models. A teacher with a predominant non-interventionist style believes that having the control and rules in the classroom is unnecessary because, in their opinion, every child is the creator of their own destiny. The central figure is not the teacher, and their strategies for managing the class are based on the belief that the natural curiosity of students is the most important driver of the learning process.

Contrastingly, teachers with an interventionist leadership style emphasize the importance of external influences for a child to develop in their unique way. They see themselves as central figures with complete control and power in their hands, holding students at a high level. Students should have as little power as possible to control their behaviour. Rewards and punishments are used to encourage desired activities in students.

In between these extremes is the interactionist style. A teacher with a predominant interactionist style follows the notion that if two are needed for conflict, then two are also needed for its resolution. In decision-making and conflict resolution, students are equally involved. This creates a sense of belonging and greater responsibility among students, preserving their dignity. Within set boundaries, students have the right to make their own choices whenever possible. This shifts responsibility for their behaviour onto

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the students themselves.

The results of previous research on the effectiveness of classroom management styles indicate that teachers with a dominant interactionist style are more satisfied with the classroom climate, and students' academic success is significantly better compared to teachers belonging to interventionist and non-interventionist style (Djigić, 2017).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The focus of this research is on exploring the relationships between empathy, burnout, teacher competencies as independent variables, and dominant classroom management styles as dependent variables. The goal is to investigate the relationships between empathy, burnout, teacher competencies as independent variables, and dominant classroom management styles among teachers as dependent variables. The research sample consisted of teachers employed in primary schools in the Republic of Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina). The study was conducted on a convenient sample of 300 teachers from February to May 2018.

To examine classroom management styles, the Classroom Management Styles Inventory developed by Djigić, Stojiljković and Janjić (2014) was used. The theoretical basis for this inventory is the model of Martin and Baldwin (1993), which distinguishes three classroom management styles: interventionist, interactionist, and non-interventionist.

To assess teacher competencies, a self-assessment questionnaire was constructed in accordance with the Standards for Teacher Competencies and their Professional Development (2011). The questionnaire includes four subscales of different types of competencies: subject-specific competencies, competencies for teaching and learning, competencies for supporting students' personal development, and competencies for communication and collaboration. Each subscale has a coefficient of internal consistency greater than 0.70.

The Professional Burnout Scale (MBI-NL-ES, Schaufeli, Daamen, and Van Mierlo, 1994, developed from MBI-ES, Maslach and Jackson, 1986) was used to assess the burnout syndrome. It comprises three subscales measuring three dimensions of job burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

To examine empathy, the Empathy Assessment Questionnaire (Genç, Mitrović and Čolović, 2009) was used. It includes four subscales: empathy with negative emotional states, empathy with positive emotional states, empathy as a social role, and emotional reactions provoked by empathy. The coefficient of internal consistency for all scales used is greater than 0.70, indicating the reliability of the measuring instrument.

To determine correlations, a stepwise linear regression was employed. Considering previous research on the impact of the personal characteristics on the teaching and learning process, we could not a priori determine which one would emerge as the most significant correlate of a teacher's inclination towards a particular classroom management style.

3. RESULTS

Prediction Model of the Interventionist Classroom Management Style Based on Examined Variables

The coefficient of multiple correlation (R), indicating the linear correlation between the original values of the dependent variable (interventionist classroom management style) and the model-predicted values of the dependent variable, is 0.463 in the final model, indicating a moderate strength of the relationship. More precisely, 46% of the variability in the interventionist classroom management style can be explained by the regression model (Table 1).

Table 1: *Statistics for each model (Model Summary) (interventionist classroom management style)*

Model	R	R ²	p
1	.372	.139	.006
2	.404	.163	.004
3	.420	.176	.031
4	.435	.189	.029
5	.451	.203	.023
6	.463	.214	.046

Source: Author

Through further statistical analysis, the results of the ANOVA test were obtained for all six models in the stepwise procedure of forming the final statistical regression model. A significance value at <0.05 indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. The obtained data demonstrate that the model as a whole (with all six models) is significant [$F(2,297) = 23.875, p<0.0005$], [$F(3,296) = 19.209, p<0.0005$], [$F(4,295) = 15.755, p<0.0005$], [$F(5,294) = 13.727, p<0.0005$], [$F(6,293) = 12.470, p<0.0005$], [$F(7,292) = 11.372, p<0.0005$].

Table 2: *Regression coefficients for each regression model (interventionist classroom management style)*

Model	Variables	Beta coefficient	P	Zero-order correlation	Partial correlation	Semi-partial correlation
1	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.368	.000	.341	.363	.362
2	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.365	.000	.341	.366	.359
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.157	.004	.155	.168	.156
3	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.272	.000	.341	.225	.209
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.138	.011	.155	.148	.136
	Empathy with negative emotional states	.152	.031	.306	.125	.114
4	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.368	.000	.341	.256	.238
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.166	.003	.155	.173	.159
	Empathy with negative emotional states	.155	.026	.306	.129	.117
	Empathy with positive emotional states	-.157	.029	.152	-.127	-.115
5	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.354	.000	.341	.248	.229
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.153	.006	.155	.161	.145
	Empathy with negative emotional states	.148	.033	.306	.124	.112
	Empathy with positive emotional states	-.260	.002	.152	-.178	-.161
	Empathy as a social role	.171	.023	.220	.132	.119
6	Emotional reactions provoked by empathy	.329	.000	.341	.230	.210
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.220	.001	.155	.197	.178
	Empathy with negative emotional states	.177	.012	.306	.146	.130
	Empathy with positive emotional states	-.259	.002	.152	-.178	-.160
	Empathy as a social role	.193	.011	.220	.148	.132
	Competence for communication and collaboration	-.132	.046	.034	-.116	-.104

Source: Author

The results of the stepwise regression analysis indicate that 46% of the variability in the interventionist classroom management style is explained by the influence of emotional reactions provoked by empathy, competence for teaching and learning, empathy with negative emotional states, empathy with positive emotional states, empathy as a social role, competence for communication and collaboration, while other variables did not enter the model because they are not statistically significant.

The model predicts the interactionist classroom management style based on the examined variables

The prediction model for the interactionist style of classroom management based on the examined variables shows a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.689 in the final model, indicating a strong linear correlation between the original values of the dependent variable (interactionist style of classroom management) and the model-predicted values of the dependent variable. More precisely, 69% of the variability in the interactionist style of classroom management can be explained by the regression model (Table 3).

Table 3: *Statistics for each model (Model Summary) (Interactionist classroom management style)*

Model	R	R ²	p
1	.599	.359	.000
2	.669	.448	.000
3	.679	.460	.010
4	.689	.474	.006

Source: Author

The increase in coefficient value of determination (R²) indicates that by including new independent variables, there is a contribution to the explanation of the variability of the non-intervening style of classroom management. The R² value increases from 0.599 in the first model to 0.689 in the last model.

The statistical significance of this change is evident from the p value, which is <0.05 for each model.

Further statistical analysis for all four models in the stepwise procedure of forming the final statistical regression model, based on the p-value <0.05, concludes that the regression model is statistically significant. The obtained data show that the model as a whole (with four models) is significant [F(1,298) = 167.095, p<0.0005], [F(2,297) = 120.629, p<0.0005], [F(3,296) = 84.179, p<0.0005], [F(4, 295) = 66.498, p<0.0005].

Table 4: *Regression coefficients for each regression model (interactionist classroom management style)*

Model	Variables	Beta coefficient	p	Zero-order correlation	Partial correlation	Semi-partial correlation
1	Empathy with positive emotional states	.599	.000		.599	.599
2	Empathy with positive emotional states	.537	.000	.599	.577	.525
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.305	.000	.415	.373	.298
3	Empathy with positive emotional states	.592	.000	.599	.578	.520
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.312	.000	.415	.383	.305
	Empathy with negative emotional states	-.124	.010	.195	-.148	-.110
4	Empathy with positive emotional states	.483	.000	.599	.412	.328
	Competencies for teaching and learning	.301	.000	.415	.374	.293
	Empathy with negative emotional states	-.139	.004	.195	-.167	-.123
	Empathy as a social role	.168	.006	.518	.160	.117

Source: Author

Based on the results of the stepwise regression analysis, 69% of the variability in the interactionist classroom management style is explained by the influence of variables: empathy with positive emotional states, empathy with negative emotional states, competence for teaching and learning, and empathy as a social role. It is noted that out of all the variables considered as potential predictors of the interactionist classroom management style, only four remain, of which three are different types of empathy.

Model predicting the non-interventionist classroom management style based on examined variables

The coefficient of multiple correlation (R), indicating the linear correlation between the original values of the dependent variable (non-interventionist classroom management style) and the model-predicted values of the dependent variable in the final model, is 0.382. This suggests a weak-intensity relationship. More precisely, 38% of the variability in the non-interventionist classroom management style can be explained by the regression model (Table 5).

Table 5: *Statistics for each model (Model Summaryh) (non-interventionist Classroom Management Style)*

Model	R	R ²	p
1	.323	.104	.000
2	.347	.120	.020
3	.365	.133	.036
4	.382	.146	.040

Source: Author

The increase in the coefficient of determination R² values indicates that by including new independent variables, it contributes to the explanation of the variability of the non-interventionist classroom management style. The value, which was 0.323 in the first model, increases to 0.382 in the final model. The statistical significance of this change is indicated by the Sig.

Based on further analysis for all four models in the stepwise procedure of forming the final statistical regression model, we conclude, based on the p-value <0.05, that the regression model is statistically significant. The obtained data show that the model as a whole (with all four models) is significant [F(1,298) = 34.684, p<0,0005], [F(2,297) = 20.346, p<0,0005], [F(3,296) = 15.192, p<0,0005], [F(4,295)

= 12.582, $p < 0,0005$].

Table 6: *Regression coefficients for each regression model (non-interventionist classroom management style)*

Model	Variables	Beta coefficient	P	Zero-order correlation	Partial correlation	Semi-partial correlation
1	Emotional exhaustion	.323	.000	.323	.323	.323
	Emotional exhaustion	.304	.000	.323	.305	.301
2	Competencies for teaching and learning	-.129	.020	-.173	-.135	-.127
	Emotional exhaustion	.275	.000	.323	.273	.264
3	Competencies for teaching and learning	-.129	.019	-.173	-.136	-.128
	Attendance at educational programs for teachers	.117	.036	.189	.121	.114
	Emotional exhaustion	.265	.000	.323	.265	.253
4	Competencies for teaching and learning	-.209	.002	-.173	-.179	-.168
	Attendance at educational programs for teachers	.142	.013	.189	.144	.135
	Competence for communication and collaboration	.139	.040	-.023	.119	.111
	Emotional exhaustion	.265	.000	.323	.265	.253

Source: Author

The results of the stepwise regression analysis indicate that 38% of the variability in the non-interventionist style of classroom management is explained by the influence of variables: emotional exhaustion, teaching and learning competence, attendance at educational programs, and competence in communication and collaboration.

4. DISCUSSIONS

The research indicates that for teachers at the beginning of their careers, one of the greatest challenges in effective teaching is classroom management (Fideler & Haskelhorn, 1999, as cited in Eisenman, Edwards & Cushman, 2015). Another challenge in effective teaching is the students' desire for personal and affective relationships with the teacher. To fulfil this need, teachers should show interest in the personality and activities of students beyond the school context (Ridley & Valther, 1995, as cited in Franklin & Harrington, 2019). This highlights the importance of teachers' empathy in creating a classroom atmosphere that contributes to making students feel comfortable, free, accepted, involved, respected, and understood (Bjekić, 2000; Miljenović and Opsenica, 2019).

The study shows that, among all the variables examined, empathy is the most significant predictor of two classroom management styles – interactionist and interventionist. There is a difference in that teachers dominated by the interventionist style are more prone to experiencing and reacting to negative emotions, while teachers inclined towards the interactionist style are more prone to experiencing positive emotions. This could significantly impact the overall classroom climate and students' attitudes towards the subject the teacher is teaching.

Research has shown that a negative classroom climate emotionally drains teachers and leads to negative attitudes towards students and the job (Ozdemir, 2007). If a teacher is exposed to excessive stress, there is a risk of burnout syndrome, which diminishes the quality of teaching in two ways: by reducing job satisfaction, affecting the time and effort invested in teaching, and by decreasing the quality of communication with students (Smailović et al., 2014). Also, burnout is essential to study in an educational context as it is ultimately considered a precursor to teacher attrition or teacher intentions to leave the field (Bettini, Cumming et al., 2017; Billingsley, 2004; Brunsting et al., 2014; Gersten et al., 2001; Goddard & Goddard, 2006; Martin et al., 2012; Singh & Billingsley, 1996; Weisberg & Sagie, 1999, according to Gilmour&Co, 2022). This can also influence the dominant style of classroom management among teachers. The results of the study indicate that emotional exhaustion, as an indicator of burnout, is characteristic of teachers with a non-interventionist classroom management style.

Students' satisfaction with school is closely related to the competencies of the teachers working with them. Therefore, teaching competencies in the field of educational work have a dual effect on both the quality of students' education and their satisfaction with school. Communication competencies are often highlighted as particularly important (Bjekić and Zlatić, 2012; Zlatić and Bjekić, 2007; Gojkov, 2008; Paser, 2008, according to Djigić, 2017). Communication in teaching is seen as a process through which the teaching goals are achieved. Also, it is identified that classroom management and teacher competencies for learning and teaching are closely related to the process and learning outcomes in schools (Setyaningsih,

Suchyadi, 2021). In this study, competencies for learning and teaching proved to be significant predictors of classroom management, present in all three styles, with the strongest connection to the interactionist style, and a negative relationship with the non-interventionist style. Communication and collaboration competencies were significant predictors for both interventionist and non-interventionist styles, with a negative relationship with the interventionist style, meaning that as these competencies increase, the inclination towards this management style decreases.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research has shown that teachers who have a pronounced tendency to empathize with positive emotions and can listen and help others in problem-solving dominate the most effective classroom management style – the interactionist style. Empathy is a skill that can be learned, and it is important to give it adequate importance at all levels of the education system, with a focus on teacher faculties. Teacher faculties should dedicate more time and content to building the social and emotional skills of future teachers, both through curricula and programs and through enriching extracurricular activities that contribute to the development of empathy.

Teachers dominated by the least effective classroom management style – the non-interventionist style, are at a greater risk of experiencing burnout syndrome. This implies that caring for the mental health of teachers is important because it affects their productivity, which, in turn, influences the overall effectiveness of the teaching process. To reduce the risk of burnout, it is essential to address strategies for coping with stressful situations through both initial education and professional development programs for teachers.

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