Empathetic communication: A new paradigm in classroom management

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Article Info

Abstract

The inspiration for this investigation comes from a new classroom management trend centred around providing students with assistance and guidance to encourage them to be disciplined, to learn, and to participate in class. Within this context, teachers serve as guides and facilitators rather than external controllers of the students' actions. This investigation aims to determine how empathetic communication helps foster more inclusive learning environments and how it influences student behaviour and academic achievement. As a new paradigm in classroom management, compassionate communication is the study's focus. Interviews, observations, and surveys were combined to conduct the study using a mixed-method approach. The Greater Jakarta region's public and private schools, ranging from elementary to vocational levels, provided data collected from 161 respondents and eight teachers. The study results emphasise that teachers who communicate with empathy make students feel more at ease, more willing to share their thoughts, and more inclined to participate actively in class. One of the practical implications is the necessity of teacher training programs that focus on the development of empathetic communication skills to improve classroom management.

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Introduction

Effective classroom management is crucial in determining the success of learning and achieving educational goals. The management of physical space, learning administration, time management, diverse teaching methods, and implementing discipline are key aspects of classroom management. In traditional perspectives, classroom management focused more on teachers' efforts to control students' behaviour to ensure compliance with all teacher instructions.

Over time, research on classroom management has evolved. Experts have reported a shift in thinking about the best classroom management methods. Santrock (2011) argues that classroom management relates to efforts to maximise students' learning opportunities. Classroom management focused on strict compliance with teachers' rules can weaken students' engagement in active and constructive learning (Charles & Senter, 2008). Today, classroom management is more focused on facilitating and guiding students to develop a desire to be disciplined, learn, and participate actively (Kayyali, 2025). Freiberg explains that in this context, teachers serve as guides and facilitators, rather than external controllers of students (Freiberg, 1999; Kauffman et al., 2012).

The definition of classroom management has also developed regarding this shift in thinking. Classroom management is the actions teachers take to create an environment that supports students' academic and social-emotional learning, including building caring relationships, organising teaching, encouraging students' engagement, developing social skills, and using appropriate interventions to address behavioural issues (Gage et al., 2018). Effective classroom management not only includes the physical management of the classroom but also involves psychological and interpersonal aspects that support the learning process (Iskandar et al., 2024). Al Qusaeri and Sunarto (2024) found that intellectual intelligence has no significant effect on classroom management; instead, emotional intelligence and internal control have a significant influence.

Therefore, effective classroom management requires both academic skills, sensitivity to emotional aspects, and the ability to control situations internally. Interventions focusing on students' social-emotional aspects contribute significantly to learning outcomes (Korpershoek et al., 2016). In another study, Sari (2022) emphasised that emotional intelligence and internal control need to be realised in action, particularly through teachers' empathy in teaching. Empathy is believed to enhance a more humanistic and inclusive approach to learning, which is relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia. Regarding the importance of empathy, UNESCO has even published the Teacher's Guide to Learning Empathy, which integrates empathy into various subjects (UNESCO, 2020).

Fitriani et al. (2022) study among PGSD students at UPI Cibiru highlighted that effective classroom management improves learning motivation by creating a conducive emotional atmosphere. They emphasised that classroom management involves strategic efforts by teachers to build an efficient and supportive learning environment. On the other hand, empathy is a soft skill that needs to be trained and developed. The importance of empathy in education is further emphasised through the integration of design thinking into project-based learning and classroom culture. Hashim et al (2022) argue that empathy-as the ability to understand others' needs and perspectives- encourages social innovation, enhances communication, and improves decision-making. By implementing design thinking, students are trained to create user-centred solutions while nurturing collaborative relationships within the classroom. This aligns with the present study's focus on fostering empathy through intentional social interactions and activities that build sensitivity towards others, ultimately strengthening students' character and moral development.

The most strategic channel for demonstrating, instilling, and strengthening empathy is communication. Although not widely recognised, empathetic communication is a new term in educational terminology that is being promoted on a larger scale. This also indicates that education cannot stand alone; it is connected to other fields of science, such as communication and psychology. Various research findings have proven that teachers' empathy is closely related to the success of classroom management. The higher the level of empathy, the better the classroom control conducted by teachers (Souderjani et al., 2022). Empathy also influences students' performance, as higher teachers' emotional intelligence aligns with better classroom management quality and improves student performance (Kanbour & Kirikkaleli, 2023; Bozkurt & Ozden, 2010).

Aligned with new trends in classroom management, empathetic communication is proposed as an innovation to create a pleasant, warm, respectful, open, caring, and actively

engaging learning environment. Patel (2023) explores the importance of applying empathetic and dialogic interactions in relational pedagogy within learning environments that support social connectivity between teachers and students. Several previous studies related to classroom management have focused on improving academic achievement through classroom management strategies, increasing learning motivation through classroom management strategies, participatory classroom management to enhance the quality of learning, as well as classroom management as an effort to strengthen character (Masfufah et al., 2023; Pujiman et al., 2021; Azizah & Usman, 2023; Permatasari et al., 2023). Therefore, empathetic communication is introduced in this study as a novelty, offering a new paradigm in classroom management.

Empathetic communication serves as a bridge between teachers and students. A close relationship between teachers and students fosters a sense of safety and comfort in their interactions, which in turn contributes to the reinforcement of students' character (Cendanu & Bramasta, 2023). This aligns with one of the core elements of Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn), which aims to cultivate students who are intelligent, trustworthy, honest, and responsible and who embody the values of *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (Kemendikbudristek, 2024). Classroom-based character education is implemented through interactions between teachers and students within the classroom, as well as through the strategies employed by teachers to integrate character values into the learning process, particularly through the selection of teaching methodologies, classroom management, and learning evaluation (Sulistyarini & Dewantara, 2020).

Creating a secure and comfortable environment also indicates strong pedagogical competence, which is essential for achieving learning objectives (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). This is because pedagogical competence encompasses a teacher's mastery of educational insights, understanding of student development, curriculum and syllabus design, implementing educational and dialogical learning, developing student potential, and evaluating student learning outcomes (Larasati & Gafur, 2018).

Based on the above concepts, empathetic communication should become a new paradigm in classroom management, creating a learning atmosphere that is enjoyable, warm, caring, respectful, and actively engaging for students. This new perspective offers the innovation that empathetic communication is a skill that all teachers should possess. The purpose of this study is to elaborate and analyse how empathetic communication is practised by teachers, as confirmed through students' perspectives, and it is expected to become new knowledge that further strengthens classroom management.

Method

The subjects of this study are individuals and their communication practices. Human awareness, actively based on their experiences, forms the foundation of all qualitative research related to practices and behaviours that shape reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). A qualitative approach was chosen to examine how to construct and give meaning to each informant's perspective on empathic communication and classroom management. However, since this study also incorporates quantitative elements, a mixed-methods approach was applied, integrating survey data to support qualitative insights.

The main subjects of this study are individuals; therefore, their privacy is protected by using initials and not mentioning the names of the schools. Participants in this study are teachers and students selected based on representation from all educational levels, including elementary (SD), junior high (SMP), senior high (SMA), and vocational schools (SMK), both public and private institutions. To ensure a diverse range of experiences, participants were selected to include both veteran and early-career teachers. Respondents were chosen through random sampling.

1. All subjects and data collection information are consolidated in this section to ensure clarity and avoid redundancy. This study employs multiple data collection methods:
2. A survey involving 161 students from various schools in Greater Jakarta aimed to understand their perspectives on teacher empathy.

3. Observations were carried out in several schools to validate the survey findings.
4. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight teachers to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions; and
5. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held to explore collective perspectives and challenges regarding empathetic communication.

The research process followed a structured sequence to ensure clarity and coherence. It started with the survey, followed by classroom observations for validation, then teacher interviews for deeper exploration, and concluded with FGDs for broader contextualization. The survey consisted of 14 Likert-scale questions assessing students' perceptions of teacher empathy and classroom management. After analysing the survey responses, classroom observations were conducted to check for consistency between students' perceptions and actual interaction in class. Teacher interviews were then conducted to provide additional depth, before ending with FGDs to capture a more collective understanding of the issue.

This study has several limitations. Since the number of participants is relatively small, the findings are not meant to be generalised but rather to provide a focused insight into the topic. Moreover, classroom observations were not conducted in all participating schools but were limited to two locations.

The final analysis stage followed an interactive model consisting of data collection, display, reduction, and conclusion drawing. Pawito (2007) noted that survey findings were cross-checked with interview and observation data and further reinforced through a literature review. Denzin & Lincoln (2009) is referenced only once for readability and citation efficiency at the start of this section.

Ultimately, the findings of this study offer valuable insights for educators, particularly in classroom management, by presenting new perspectives on fostering a more engaging and structured learning environment.

Results and Discussion
Results
Students' Perspectives on Teacher Empathy

A Likert scale survey was conducted to gather students' opinions regarding teacher empathy. The survey involved 161 respondents, with the results as follows:

Table 1.

Survey Results of 161 Respondents

Num	Aspects	Percentages
1	The teacher listens attentively	43,8
2	The teacher shows respect for students	43,2
3	The teacher values students' feelings and experiences	42,6
4	The teacher uses positive language to encourage and motivate students	48,8
5	The teacher avoids negative language (criticism, threats, ridicule)	43,2
6	The teacher shows empathy to students experiencing difficulties	48,1
7	The teacher assists students in solving their problems	32,7
8	The teacher creates a safe and comfortable learning environment	56,8
9	The teacher encourages students to express their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment	53,1
10	The teacher's attitude makes students feel valued	42
11	The teacher shows enthusiasm while teaching	38,3
12	The teacher is flexible and adaptable to individual needs	30,9
13	The teacher is open to receiving feedback and suggestions about teaching	46,3
14	The teacher collaborates with parents/guardians to support students	46,3

Source: Obtained from Primary Data, 2025.

Overall, students indicated that teachers are beginning to demonstrate empathetic behaviour towards them. Although the efforts are not yet optimal, teachers have made noticeable attempts. Teachers listen when students speak, are flexible, use positive language, are open to criticism, and collaborate with parents. The highest aspect of teacher empathy

reported is that teachers create a safe and comfortable learning environment and encourage students to voice their opinions without fear of being judged.

Teachers' Perspectives on Teacher Empathy

Empathy is a term in psychology that has increasingly gained recognition in human relationships. Empathy fosters a humane, inclusive, caring, and respectful environment. The following are the interview results from 8 teacher informants.

Table 2.

Interview Results with 8 Educators

Name	Ways to Demonstrate Empathy	Challenges in Applying Empathy	Self-Development	Impact of Empathy on Classroom Management
HP	Understanding students, softening language, positioning oneself as equal	Choosing appropriate words for elementary students	Has not participated in empathy training	Does not immediately impact, but leads to increased familiarity, comfort, and openness
NM	Treating students according to their needs	Choosing words and sometimes being carried away by emotions	Has not participated in empathy training	Observed changes, students are more caring, and the quality of learning improves
RS	Personalized approach to students according to their needs	Group dynamics in the classroom	Has participated in training	After applying empathy, students became more open and easier to manage, showing increased mutual care
AM	Understanding or sensing what others are experiencing, showing concern, and developing listening habits	Time constraints and parental background	Has participated in empathy training	Strong correlation: students are more aware and caring towards each other
LH	Understanding students, communicating heart-to-heart with three principles: greeting, paying attention, and valuing	Choosing language suitable for different generations	Has participated in empathy training	Empathy makes students feel safe and comfortable and more interested in learning
YC	Sharing and understanding students' needs through questions or direct actions	Time constraints	Has not participated in empathy training	Highly assists in creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment
YP	Ability to share in what students are feeling	Different life experiences	Has not participated in empathy training	Strong correlation: students become more appreciative of the teacher and attentive, resulting in a more conducive classroom
LN	Understanding students' situations	Different life experiences	Has not participated in empathy training	The classroom becomes more engaging, and lessons are more anticipated by students

Source: Obtained from Primary Data, 2025.

The interview findings with eight educators, as outlined in Table 2, offer significant insights into the manifestation of empathy in the classroom, the obstacles educators encounter in implementing empathy, the importance of self-development, and the influence of empathy on classroom management.

The instructors in the table presented diverse ways of exhibiting empathy. A prevalent method involved comprehending the requirements and circumstances of students, as evidenced by the comments from HP, NM, RS, and others. Educators like HP and YC advocated using softened language or direct communication with pupils to meet their emotional and academic requirements effectively. Several educators emphasised the significance of personalised methodologies, wherein the educator tailors their techniques to each student's distinct requirements and backgrounds, exemplified by RS's and AM's individualised strategies. This diversity of tactics underscores the necessity for adaptability in empathic behaviours, enabling educators to modify their conduct to cultivate healthy relationships with their pupils.

Notwithstanding the favourable objectives, implementing empathy in the classroom has specific problems. A persistent topic was the challenge of selecting the correct words or suitable language while engaging with kids, particularly younger children. HP and NM acknowledged the difficulty of selecting appropriate language for various age demographics or during emotionally charged situations. Moreover, multiple educators (AM, YC, and LH) indicated time restrictions, implying that teachers frequently find it challenging to reconcile their workload with the emotional assistance required for students. Another problem educators such as NM and YP emphasised was navigating varied life experiences, which can occasionally hinder the capacity to engage with pupils on a profound level, particularly when the teacher's experiences markedly diverge from those of their students.

Empathy training for self-development significantly affects the use of empathy in educational settings. Significantly, three of the eight educators indicated their participation in empathy training (RS, AM, and LH), suggesting that formal empathy training can augment instructors' capacity to execute empathic practices effectively. These educators indicated improved results regarding classroom management and student involvement. Conversely, instructors lacking formal training appeared to depend more on their personal experiences and instinctive reactions to exhibit empathy, achieving inconsistent results. This indicates that although personal instincts contribute, systematic empathy training could enhance the uniformity and efficacy of sympathetic conduct in education.

Responses concerning the influence of empathy on classroom management were diverse; however, several educators indicated favourable results. RS observed that implementing empathy made pupils more receptive and manageable, indicating that empathy fosters a more favourable classroom atmosphere. AM and YP noted that pupils exhibited increased compassion and attentiveness, fostering a favourable learning atmosphere. Educators like LH underscored that empathy fosters a sense of safety and comfort, augmenting students' engagement in learning. This underscores that empathy enhances relationships between instructors and students while promoting a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment, facilitating effective classroom management for educators.

The Impact of Empathetic Communication on Classroom Management

In the context of communication, empathy falls into the category of nonverbal cues. Its presence is reflected in how teachers communicate, choose their words, treat students, and use body language. The opinions of 161 respondents regarding how teachers interact with students and their implications for feelings and classroom atmosphere largely depend on what is observed and experienced. Respondents who agreed that their teachers were empathetic acknowledged that this correlated with the classroom atmosphere and how students perceive learning.

Conversely, teachers noted that empathy is related to acknowledging students' feelings, providing a sense of security and comfort, and fostering mutual openness and care. Teachers reported that students became more compliant and easier to manage after implementing empathy in teaching activities. These findings imply that empathetic communication represents a new paradigm in classroom management. Classroom management focusing on strict teacher rules and passive compliance may weaken student engagement in active and constructive learning (Charles & Senter, 2008). Strengthening empathy communication skills among teachers is therefore essential.

The results of this study provide new insights and address gaps regarding creating effective classroom management. The study's findings contribute to classroom management by demonstrating that empathetic communication is the best way to engage students actively, humanely, and inclusively. Additionally, this research fills gaps in previous studies regarding how to engage students and address complaints.

Discussion

Empathetic communication Enhances Engagement and creates an Inclusive Learning Environment.

This study shows that the empathetic communication practised by teachers significantly impacts creating a conducive classroom environment that is aware, safe, and open. These findings are consistent with research conducted by Souderjani et al. (2022), which indicates that higher levels of empathy in teachers correlate with increased student comfort in the classroom, thereby enhancing learning motivation. Empathetic communication by teachers is linked to understanding students and determining appropriate actions during the learning process. This is related to how teachers manage their own emotional responses. From the focus group discussions (FGD) conducted, teachers noted that a conducive classroom environment is directly impacted by increased enthusiasm for learning when empathetic communication is employed. Some teachers mentioned in the FGD that their classrooms had become more inclusive because students no longer feared being open and participating in the learning process.

When teachers understand their students, a comfortable learning environment is created. Souderjani et al. (2022) state that teachers' empathetic behaviours include emotional attention and affective problem-solving. Bozkurt and Ozden (2010) assert that teachers with high emotional intelligence foster more effective classroom management. Interpersonally, these results demonstrate effectiveness marked by openness, mutual support, positive attitudes, understanding others' feelings and conditions, and equality (Alvanco, 2022). In this study, all respondents involved in the focus group discussions (FGD) indicated that one way to show empathy towards students is by trying to understand them. This effort aims to create learning experiences tailored to students' needs. When students feel their needs are well accommodated, they no longer fear being open and strive to exhibit positive attitudes in learning. This finding aligns with a survey conducted among students, where 53.1% reported no longer feeling afraid to express their ideas or opinions.

Empathetic communication implemented by teachers in the classroom also positively impacts student learning outcomes. Emphatic communication by teachers is crucial for creating supportive and engaging learning environments. It positively impacts students' mental health, emotional engagement, trust, academic achievement, and overall well-being, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes across various educational contexts (Wang & Kang, 2023).

Empathetic communication can be elucidated through various principal theories in education and psychology. Goleman's (2006) notion of emotional intelligence is particularly pertinent for comprehending how educators regulate their emotions and react to pupils' emotional states. Goleman asserts that emotional intelligence encompasses the capacity to identify and regulate one's own emotions, in addition to comprehending and addressing the emotions of others. In this context, educators who employ empathy in the classroom, as RS and AM do, can comprehend students' emotional needs and modify their approach according to their social and emotional circumstances.

The difficulties encountered by educators like NM in selecting appropriate language demonstrate that regulating emotions, both personal and those of their students, is essential for effective empathic communication. Erikson's (1963) theory of social-emotional development offers a significant perspective on the importance of empathy in teacher-student relationships.

Erikson posits that developing identity and robust social interactions commences with establishing trust, self-respect, and respect for others. Educators who employ empathy, such as AM and RS, foster a secure environment for students to cultivate their trust and social identity,

facilitating academic and social development. This illustrates how empathy fosters pupils' psychological growth by establishing mutually respected connections.

In his theory of social constructivism, Vygotsky (1978) underscores the significance of social contact in the learning process. Vygotsky posits that the zone of proximal growth is established when pupils have assistance from others, either educators or peers, in confronting learning obstacles. This is intricately connected to the sympathetic communication employed by educators like HP and YC, fostering an inclusive environment for student dialogue and interaction. Consequently, empathy enhances interpersonal relationships and facilitates possibilities for students to learn and thrive in a nurturing setting.

Rogers' (1969) humanistic educational approach underscores the significance of empathy in fostering an effective learning environment. Rogers contends that the rapport between educators and learners must be founded on reciprocal respect and transparency, as seen by implementing empathetic communication. Methods employed by LH, which incorporate the concepts of respect and attentiveness, foster an environment conducive to learning, wherein pupils perceive themselves as secure and esteemed. This technique fosters a sense of acceptance among students, simultaneously enhancing their willingness to engage in learning, thus illustrating the strong correlation between empathy and learning motivation.

Bandura's (1986) social learning theory elucidates how empathic communication in education might affect student conduct. Bandura posits that individuals acquire knowledge by witnessing the actions of others, particularly those in positions of authority, such as educators. Educators who demonstrate empathy in their interactions work as social models for students, enhancing their comprehension of good relationships and the significance of social ideals. RS noted that with the implementation of empathy, pupils exhibited increased openness and manageability, suggesting that kids acquire knowledge not only from the curriculum but also through the behavioural exemplars established by their educators. The implication is that teacher empathy enhances the classroom climate and contributes to long-term academic achievement.

Empathetic Communication and Classroom Management

In the context of this study, the informants generally stated that while empathetic communication does not directly influence classroom management, its impact is highly significant. Empathetic communication practised by teachers in the classroom also positively impacts students' learning outcomes. In the context of this study, informants generally stated that while empathetic communication does not directly affect classroom management, it is "felt" in a more intangible way. Other informants noted that empathetic communication contributes to higher-quality learning processes, enhanced collaboration, and warmer, more open levels of student trust. This is supported by 56.8% of students who reported that teachers have created a safe and comfortable learning environment for all. This finding is consistent with Bozkurt and Ozden's (2010) research, which indicates that self-awareness and empathy correlate with effective classroom management.

Similarly, Souderjani et al. (2022) found that student performance improves when teachers use empathetic communication. Bozkurt and Ozden (2010) also observed that a more positive learning environment improves student performance due to empathetic communication (Bozkurt & Ozden, 2010). This demonstrates that implementing empathetic communication not only aids in classroom management but also enhances students' active engagement and participation. Another important implication is that teachers who demonstrate empathy can foster a more humanistic and inclusive learning environment, in line with Indonesia's independent curriculum principles.

This study also resonates with the findings of Hagermoser-Sanetti et al. (2018), who emphasised that consistent implementation planning and participant modelling significantly improve teachers' classroom management practices while reducing disruptive student behaviour. Their research underscores the need for ongoing support in applying effective management strategies to maintain classroom order and enhance learning outcomes. Combined with structured implementation efforts, these insights reinforce the idea that

empathetic communication contributes to a more well-managed and inclusive learning environment. Kayravici (2020) further emphasised that while communication skills positively influence classroom management, integrating these skills with problem-solving abilities enhances the overall effectiveness. Empathetic problem-solving helps teachers respond constructively to student behaviours, resolve conflicts, and create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Empathy fosters student engagement and is assumed to encourage social innovation, strengthen communication, and enhance decision-making, while reinforcing social relationships and a collaborative classroom culture (Hashim et al., 2022). This article aligns with the focus of this study, which highlights the development of empathy as a crucial skill in education, particularly through social interactions and activities designed to enhance sensitivity to the needs and perspectives of others, thereby promoting character building and moral development in an educational setting.

According to Kavrayici (2020), empathetic communication is a foundation for problem-solving skills, enabling teachers to manage conflicts more effectively, understand students' needs, and create a more inclusive and conducive learning environment. When combined with empathetic communication, effective classroom management enhances teacher-student interactions, supports more effective learning experiences, and provides a space for students to maximise their potential (Purwani & Astuti, 2023).

Open, honest, and empathetic verbal communication allows individuals to express their emotions, needs, and perspectives more effectively, fostering trust and deeper understanding. This is particularly relevant in educational settings, where an open and empathetic communication approach can create a more positive learning environment and strengthen interactions that support students' personal and academic growth (Harahap, 2024).

Empathetic communication is essential in the research context (Jakarta-Bogor-Tangerang-Bekasi) due to the diverse student population. It enhances emotional and cognitive connections, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms. Empathy in the classroom strengthens teacher-student and peer relationships, reducing prejudice, discrimination, and social exclusion by fostering prosocial behaviour. In this context, teachers are expected to possess high educational sensitivity and implement empathetic pedagogical approaches to create an inclusive learning atmosphere that supports students' emotional development.

The relevance of this article lies in its emphasis on effective communication as a key element in establishing positive interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Empathetic, open, and understanding interactions contribute to a conducive classroom climate, strengthening teacher-student relationships and facilitating more effective learning processes.

Based on the findings of this study, several limitations should be noted. First, the limited number of informants and respondents prevents broad generalisation of the results. Second, observations were not conducted across all school locations but were limited to only two schools. Despite these limitations, the qualitative approach used in this research captures events in their natural context, providing a more holistic view of the occurrences. This approach aims to reveal events or issues in a more structured manner (Tracy, 2024).

An unexpected finding in this study is that, despite the generally positive perception of teacher empathy, some teachers experience difficulties implementing empathy due to challenges such as time constraints and diverse student backgrounds. Additionally, generational differences pose another challenge, requiring teachers to carefully choose appropriate language and expressions to ensure optimal understanding of the learning content by students. These challenges arise from differences in life experiences and personal development among teachers. Some teachers also noted that they could still create a supportive learning environment despite not participating in formal empathy training. This indicates that formal training is not the only method for developing empathy, and factors such as experience and personal awareness also play a significant role.

In addition, the critical role of teachers' communication strategies in managing classroom behaviour effectively is highlighted. Their study found that many pre-service teachers rely on

authoritative approaches due to a lack of practical training, highlighting the need for more application-based learning during teacher education programs. These findings align with this study, which underlines the importance of equipping teachers with communication skills that support classroom management, student autonomy, and well-being (Karasova & Kleckova, 2023).

While these factors may present challenges, survey results show that 48.8% of students feel that the language teachers use is positive and capable of building and encouraging students in their learning. This suggests that the communication practices employed by teachers effectively develop students' socio-emotional skills by aligning the learning context with students' backgrounds, thereby fostering their desire to engage academically. Korpershoek et al. (2016) said that effective classroom management is characterised by developing students' socio-emotional skills, which contribute to achieving the designed educational programs. Other research also indicates that empathetic interactions in teaching support social and emotional connections between teachers and students, making students feel more valued and supported in the learning process (Patel, 2023). This is reflected in the survey results, with 42% of students feeling valued and 43.2% noting that teachers respect them.

The main strength of the design and methodology of this study is the use of a qualitative approach, which allows for an in-depth exploration of informants' views and experiences. Tracy (2024) asserts that qualitative approaches help answer questions with profound insights through extensive exploration and capture information missing in surveys or structured experiments. However, a limitation is the small number of informants and the restricted number of observation sites. To improve future studies, it is recommended that the number of respondents be expanded and observations be conducted in more schools to obtain more representative results.

Several questions remain unanswered in this study, such as the most effective and sustainable methods for training empathy in teachers. Further research is needed to explore the use of other variables, such as emotional intelligence and parental involvement in the learning process.

Empathetic communication fosters a learning environment in Civic Education that emphasises understanding, respect, and cooperation. Educators create a space where students feel heard and valued by developing the ability to listen actively. This approach is fundamental for cultivating democratic values. Active listening transcends merely hearing words; focusing on the speaker's emotional undertones and non-verbal cues enhances emotional intelligence and social awareness (Goleman, 2006). This level of attentiveness creates an atmosphere where students engage with each other on a deeper level, enhancing their understanding of diverse perspectives and fostering mutual respect. Empathetic classroom communication is a crucial tool for building democratic citizenship. Students learn to appreciate diversity and contribute positively to society.

In Civic Education, empathy goes beyond understanding others' feelings; it involves recognising the significance of diverse viewpoints in shaping democratic societies. Integrating empathetic practices into classroom activities helps teachers connect students with people from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. Empathising with others' experiences directly enhances critical thinking skills. Students question assumptions, challenge stereotypes, and engage in meaningful dialogue. Moreover, students must develop the capacity for perspective-taking, enabling them to understand the motivations and beliefs of others, even if they do not share them. Empathetic communication strengthens the foundations of democratic education by fostering open-mindedness and reducing prejudices (Arnett, 2018).

Active listening and empathetic communication promote empathy and create community within the classroom. Teachers and students who listen to each other create a culture of mutual respect and trust. This encourages students to participate more freely in discussions, share their thoughts without fear of judgment, and collaborate with others to solve complex social and civic issues. Establishing a safe space for these interactions ensures students can express themselves and engage in reflective and critical thinking. Teachers encourage students to

internalise the values of social justice and equality, which form the foundation of democratic education principles (Noddings, 2013).

Additionally, using empathetic communication practices in the classroom significantly influences students' personal and academic growth. Empathetic interactions help students develop prosocial behaviours like cooperation, conflict resolution, and a commitment to fairness. These skills apply directly to real-world situations where individuals from diverse backgrounds collaborate towards common goals. Empathetic communication is crucial in Civic Education, extending beyond the classroom, influences students' community behaviours, and contributes to the broader goal of nurturing responsible and engaged citizens.

Conclusion

This study reveals that empathetic communication is crucial in creating effective classroom management. Using a mixed methods approach, the research demonstrates that teachers who apply empathy in their interactions with students can establish a more positive and conducive learning environment. Students who feel heard and valued exhibit higher learning motivation and more active engagement in the classroom. The findings of this study also underscore that classroom management focused on empathy and positive communication not only enhances the classroom atmosphere but also influences students' attitudes and behaviours overall. This research proposes empathetic communication as a new paradigm in classroom management, replacing the older approaches more oriented toward control and strict discipline.

Although this study involves a limited sample and includes only a few schools, its findings provide valuable insights into the importance of empathy in teaching and classroom management. As identified in this study, the development of empathetic communication skills needs to be an integral part of professional training for teachers. This is expected to improve classroom management practices, support better learning outcomes, and foster a new, more humanistic and inclusive paradigm in education.

The implications of this study point to the urgency of shifting classroom culture from one based on authority to one grounded in emotional understanding. Empathetic communication improves teacher-student relationships and aligns with broader educational goals such as equity, inclusion, and student well-being. Therefore, it is recommended that schools and policymakers develop continuous, practical training programs to strengthen empathetic communication skills in educators. These programs should be embedded in pre-service and in-service teacher development to ensure long-term impact and sustainable change.

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