

## DEVELOPED EMPATHETIC CAPACITIES AS A PREREQUISITE FOR QUALITY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

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### Abstract

*The specific issue of the quality of educational process requires a quality school environment, which can be observed at several levels: first of all, through quality interpersonal relationships, and then through quality curricula and syllabi and the ecology of the school environment (Relja, 2006). A quality school atmosphere is based not only on a humane/altruistic approach to students but also on the satisfied teacher, who is characterised by a number of positive qualities, as well as on the equally satisfied student, who cultivates positive feelings towards the authority of their teachers, towards the school itself, and towards the educational process in general. Good quality relationships between people are based on empathy, which is an ability to relate to the feelings of other people. It is via empathy that the te-*

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*acher, however briefly, puts on their students' shoes and thereby feels the same emotions, which is what actually allows them to truly understand their students' feelings, actions, and problems and to respond positively to them. In doing so, they show a full understanding of their needs directed towards the well-being of students. Empathy includes both cognitive and emotional components and, therefore, in the process of empathising, knowledge and emotions interact. As most authors consider it to be a regulator of different forms of behaviour, especially within the context of altruistic behaviour (Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, and Birch, 1981), empathy represents very important kind of motivation for altruism, given the degree of emotional unity established, which is a prerequisite for effective and sincere interaction between people and an initiator of a close understanding of another person's emotional world.*

**Key words:** *empathy, altruism, teachers, students, school environment.*

### **Empathy is innate – empathy as part of social neuroscience**

One of the most important findings that contributes to understanding the neural dynamics of human relationships, as well as to understanding empathy both as a mental structure, that is, characteristics of every person, and as an important motive for their behaviour aimed at the welfare of another person is that the co-called mirror neurons feel both the movement that the other person is about to make and their feelings, at the same time preparing us to mimic the movement and to feel at the same time with that person". (Goleman, 2007: 17). Therefore, since we can see a person in need of support, care, or help, our mirror neurons are activated and empathy occurs. The more a person or a teacher emphasises, the more they will want to support and help the other/a student, or, in other words, the more active the systems of mirror neurons, the stronger the empathy. Accordingly, Kohut (1981), by means of his own thoughts and feelings, also sees empathy as immersion into the internal life of another person (Kohut, 1981, according to Gregurek, 2011). Similarly, Vuković and Bošnjaković (2016) perceive empathy as an ability of understanding the situation in which a person is, as

well as understanding his/her internal state. Kozarić-Kovačić and Francisković 2014 (according to Vuković & Bošnjaković 2016) see empathy in a similar way, whereby the ability to understand the states of others contributes at the same time to understanding of one's own identity.

Goleman (2007) says that different research on both humans and animals suggest the existence of a common impulse, the impulse to react to someone else's trouble/suffering, which provokes similar feelings in a person who is observing another person (eg. teacher – student), prompting them to provide assistance. The examination of the neural structure area points to the existence of common characteristic areas in the brains of both people and mammals (especially primates), while similar structures do not exist in amphibians, and they often eat their offspring.

Goleman (2007) mentions some experiments with animals and babies. A group of monkeys draw chains in order to get food, inflicting a painful shock to one of them. After they realise it, most of them stop and starve themselves. Babies react in the same manner to other babies' crying, while they rarely react to listening to their own crying when recorded, and already in the 14th month they try to mitigate the suffering of another baby. As an exchange of feelings accompanies every encounter between people, feelings 'can be transferred' from one person to another, regardless of what kind of relationship they have established. The emotional aspect which is perceived is processed below the threshold of consciousness, and this non-conscious feedback signals a particular emotion by preparing the very same feeling. Such a transfer, the transfer of emotions, can affect one person but also more people at the same time and then, '...it is an *emotional infection*, which spreads fast below the threshold of the conscious, automatically and effortlessly'. For example, if we see someone who shows fear (even by the way they hold and move their body), our brain will activate the system of the fear 'circuit' and so on.

Another important finding for understanding empathy underlies Batson's theory of Empathy-Altruism (Aronson, Wilson, and Akert, 2006; Goleman, 2007) is that neural networks for perception and action share a common code in the language of the brain, and that code at the very same moment both prepares a person and spurs them to an appropriate action, that is, it signals to the motor area in the brain where reactions are prepared to form

an appropriate action. Therefore, along with the current emotional contagion, there may occur ready-made (instant) reactions, which are valid for every emotion that caused a reaction (Goleman, 2007: 66). It is concluded that in addition to spreading contagious feelings, the state of emotional contagion provokes in the observer – the teacher and then later the student – an (more or less intense) emotional state equal to that of the other person, and automatically prepares the brain for an appropriate action. The rapid transition from empathy to action indicates the existence of a system of circuits intended specifically for that purpose. This is the so-called model of empathy which is based on common coding of perception and the action itself, which leads to a situation in which certain neural circuits are activated without conscious controls, and it is them that urge the observer into action (Preston and de Waal 2002b, de Waal 2008).

**Empathy is acquired - confident parents create confident  
and empathic children, and confident teachers  
respond empathetically**

As a child's brain is programmed to grow fastest in the first years of life, but is also the last organ that reaches biological maturity, it is the major figures in the early period of a child's development (particularly parents, educators and teachers, other people from their close environment and so on), through the creation of and participating in their emotional world,, significantly affect and stimulate the growth of its neurons. In 1944, British scientist John Bowlby, in his article entitled 'Forty-Four Juvenile Thieves: Their Character and Home-Life', defines and later develops a very complex theory of attachment, according to which he identifies the key ingredient of a child's empathy and their later overall well-being. If parents treat children in this way (empathetic and benevolent) and provide empathetic and benevolent responses to their needs, they build a basic sense of security, or as Bowlby puts it: *a secure base conditioned by an adequate bond between parents and their children*. To establish this kind of parent – child connection, it is important that the mother/father properly recognises the needs of a child

and is responsible for them. Since babies, from the very birth, are active communicators, the functioning of this connection (loop) is necessary, and it functions equally in both directions (e.g. a baby's emotions direct the mother's actions, and vice versa), although Bowlby (1944) believes that in the early childhood the dominance in this relationship should be in the favour of a child. In their first years of life, by means of and within the framework of this relationship, a child will establish one of the patterns of emotional attachment: secure, anxious, or avoidant, a pattern which later repeats itself in their relationships with others and indicates the level of their openness and willingness to understand and accept others, to establish relationships with others, which shapes their behaviour towards them. The following are general characteristics of people in relation to the respective pattern they belong to: the *confident category* includes people who easily achieve closeness with others, and who primarily see themselves as people worthy of attention, care, and affection of others. In addition, they see others as people worthy of care as well, accessible and reliable, and they do not feel uncomfortable if they are dependent on others. With regard to the *anxious category*, it includes people characterised by emotional dependence and excessive self-criticism and worry, who have a constant fear of dissatisfaction and abandonment. Furthermore, they see themselves as people who are not worthy of attention, love, and care, and who cannot establish a valuable relationship due to excessive shyness, hyper-anxiety, and even importunity. Finally, the *avoidant category* consists of people who feel uncomfortable with emotional intimacy and who find it difficult to share confidence and feelings with another person. Similarly, they do not feel comfortable in dealing with people due to the repression of their own feelings and constant anxiety, especially if someone tries to approach them. On top of it, they see others as emotionally instable.

The opinion of Batson (2011; 2017) is that the altruistic impulse itself stems from empathy and that the aforementioned attachment patterns strongly influence it (whether they encourage, weaken, or suppress it). Thus, a more general classification is provided which groups people into two categories: people who are altruistic and those who are not, that is, confident and empathic people as opposed to anxious and avoidant people. On the

other hand, an increase in the empathy level increases the quality of relationships among persons (Milivojević, 2015).

Therefore, synchronised parental care is of crucial importance for the establishment of these patterns. What is needed is interactions with which babies will be satisfied, and if parents fail in this respect, a child is in serious danger of growing up to develop dysfunctional forms of attachment (those children who are treated with empathy will probably become confident and empathetic themselves, while anxious parents bring up anxious children, with avoidant parents bringing up children who avoid everything and shy away from both emotions and other people) (Goleman, 2007: 162-164). Moments of synchronised care 'strengthen' the secure base and are characterised by intimacy, respect, and emotional attachment (Goleman, 2007), which depressed mothers do not show; they are often poorly coordinated in terms of time, obtrusive, sad, or angry; some even create a physical gap between themselves and their children (they do not touch them, do not cuddle them, and, later on, they rarely talk to them) and so on. It is important that encouraging such positive forms of behaviour does not mean that a child should be isolated from the world and thus deprived of all the emotions they will inevitably face later in life, starting from the firm belief that a child should be protected. A child should, in fact, be allowed to face the variety of negative emotions that inevitably accompany his or her growing up, for which they need to be emotionally prepared.

The form of affective attachment in confident people is the most adequate one in terms of empathy, that is, these people are able to rapidly empathise with the internal state of another person, such as their feeling of anxiety, and are immediately ready to provide support and help. For anxious people, diverting focus onto others is difficult, and even if it happens, there occur contagious anxiety and agitation, due to their excessive sensitivity. When they empathise with others, their feelings are often amplified to what is termed as *empathy distress*, or the inability of empathy due to the load and fatigue in emotions – 'compassion fatigue'. To avoidant people, compassion is very hard, since they protect themselves from painful feelings by suppressing them. They shut themselves off before *emotional contagion* (the transfer of emotions from one person onto another) and have low empathy, and thus very rarely provide support and assistance to another person. If

they do in fact provide that support, it is often due to previous calculations of personal gain (Goleman, 2007).

Starting from the attitude of Kond (2017) that empathy is based on love for a human being, in this case love to children/students, and that it contributes to strong bonds among people, the conclusion is that in order to foster quality relationships between teachers and students within the educational process, providing care and support is fully realised if the teacher properly understands the emotions involved (both their own and those of others), but also feels safe because they have previously built a stable emotional foundation that will provide them with support, so as not to be overcome and inundated by empathy. The sense that we ourselves are sure of our emotional capacities – that we are cared for – allows us to freely and fully care for our students/others.

### **Empathy is encouraged and learned**

Parents are important partners in the structuring of the inner world of a child, important teachers in the framework of their reasoning, while that role is later equally shared with teachers in schools. They will continue with the aforementioned, as well as develop empathic ability in children through learning by participation, through cooperative learning, and so on (Staub, 1997). For example, induction is a form of reasoning which significantly affects the overall development of care and support on the basis of explanation and pointing out the consequences of a response, pointing out also the understanding of the internal conditions of the other and further developing the understanding that actions can be taken to achieve someone's well-being. Positive induction points out positive consequences, those that can contribute to the benefit of another person, which certainly has a positive influence on the quality of interpersonal relationships within a child's school environment.

Furthermore, the school, as an important environment in the educational process incorporating a series of interpersonal relationships, features other forms of learning and, therefore, through individual and group activities and participation in situations that require compassionate and caring behavi-

our, children are taught to behave in a compassionate way. Models (at the earliest age these are parents and other family members, and later this role is taken by teachers, peers, friends and others respectively) are important for actions and forms of behaviour, empathetic/altruistic behaviour included, and learning occurs on the basis of mimicking their activities (learning by identifying, learning by imitation, and learning by role), who can also make an important contribution to fostering the understanding of the emotional state of another person, as well as of appropriate behaviour. For example, through cooperative learning it is possible to establish positive relationships not only between members of the same group, but also between different groups (be they ethnic, racial, and so on). With regard to that, one of the possible techniques for the development of empathy, which is also important for improving interpersonal relationships and often especially emphasised, is the so-called role-exchange technique, leading to a certain ability to perceive situations and feelings from the perspective of the other.

### **Why do we act towards the benefit of the other after empathy: The *Empathy – Altruism* theory?**

#### *Observing someone who needs help*

For a number of years, literature has referred to Batson's Empathy-Altruism Theory, aimed at researching into the relation between the two. According to the theory, perception of the needs of another person, as well as valuing his/her characteristics as highly as possible, leads to the feeling of empathetic care, which results in an action of support or lack of support, that is, positive action and the decision to eliminate or not eliminate it. In accordance with this hypothesis, numerous research activities show that there is emotional empathy in low to moderate positive relations with altruistic tendencies (Carlo, Randall, 2002; Davis et al., 2018; Eberly-Lewis, Coetzee, 2015).



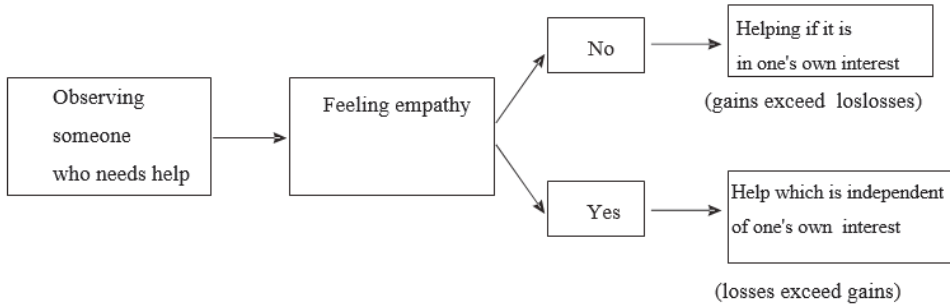


Figure 1. *Batson's Empathy-Altruism Theory (Aronson, Wilson, Akert, 2006: 368)*

According to Figure 1., the first step in providing some form of support and assistance is paying attention by observing the person, which is logically followed by the emergence of empathy. Greater attention contributes to a greater extent recognition and experiencing of the emotions of others, which enables the building of emotional connections, and thus offers greater opportunities for an adequate response for the benefit of the other.

The viewer's empathy with the mental state of the other (Štajnberger, Čolak and Miljković, 2006) is the next step. It has also been found that the strongest empathy occurs if there is immediacy between people, that is, when there is immediacy of the emotional contagion, which, in addition to causing in the observer an appropriate state similar to that of the person in distress, ,’..softens the boundary between the self and the other’ as well (Preston, De Waal, 2002a: 12).

As immediacy is characteristic of essential and high quality relationships between teachers and students, in some situations within the educational process teachers are, for a number of factors, prevented from experiencing empathy or are able to feel only sympathy that Preston and De Waal refer to as ,’... a sense of other people's troubles with little or no communion’ (2002b: 13).

The probability of providing support and assistance increases with the power of the emotional connection, which is characteristic of empathy due to the immediacy of emotional contagion. The aforementioned distance (physical distance, reduced alertness, disinterest, other people, and so on) still do not completely hamper the teacher from experiencing another person's emotional world, and in that case we can talk about the experience of *cognitive*

*empathy* in which: ',... the observer reaches the felt state from a distance through thinking about the other person's troubles.' (Goleman, 2007: 89). Distance certainly weakens the internal impulse of teachers to behave in a caring manner while, due to the immediacy of emotional contagion, the impulse is reinforced.

The subtype of empathy that happens or does not happen quickly and automatically due to a short-term observation of someone's facial expressions or movements is *primal empathy*, and a person who is able to quickly feel appropriate emotions of another person shows an inclination towards it (Goleman, 2007). Scientists believe that this intuitive empathy, 'empathy from the inside', is also activated by mirror neurons and is only possible because of previous observation. The tendency towards this form of empathy is particularly important in a range of interpersonal relationships within the educational process, especially in a series of daily relations between teachers and students, when speaking about events, emotions, and alike ceases, and, apparently, only the cessation of the flow of information occurs. An experienced pedagogical expert knows that sending of information continues via a series of non-verbal codes which are to be identified and responded to adequately. According to the senses which are reserved for reception within communication, codes/symbols can include the following: acoustic – hearing; optical – sight; tactile – the sense of touch, and chemical – the sense of smell. We receive 83% of information via vision, 11% via hearing; 3.5% via the sense of smell and 1.5% via the sense of touch (Maslovarić, Martinović and Blečić, 2014).

The next steps in Batson's Empathy–Altruism Theory indicate the possibility of experiencing or not experiencing empathy, which he further develops in the direction of the theory of social exchange (Goleman, 2007). This theory is guided by the argument that *aiding always stems from self-interest*, and social exchange theorists (Homans, 1961) argue that human behaviour is largely determined by the desire of a person to maximise their gains and minimise their losses. When speaking about losses within the framework of this theory, it means that support and assistance will not occur due to the following: physical danger, pain, inconvenience to a person, or the fact that the activity a person is supposed to take is too time-consuming, while the gains are as follows: rewards; counterservices – norms of recipro-

city as a form of conscious investment (whether these be short-term or long-term), and the expectation that the help will be reciprocated, perhaps even rewarded in the future.

Thus, the variation in the ability to empathise (as an essential personality trait) and many situational factors are just some of the reasons that, in a certain situation, may affect the lack of empathy, but also the lack of attention as its essential requirement in most cases. In addition to these variations in empathetic abilities, whose cause is a pattern of attachment, a possible explanation is successful identification during childhood. Freud believes that an early traumatic experience leads to either insufficient or excessive empathising – the boundaries are either rigid or blurred. (See: Miočinović, Lj. *Kognitivni i reflektivni činioci u moralnom razvoju*, 1988). Furthermore, since we experience constant acceleration of modern life on a daily basis, people become preoccupied or 'overexposed' to a variety of stimuli. There is an additional burden of our own negative feelings as well, caused by ubiquitous stress and daily problems within the environment and society in which we live. Fromm sees personality as a 'product' of the adaptation of human needs and behaviour to the conditions of social life considered as a whole. He, therefore, differentiates between a personal, individual character – as part of the character by which every individual is different from another on the one hand and, on the other hand, a social character that is common to most members of society, whose function is the formation of personalities as members of society, who would act and behave not only towards the best functioning of the society to which they belong (See: Fromm, 1963, pp. 14 – 39), but also towards the best functioning of another person. For more on the influence of the environment and other people within the theory see: *The effect of the number of people*. Many phenomena that make up the concept of such a living environment significantly affect the mood of a person, and often, due to the incidence of the excessive intensity of an emotion, the person becomes powerless in the process of its accurate identification. The person is thus one who responds by a 'mediocre' action, and more often by extreme passivity (More on this in *The positive mood hypothesis* or *The negative-state relief hypotheses*).

In case of the lack of attention, the action would clearly lead to providing support and showing concern only in case of the realisation of one's own interests. No empathy means no emotional commitment, so in such a

case we can speak of a formal relationship with a pronounced interest identified in literature as a relation of social exchange, a characteristic of new acquaintances who who are afraid of equality and who are often brutally rational in their losses to gains calculations. Establishing such an attitude is unacceptable and contrary to the very definition of the teaching profession, and opposed to the desire to nurture an effective school atmosphere and quality educational process in general.

Contrary to Batson's theory, the following possible steps, as a result of experiencing empathy, are also based on the theory of social exchange, but have, in their core, a different relationship between people, followed by acting independently of one's own interests (the act of helping when losses exceed gains). Thus, the relationship between individuals who occupy the respective position of the subject and the object of empathy is strengthened by a type of emotional connection, and it is far from a relationship that is characterised by a concern for equality. Within such a relationship, the sensitivity for others is recognised as the *relationship of communion*, which has the following characteristics: people do not want their services to be reciprocated immediately; people do not feel used if their services are not reciprocated; people do not care about how much each person contributes to the relationship; and, the possibility of helping produces a good mood in a person (Aronson, Wilson, Akert, 2006), while relations of *social exchange* are in stark contrast to the above. It is generally known that relations of *communion* in everyday life are typically found between family members and close friends, and as such should be a model for the everyday human relations within a school environment.

Proximity as a characteristic of positive and quality relations between teachers and students should be cherished in everyday learning and extra-curricular activities so that teachers, as well as other participants in the educational process, could create positive school and out-of-school environment for students, and experience empathy 'freely', if necessary. Emotional sharing, enhanced by physical speed, sober attention, interest, and sensitivity to the needs of other persons/children, are characteristics of good and committed teachers who react to quality relations with children. Thatway, they directly influence children's quality of work and, in general, the quality of their work. If teachers are aware of the importance of existence of such star-

ting grounds as regards relations and interactions with students, it will undoubtedly contribute to an increase in the quality of their practice in the said domain , as well as to a more productive learning environment.

## Conclusion

Inherited traits are not the only determinants of a person's behaviour; it is necessary to take into account many other factors. Therefore, we cannot talk of empathy and altruistic behaviour as physical traits which depend on the presence of a protein in the body or in the brain, encoded in a single gene. If we acknowledge the findings (Tooby, J., Cosmides, L., 2008) that empathic capacities are partly innate and partly acquired in everyday relations with others, we must, in the first place, bear in mind that the atmosphere in which children grow up is crucial for their development and that the period of their upbringing should be given full attention, because, if in their primary environment children do not learn appropriate forms of behaviour, inappropriate ones can spread easily outside the family environment. (More about this in the theory of selection of relatives, theory of reciprocity, theory of learning social norms).

John Bowlby (1980, 1988) points out that differences in the quality of early attachments have long-term implications on later intimate relationships, self-understanding, and mental health or pathology. Securely attached children describe themselves more positively than insecure children, and they are at the same time able to recognise their own shortcomings and imperfections. In addition, they are more competent in evaluating emotions, and they show a better understanding of negative emotions and their consequences. Similarly,, they have a greater capacity for empathy, and they get better evaluation from adults (teachers, expert advisors) in terms of self-esteem, self-confidence, emotional health, and positive affects. The family, therefore, creates and shapes the emotional reality of a child. For this reason, an optimistic claim that parents can develop empathy in children is important as well, providing the parents are, from the very first moment, devoted to their children in the right way and aware that an adequate bringing up and education of a child is their most important and responsible role, one

which lasts for a lifetime. Although parental care cannot 'change' a single gene of a child, it can shape what children experience, which is an indispensable part of their earliest reality, which undoubtedly affects the 'shaping' of their neural circuits, which, in turn, is especially emphasised by the neuroscience.

The ability to experience different emotional states of other people, developed through healthy inter-personal communication and relationships, stems from internal security, that is, from a positive self-image and self-acceptance (Kuburić, 1994). Therefore, the teacher, as an emotionally developed person who is able to properly deal with their own emotional experiences, and who is aware of their emotional stability/security and value, will 'approach' the student's emotional world in the same way. Since the teacher has a 'lot to invest', they will easily spur a positive development in both the teacher and the student, but also significantly affect the quality of their relationship. (Kuburic also states Fromm's observation in which he points out the same attitude when perceiving themselves and others, whereby only a person who believes in himself/herself may be able to understand and support others. The emotional understanding of others is inevitably preceded by the emotional understanding of yourself, including one's own weaknesses which do not cause self-rejection).

From a wider perspective, it is important to point out that every individual, from the very beginning of their life, becomes part of not only a family but also of a wider community that has its own standards of conduct and specific ways of regulating the life of community in general, that is,, its own culture, which is formed and changed during the life of a group. Understandably, it is not desirable to observe the human nature in every situation and at all times as the same and unchanging, and the behaviour patterns of society are not universal personality traits, in the sense that the way people react to various stimuli is not universal either, but they are important to a certain extent. In addition, each individual is also affected by many specific situational factors, all of which can affect their empathic ability as an important aspect of their interpersonal functioning within a school setting or another environment.

Still, when drawing individual conclusions related to the *empathy-altruism theory*, we must bear in mind that ever since 1991, when Daniel

Batson first presented it, this theory has regularly been subject to a number of reviews and verifications, with the greatest proportion of conflicts and debates concerning it being related to the inability to delineate/distinguish/extract the 'real motivation' that people are guided by when performing altruistic actions, that is, whether empathy represents the real concern for another person or whether it represents one's own personal interest and reduction of their own discomfort. This theory has withstood many challenges so far, and it therefore has certain validity. Situations in which one thinks of increasing one's own personal gain only, together with general rough calculations based on the losses to gains ratio in interhuman relations are a reality, and often the criteria on which modern human beings rely concerning their overall actions, but they, by no means, should be seen as the guiding principles of a competent teacher. A crisis of humanity is inevitable if life and interpersonal relationships are viewed as an economic market in which a person deliberately seeks and establishes relationships in order to increase their gains over losses. In such a 'life economy' there would be subjects (parents, teachers, students and alike) who would not be altruistic and who would be incapable of experiencing empathy. Such individuals would easily perform calculations even when it comes to their own emotions, they would be able to give them in calculated doses, thus becoming meaningless 'consumers' of life, which is, by definition, unique and unrepeatable. Furthermore, they would be inadequate and incompetent in all their life and professional commitments. More specifically, if teachers were observed from a solely human, humane, and professional standpoint, it is easy to notice that empathetic/altruistic behaviour is not a material reward (neither for the one who does it nor for those for whom it is done) but an actual necessity in all human relationships inside a school environment, and, what is more, for human beings themselves

On the other hand, some researchers (Williamson, Clark, Pegalis, and Behan, 1996) have concluded that personal gains, due to the provision of care and help, are just as important in exchange relations as they are in relations of communion, the only difference being in the nature of that well-being. To be specific, if the parents and/or teachers provide support to children/students, and if, as a 'reward' they get a reality in which a child/student grows up into an empathic, confident, and successful person, it is still a're-

ward', although of specific nature. We can say that this is a long-term investment and a special gain, as opposed to a short-term and very fast pay-back when doing a favour in the context of social exchange. Yet, we believe that the substantial difference between these two types of relationships is not about the 'rewards' that motivate them, but about the fundamental direction of one person towards another, while the gains are just a product of the 'outcome' of such an attitude. There are clear differences between the relationships of communion, where one person is directed towards achieving the well-being of another person, as opposed to exchange relations in which all acts and feelings come at a 'price' and a necessary return path – the norms and rules within the two relationships are by no means the same. The goal of community relations (in the case of parent-child or teacher-student relations) is a confident and worthy individual, which can be treated in this respect as the full realisation of the roles of both parents and teachers which is in no case materially measurable, interest-based, or which can be explained in any other way but within the realm of emotions which every person (whether parent or teacher) has towards others within some form of quality interpersonal relationships. We believe that identification of these two forms of relations cannot lead to any worthy conclusions, because material expectations (rewards, services, and alike) have no place either in an altruistic or empathetic response or in the desire to create and foster a positive school atmosphere and meaningful relationships within it. It is all the less so if we aspire to act in an altruistic and empathetic way with people who share the same views and approaches in order to make changes for the benefit of everyone.

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## РАЗВИЈЕНИ ЕМПАТИЈСКИ КАПАЦИТЕТИ КАО УСЛОВ ЗА КВАЛИТЕТНЕ МЕЋУЛИЧНЕ ВЕЗЕ У ШКОЛСКОМ ОКРУЖЕЊУ

### *Резиме*

*Питање квалитета образовног процеса захтијева квалитетно школско окружење, што се може посматрати на неколико нивоа: прво, кроз квалитетне међуличне везе, а затим кроз квалитетан наставни план и програм и садржај наставних предмета те кроз екологију школског окружења (Relja, 2006). Квалитетна школска атмосфера заснива се не само на људском/алтруистичком приступу ученицима већ и на задовољству наставника, кога одликује низ позитивних особина, као и на задовољству ученика, који његује позитивна осјећања према ауторитету наставника, према школи и према образовном процесу у цјелини. Квалитетне везе почивају на емпатији, што представља способност за успостављање односа према осјећањима других људи. Управо се кроз емпатију наставник, ма како привремено, ставља у положај својих ученика и дијели њихове емоције, а то је заправо оно што му омогућава да разумије њихова осјећања, потезе и проблеме и да позитивно реагује на њих. Поступајући на тај начин, наставник показује разумијевање за потребе ученика и њихово благостање. Емпатија укључује како когнитивне тако и емоционалне компоненте те стога, током тог процеса, долази до садејства знања и емоција. Пошто је многи аутори посматрају као регулатора различитих облика понашања, нарочито у контексту алтруистичког понашања (Watson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, and Birch, 1981), емпатија представља значајну врсту мотивације за алтруизам, узимајући у обзир успостављено емоционално јединство, што је предуслов за ефективну и искре-*

ну интеракцију међу људима те зачетник пажљивог разумијевања емоционалног свијета друге особе.

**Кључне ријечи:** емпатија, алтруизам, наставник, ученик, школско окружење.

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## **РАЗВИТЫЕ ЭМПАТИЧЕСКИЕ СПОСОБНОСТИ КАК УСЛОВИЕ КАЧЕСТВЕННЫХ МЕЖЛИЧОСТНЫХ СВЯЗЕЙ В ШКОЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЕ**

### **Резюме**

*Вопрос о качестве образовательного процесса требует качественной школьной среды. Данную проблему можно рассматривать на несколько уровней: во-первых, через качественные межличностные связи, потом через качественную учебную программу и содержание школьных предметов, а потом и через экологию школьной среды (Relja, 2006). Качественная школьная атмосфера основывается не только на человеческом/альтруистическом подходе к ученикам, а также на удовольствии учителя, отличающегося рядом положительных качеств, и удовольствии ученика, испытывающего положительные чувства к авторитету учителя, к школе и к образовательному процессу в целом. Качественные связи основываются на эмпатии, т.е. на способности формирования отношения к чувствам других людей. Именно через эмпатию, хотя и временно, учитель ставляет себя в положение своих учеников и разделяет их эмоции и это помогает ему понять их чувства, поступки и проблемы и позитивно реагировать на их. Ведя себя таким образом, учитель проявляет понимание к потребностям студентов и их благополучию. Эмпатия включает в себя когнитивные и эмоциональные компоненты, поэтому, в течение данного процесса, происходит взаимодействие между знаниями и эмоциями. Поскольку многие авторы рассматривают эмпатию как регулятор различных*

*типов поведения, особенно в контексте альтруистического поведения (Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, and Birch, 1981), эмпатия является очень важным видом мотивации к альтруизму, учитывая эмоциональную объединенность представляющую собой условие продуктивного и искреннего взаимодействия между людьми и начало внимательного осознания эмоционального мира другого человека.*

**Ключевые слова:** *эмпатия, альтруизм, преподаватель, ученик, школьная среда.*

