

## **TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING THE DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The main focus of this paper is the concept of discipline in the classroom, which is explored through the aspects of student's basic needs, use of rules of behaviour, student's engagement in the learning process, internal and external motivation and self-discipline. This research was conducted on a sample of 364 participants, teachers in high schools in North Macedonia. The aim was to examine teacher's beliefs and attitudes regarding the discipline in the classroom, as well as to see whether there are differences in teacher's beliefs and attitudes regarding their working experience.

The findings show that most of the teachers have positive approach in establishing discipline, manifested through creating an environment built on respect, trust, mutual understanding and cooperation. Most often used strategies for establishing discipline are defining rules of behaviour and engaging students in the teaching process. In situation of student's misbehaviour, teacher's use warning, request, reprimand, punishment, etc., but with a certain gradation in their use from not very strict to a more severe. Statistically significant differences between teacher with different work experience were found out in some of the explored aspects, mainly in those related with teacher's authority and control.

**Keywords:** basic needs, engagement, motivation, self-discipline.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

One of the prerequisites for achieving a success in the teaching process is creating a positive classroom environment in which every student will feel emotionally safe, encouraged and motivated to engage and successfully participate in the process of education. In achieving this, a significant importance should be given on the issue of discipline in the classroom.

Discipline is seen as a part of the classroom management and includes strategies and approaches which aim toward creating a positive classroom environment.

Usually, when the term discipline is mentioned, one thinks in terms of negative connotation, and when we talk about discipline, we actually mean in terms of student's misbehaviour. In the past, it was called "restraint" because it was maintained with the use of coercive and repressive measures, and its purpose was "to brake student's will" and establish student's unconditional and "blind" obedience. In this regard, discipline is mostly associated with maintaining the order in the classroom, having strict rules, fear, and respecting teacher's authority, was established with the use of warnings, threatening, restrictions and punishments. But, throughout the historical development, this term has evolved, and today discipline is seen in a positive sense as a quality that emerges from student-teacher relationships and enriches classroom environment, as well as student's individuality.

The issue of discipline is very complex topic which is closely related with achieving success in the teaching process, i.e. learning outcomes, from one part, and with the process of student's individual development, from the other.

The discipline is seen as a prerequisite for planning and creating learning environment that is organized and structured, where students know what is expected from them and how they should behave, but also an environment where they feel safe and supported to participate in the learning process, to discuss, make decisions related with the process of learning or presenting the results etc. In order to achieve this, the crucial aspect is to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding, trust and cooperation between the teacher and students, in which everyone will be treated with respect and dignity, and every student will be accepted as a member of the class as a group.

From the other part, environment like this helps the students to grow as individuals, in a way that teaches them how to be persistent, dedicated, and accountable for their behaviour, to be honest, truthful, with a strong sense of self-control and self-discipline. This is achieved by giving the students choices and possibilities to make decisions, to take responsibility for the results, and to learn how to accept the consequences from their behaviour. In this regard, through developing these positive personal traits, discipline contributes in developing student's personality, their character and will.

### 1.1 Important characteristics of discipline

When speaking about discipline, there are some aspects which are most often emphasized, as recommendations for establishing and maintaining discipline in the classroom. They refer to the following aspects: student's basic needs, establishing rules of behaviour, student's engagement, internal instead of external motivation and developing self-discipline. In the following part, we will examine them.

#### ➤ *Student's basic needs*

When searching for the answer on the question: *Why students misbehave?* some authors take student's basic needs as a starting point (Glasser, 1993, Dreikurs). According to William Glasser, all students have their basic needs, and the school and the teachers should create an environment where these needs will be met. In situation when they fail in doing this, students will find a way of meeting them, even and if that requires to behave in a socially unacceptable way, or by misbehaving. Hence, from here discipline problem in the classroom arise. In this regard, the roll of the teacher when misbehaviour occurs is to detect which need is not being satisfied and re-direct student's behavior in a way that will meet student's needs, but through a positive behaviour and in a socially acceptable manner. (Glasser, 1993).

In continuation are described student's basic needs and how failing to meet them is manifested in the classroom.

*Need for survival* – students have need to feel safe and free from a personal threat when they are in school. *Need for love and belonging* refers to the need to have attention and feel that one is accepted by the teacher and other classmates, as a part of the group/class, to be involved in class activities and discussions. In situation when this need is not met, students can feel unloved, alienated, and lonely or isolated. Teacher can help to meet this need by creating emotionally safe environment and to show care and respect for every student. *Need for power* is related with students need to feel that they have control over their destiny and have the power to make decisions. This need can be met by giving them more choices, opportunity for leadership, ownership in creating rules of behaviour and accordingly in taking responsibility. When this need is not met, students can either withdrawn or rebel and act in hostile manner. *Need for freedom* refers to allowing students to have feeling of autonomy and giving possibility to express their individuality, creativity, to feel free to have different perspectives and points of view. *Need for fun* relates with the

possibility students to experience joy and happiness. When is not met, student's reaction will be boredom, frustration, daydreaming, and students will find a way how to meet this need through making own fun, joking, or engaging in off-task activities. It can be met through organizing interesting activities like quizzes, fun competitions, use of humour etc. *Need for competence*<sup>1</sup> – every student has the need to show what he/she is capable to do and achieve something. It allows the students to feel that they can contribute and gives sense of self-efficacy. Failing to meet will result with feeling that they are useless, incompetent, and can lead to losing the motivation.

Understanding student's basic needs is the first and most important step in resolving discipline problems. Identifying the need which is not being met, will help the teacher to focus on the source of misbehaviour and find a way how to alter it. Supporting the student to meet the basic need helps to change the behaviour from a negative (when the need is not met) into a positive direction, which means behaving in a productive and socially accepted manner. (Dreikurs, Glasser 1990, 1993; Charles & Senter, 2005; Shindler, 2010)

➤ *Establishing rules of behaviour and logical consequences*

Defining rules of behaviour is considered to be one of the crucial aspects in creating a positive work environment. They give the basis for students to feel safe and create an atmosphere of trust, respect and mutual understanding. The recommendation is that the rules should be defined jointly by the students and the teacher, they should always be stated in positive form, and there should be only a few rules (Glasser, 1990; Gosen, 1994; Gordon, 2001; Shindler, 2010; Alber, 2011). According to Logan defining five rules is enough. (Logan, 2003)

Rules describe in behavioural terms what is expected from the students and which are the lines that should be not crossed. In this manner, students clearly know how they should behave, but they also know what they can expect from the others. This creates emotionally safe environment for the students and contributes in meeting their need for belonging. From every student is expected to: be responsible for his/her own behaviour, to cooperate with others and to contribute in maintaining a favourable learning environment. (Glasser, 1993)

Their real value comes from the fact that the students are involved in the process of setting the rules, as well as the consequences which follow in situation when the rules are not respected, so the locus of control is internal and every student is responsible for respecting them. This contributes in developing student's responsibility and accountability for their own behaviour. (Shindler, 2010) By this, rules also become one kind of "social control" and contribute in developing student's responsibility and self-control within the class, as a social group.

In situation when student is not respecting some rule, according to Alber, the teacher should use warnings, but if same behaviour continues, than logical consequences must be delivered. (Alber, 2011)

The purpose of consequences is to help students to see the cause and effect relation, i.e. to understand that every behaviour has some effect, and when they choose to misbehave or to not respect the rules, the effect will be delivering consequences. Shindler considers that this is "the most powerful means to developing a responsible mind-set in students." (Shindler, 2010: 161).

The most important aspect when delivering the consequences, is that they must be related with student's (mis)behaviour which has caused the need for consequence. In this manner, the student will be enabled to clearly see why the consequence was delivered, while otherwise, if it's not related with the initial behaviour,

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<sup>1</sup> Glasser speaks about need for survival, while Shindler about the need for competence. The other needs for belonging, freedom and fun are same between these authors.

it will be considered and perceived by the student as a punishment, since it does not allow him/her to see this relation. (Shindler, 2010)

In this context, Alber discusses about so-called “Developmental discipline“ which means that the student can re-examine own behavior, and find out what can be done in future to prevent reoccurrence of the same situation. The aim of this, is students to be aware of own behaviour, the possible consequences as well as how they should treat each other. (Alber, 2011)

➤ ***Student’s engagement***

The way teacher approaches in the process of planning and organizing the instructional process can have a very big impacts on the overall atmosphere in the classroom, including the discipline too. Planning instructional events which are interactive and support student’s participation in the teaching process, helps the students to meet their basic needs and motivates them to learn better. Student’s engagement in the process focuses students to productive behaviour, and in the same time decreases possibility for misbehaviour. In this sense, Shindler considers that “both functional and problematic or dysfunctional behaviours have explicable causes and in most cases are related directly or indirectly to teaching practices“ (Shindler, 2010: 6).

➤ ***Intrinsic instead of extrinsic motivation***

The issue of motivation has always been an important topic in discussions about classroom management practices, and the discipline as it’s integral part. When speaking about motivation, it is widely accepted the perspective that intrinsic motivation is crucial and plays very important role in how much the student will be engaged and motivated to participate and learn more.

While extrinsic motivation is product focused, sees the task as a means to an end, has short-term benefits and promotes the need for praise, rewards and positive reinforcement from an external source (the teacher), intrinsic motivation is a natural condition, sees that the task itself has a value, is process focused and has long-term benefits. (Shindler, 2010: 104) Students that are intrinsically motivated to learn and succeed are oriented toward growth and continuous personal improvement. Having this in mind, they enjoy in the process of learning, are actively participating and don’t engage in dysfunctional behaviour or misbehaviour.

In practice are known a lot of means and strategies which are used with aim to motivate the students to behave in a desirable way (praise, grades, rewards, incentives, positive reinforcement, use of coins, stars, token rewarding system etc.) or to prevent them from undesirable behaviour (warning, threatening, reprimand, punishment etc). While the use of the latter is coercive, the first mentioned are very often seen as supporting and motivating.

When explored in depth, praise, grades, rewards, and positive reinforcement are motivators, but extrinsic rather than intrinsic. As an extrinsic motivators they can motivate the student, but only in a short term and these strategies do not have the same impact as the intrinsic motivation. Some authors, raise the dilemma whether this type of positive reinforcement is truly positive or they only represent some sort of social control, which in its essence is manipulative and aims at achieving short-term result, but in reality does not contribute nor helps the person to be intrinsically motivated, to want to achieve more because of his/her personal growth and self-fulfilment. (Shindler, 2010; Rubin, 2012; Kohn, 2005)

In the context of discipline, when students are determined and persistent in achieving their goals, it can be said that a success is achieved. In this context is Logan's perspective that: "Students should be encouraged to be proud of their achievements and to strive toward inner praise." (Logan, 2003: 3)

### ➤ *Self-discipline*

Closely related with the term discipline is self-discipline. It is manifested in the attitude that the individual has on oneself. As a personal characteristic, is very complex and requires high level of self-awareness and strong will and determination throughout the whole life. Self-discipline is also reflected in individual's attitude toward other people, toward the work, the material staff and so on.

Self-discipline implies "ability to control one's own behavior" (Temkov, 2004: 128) In order to say that one person is self-disciplined, he/she must possess qualities such as: responsibility, consistency, purposefulness, diligence, persistence, determination, self-confidence, self-control, etc.

To be self-disciplined means to be able to control own instincts and hedonistic needs, with the power of the will, and instead of doing pleasant things, to be persistent and put additional effort, for the aim of higher goals, despite all the difficulties and inconveniences. In this regard, students should be taught "how to govern themselves" to control their instincts and emotions. Seen like this, self-discipline and all above mentioned qualities actually represent long-term goals in the domain of student's individual development. (Mitevka, Petrusheva, 2015)

Related with the classroom management practices, it can be said that strategies and approaches that teachers use in establishing discipline in the classroom help the students to develop self-discipline as a personal quality, while "self-disciplined students actually create the discipline in the classroom, since they are in control of their behaviour and there is no need for the teacher to use warnings, reprimands or punishments." (Logan, 2003)

Based on all above-mentioned aspects, we consider that if teachers are aware and have knowledge and skills how to apply them in practice, they will positively contribute in establishing and maintaining the discipline in the classroom, not just as a quality of the classroom environment, but as student's personal quality as well. In this regard, teacher's work in this domain should be systematic, continuous and goal-directed.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The aim of this research was to examine teacher's beliefs and attitudes regarding the discipline in the classroom. The research was conducted on a sample of 364 teachers in high schools in North Macedonia. Participants in this study were with different working experience and divided in 4 categories (less than 5 years, from 5-15 years, 15-25 years, and more than 25 years of working experience).

The research was conducted with the use of a questionnaire composed of opened and closed type questions, related with teacher's attitudes and beliefs about student's basic needs, rules of behavior, sources for student's misbehavior and practical approaches used to maintain the discipline in the classroom were examined. One more aim of this research was to see whether there are differences in teacher's beliefs and attitudes about discipline regarding their working experience.

The obtained data were analyzed with use of qualitative and quantitative methods, using statistically descriptive methods, while for testing statistically significant differences between teachers with different working experience Pearson Chi-square test was applied.

## **3. RESULTS**

The first question intended to examine teacher's attitudes about the meaning of establishing discipline in the classroom. Results have shown that the most of the participants (342 participants, 94%) consider that establishing discipline means to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation between the

teacher and the students. Around 20 participants (5.5%) of participants view discipline as establishing silence, order, and conditions for work, while only 2 participants (0.5%) see it as a way of using warnings and punishments. (Table 1) There were no statistically significant differences found between teachers with different working experience.

In your opinion, what is the meaning of establishing discipline?						
	Less than 5 years	5-15 years	15-25 years	More than 25 years	Total	
Establishing silence, order, and working conditions.	5	5	4	6	20	$\chi^2 = 3.442$ df = 6 p = 0.752
	5.4%	4.3%	5.5%	7.1%	5.5%	
Atmosphere of respect, trust, responsibility, and cooperation.	87	110	68	77	342	
	94.6%	95.7%	93.2%	91.7%	94.0%	
Use of warnings and punishments	0	0	1	1	2	
	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.2%	0.5%	
Total	92	115	73	84	364	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 1. Approach in establishing discipline

The next questions examined teacher’s opinions regarding some of student’s basic needs, or the need for freedom and power, as a basis for discipline.

On the statement: “Students need to have a sense of freedom to be disciplined“, 273 participants (75%) confirmed, while 91 participant (25%) disagreed with this statement. The results from the Chi-square test have shown that there is statistically significant difference between teachers with different working experience at a level of significance 0.05. (Table 2)

Students need to have a sense of freedom to be disciplined						
	Less than 5 years	5-15 years	15-25 years	More than 25 years	Total	
Yes	59	95	52	67	273	$\chi^2 = 13.981$ df = 6 p = 0.030 p < 0.05
	64.1%	82.6%	71.2%	79.8%	75.0%	
No	33	20	21	17	91	
	35.9%	17.4%	28.8%	20.2%	25.0%	
Total	92	115	73	84	364	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 2. Sense of freedom as a basis for discipline

From presented results it can be noticed that teachers with work experience in the range from 5-15 years have highest percentage of affirmative answers, while the highest percentage 35% of teachers that do not agree with this statement are found in the group with less than 5 years of experience.

Regarding student’s need for power, most of the teachers 286 participants (78.6%) disagreed with the statement: “Meeting student’s need for power has a positive effect on establishing discipline in the classroom“, while only 78 participants (21.4) answered positively. There were no statistically significant differences found between teachers with different working experience on this question. (Table 3)

Meeting student’s need for power has a positive effect on establishing discipline in the classroom						
	Less than 5 years	5-15 years	15-25 years	More than 25 years	Total	
						$\chi^2 = 6.024$ df = 3

<b>Yes</b>	22	16	21	19	78	p = 0.110
	23.9%	13.9%	28.8%	22.6%	21.4%	
<b>No</b>	70	99	52	65	286	
	76.1%	86.1%	71.2%	77.4%	78.6%	
<b>Total</b>	92	115	73	84	364	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 3. Meeting the need for power

The next question covered the issues of establishing rules of behaviour, as a strategy for establishing and maintaining discipline. On the statement: “Rules of behaviour used for establishing discipline are determined only by the teacher“133 participants (36.5%) answered positively, while 231 participants (63.5%) did not agree. (Table 4)

Regarding the tested variable, results have shown that there is statistically significant difference at a level of significance 0.01. From presented results it can be noticed that 53.3% of the teachers with shortest working experience agree with this statement, and it tends to change with increasing of the years of experience, and comes in situation where around 76% of the teachers with the longest work experience have opposite opinion, or disagree.

Rules of behaviour used for establishing discipline are determined only by the teacher						
	Less than 5 years	5-15 years	15-25 years	More than 25 years	Total	χ <sup>2</sup> = 20.688 df = 3 p = 0.000 p<0.01
<b>Yes</b>	49	45	19	20	133	
	53.3%	39.1%	26.0%	23.8%	36.5%	
<b>No</b>	43	70	54	64	231	
	46.7%	60.9%	74.0%	76.2%	63.5%	
<b>Total</b>	92	115	73	84	364	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 4. Setting rules of behavior

The following questions refer to teacher’s practical experiences related with establishing discipline in the classroom.

On the question: “Do you have difficulties in maintaining the discipline in your classroom? “ 200 participants (54.9%) answer negatively, 157 participants (43.1%) answered they have difficulties only with some students, while 7 participants (1.9%) answered Yes. The results from the Chi-square test have shown that there are no statistically significant differences between participants regarding their working experience. (Table 5)

Do you have difficulties in maintaining discipline?						
	Less than 5 years	5-15 years	15-25 years	More than 25 years	Total	χ <sup>2</sup> = 6.546 df = 6 p = 0.365
<b>Yes</b>	2	1	2	2	7	
	2.2%	0.9%	2.7%	2.4%	1.9%	
<b>No</b>	41	69	41	49	200	
	44.6%	60.0%	56.2%	58.3%	54.9%	
<b>Only with some students</b>	49	45	30	33	157	
	53.3%	39.1%	41.1%	39.3%	43.1%	
<b>Total</b>	92	115	73	84	364	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 5. Difficulties in maintaining discipline

The next question was open-ended and aimed toward gathering information about the practical approaches on how teachers maintain the discipline in the classroom.

A qualitative analysis was done and in the following part are presented some of the most often used approaches and strategies of our participants. They are:

- ✓ Setting rules / Code of conduct / Boundaries that cannot be crossed. Many of the respondents answered that they set the rules of behaviour at the beginning of the school year. Mainly, they are defined together with the students, and sometimes consequences for violating them are also included. By this, teachers believe that student's self-discipline and accountability for their behaviour are built and supported;
- ✓ Building a relationship based on mutual respect, trust, and cooperation with students and encouraging a positive atmosphere;
- ✓ Organizing interesting lessons, with engaging activities for the students, involving in discussion; connecting the material with situations and examples from every-day life etc;
- ✓ Planning time for work and relaxation time / "Time out" - a time when students are allowed to get up and do something they need to do;
- ✓ Conversation: many of participants answered that they use it as a tool/means of maintaining discipline. First they usually try to talk with the student that is misbehaving, and then, if necessary, to the class teacher and the pedagogue;
- ✓ Use of rewards and personal praise for disciplined/well-behaved students;
- ✓ Strictness and use of authority of the teacher;
- ✓ Warnings / Reprimands / Threatening / Giving additional assignments to misbehaving students;
- ✓ Raising the voice / Using more strict tone and language/ Interrupting the lecturing and asking question to misbehaving students/ Expelling from the class / Threatening with low grades;
- ✓ Punishment - when previously used warnings and reprimands didn't give the expected results;
- ✓ Referral to the pedagogical staff / Use of disciplinary measures.

The next question required from the participants to list the most common reasons for student's misbehaviour. Since this was also an open-typed question, a qualitative analysis was done. Results were carefully analysed and divided in the following categories:

- ❖ ***Causes that originate from students*** - in this group are problems that originate from student's personal characteristics, their relationships with the peers or are caused by the characteristics of their developmental period. The listed reasons are:
  - Hyperactivity, anxiety, fatigue, feeling nervous, hormones, relationship problems;
  - Need to be in the center of attention, very high ambitions, high level of self-confidence, arrogance, frustrations, inferiority, dissatisfaction, disrespect, rebellion, narcissism, jealousy among students;
  - Poor working habits, issues with attendance, being late for classes, laziness, lack of interest in learning, resistance to learning due to lack of connectedness between the content material and applicability in everyday life, lack of attention and concentration, boredom, passivity, bad manners, impatience, too much freedom that students abuse, talking loudly, quarrels, use of inappropriate language etc.
- ❖ ***Causes that arise from the teacher and his/her work***: boring lectures and lesson contents, lack of teacher's preparation for the classes, lack of student's engagement in the teaching process, no teacher authority in the classroom, too much strictness or too much tolerance of student's misbehaviour and not taking appropriate actions, friendly relations with the students, having a selective approach toward some of the students, not respecting student's personality, etc.



❖ *Causes that originate from objective circumstances* such as: lots of classes during the school day, working conditions (overcrowded classrooms, classes with students with different levels of knowledge) extensive curriculum, content materials that are complex and difficult to understand, poor concentration at the end of the working day, use of mobile phones, texting messages etc.

❖ *Causes that originate from the parents and the broader environment:* home upbringing and bad behaviour, family relationships, family problems and unfavorable family situation, parents' disinterest in student's school activities, lack of parent control, lack of cooperation between teacher-student-parent, influence of the broader environmental etc.

Here we would like to emphasize that some of the participants consider that support that students get from their parents and even in some cases from the management of the school, manifested through no taking actions, justifying student's (mis)behaviour and even in some cases attacking teacher's authority and integrity, is supporting the students to continue to misbehave and show disrespect toward the teachers. These actions have long-term negative consequences on discipline and reflect negatively on student's personal development, causing rebellion and disrespect toward authorities.

In this direction, one of reasons that is very often listed by the teachers comes from the part of the family, or the parenting style and upbringing. The tendency of parents to upbringing their children in the manner that they are the center of everyone's attention, has negative reflections in school environment, where these students tend to require the same status and attention in the classroom.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The opinion of the majority of the teachers is in line with theoretical perspectives and definitions of discipline, where the discipline is seen as something more than achieving silence and order during lectures, but it presents a qualitative aspect of the classroom environment which enables creating an atmosphere of trust and respect among teacher and students, and is a prerequisite for developing student's responsibility.

Related with the issue of students basic needs, results have shown that around  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the participants have a positive attitude towards meeting student's sense of freedom, while this is not the case when it comes to meeting the need for power, where almost 80% disagreed that it contributes in establishing discipline. The disagreement may be an indicator on the one hand of the lack of familiarity with the concept of student's basic needs as presented previously, but on the other hand it can indicate understanding of the need for power in a negative connotation, manifested through behaviour in which one individual gets privileges at the cost of suppressing or harming the other. This probably confronts with teacher's perspectives about who is in charge and has the control in the classroom.

Related with the tested variables, statistically significant difference was found regarding the need for freedom, where relatively high percentage of novice teachers (36%) disagreed about its importance. Analysing the reasons, one of possibilities is that these teachers are at the beginning of their career, when they still search and/or struggle to find the most appropriate approach in discipline and to establish them as the main creators of the classroom atmosphere, which confronts with student's sense of freedom, which can be seen as a threat.

When speaking about the process of setting the rules, the same category of teachers considers that only the teacher is in charge of defining them. This relates with the perspective of the teacher as a superior in student-teacher relationship, whereas the student is in the position of inferior/subordinated. This relationship is the basic feature of the authoritarian management style. This can raise the dilemma whether these participants apply this management style in their classroom or the results relate only to the issue of defining the rules of behaviour, as an initial step in establishing discipline. This, as well as the previous question related with

student's need for power, have shown that this group of teachers are more prone toward attitudes characteristic for the authoritarian management style.

The assumption is that maybe younger teachers, since they are faced with the insecurity of the lack of experience and the challenges of defining their management style, feel the need to impose their authority at the beginning, the authority which they possess as legitimate from a position of the teacher, and then gradually acquire and build it, through their relationship with students and maybe to progress toward more democratic management style. Of course, taking into consideration the complexity of examining teacher's management style, this should be examined deeper in some further studies.

Questions related with teacher's practical experiences in establishing discipline have shown that less than half of our participants have difficulties with maintaining the discipline, and this is mainly with some of the students.

Analysis of teacher's answers about practical approaches and strategies they use in practice, have shown that one of the commonly used practices is setting the rules of behaviour, creating positive atmosphere, and student's engagement in the instructional process. When misbehaviour occurs, usually warnings and reprimands are used, and sometimes punishments. However, the conclusion is that punishments are rarely used, while more often applied strategies are assigning additional tasks to misbehaved "problematic" students, and sometimes using more severe form such as interrupting the lecture and questioning the student. It is also noticed that there is an order and gradation in measures applied, starting with warning and reprimand, and moving toward more severe like punishments and referral to the pedagogical staff and use of disciplinary measures.

These answers actually confirm the previous findings that the majority of the teachers understand the discipline as a process of creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation, but still, it should be not omitted that there are some participants which have different understanding of discipline and apply more severe approach.

Teachers consider that student's misbehaviour is caused by many different factors, which were categorized as causes that arise from: students, teachers and their work, objective circumstances and parents and broader environment. All of them, emphasize the complexity of the discipline issue, and require from the teacher to have a broad range of knowledge and skills, in order to be prepared to recognize, diagnose, prevent and take action in overcoming and finding a solution for all discipline problems. Some of the sources are in teacher's power and he/she can control or alter them (organizing the teaching process, meeting students need, and some of the objective factors), while others cannot be controlled, and the only solution in this situation is to find a way how to reduce their influence or redirect them in a positive direction.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The general conclusion is that among the participants prevails positive approach in establishing discipline, based on the democratic management style, built on respect, trust, mutual understanding and cooperation, with establishing rules of behaviour and adherence to them, as a basic prerequisites for establishing and maintaining the discipline.

Still, when misbehaviour occurs, which can be caused by many factors, both objective and subjective, originating from students, teachers or other subjects, teachers use a series of strategies and means such as: warning, request, reprimand, punishment, etc., but with a certain gradation in their use from not very strict to a more severe.

However, it is evident that not all participants in this research had the same opinion. Some of the teachers have different perceptions and approaches in resolving misbehaviour which arises from students as a source. Such are, for example, rudeness and impolite behavior, disrespect of authorities, low interest and motivation etc., due to which teachers are more strict and have an authoritarian approach, characterized by setting the rules exclusively by the teacher, use of warnings, punishments, threatening, low grades, expelling from the class, use of disciplinary measures and so on.

Having in mind all mentioned aspects, it can be said that the complexity of the concept of discipline requires a comprehensive, well prepared and carefully analysed approach. This urges the need for the teacher to have appropriate knowledge base, with strong theoretical background, as well as skills for implementing the right strategies, which will be carefully tailored in accordance to student's personal characteristics and needs.

As pointed previously, the discipline in the classroom, through the use of different means and strategies, helps in establishing positive atmosphere, good relationships and pleasant learning environment, but in the same time contributes in developing positive personal characteristics and qualities of the character, and in this sense promotes student's individual development as a long-term goal in education process. This is best seen through the change and progress from discipline in the classroom toward self-discipline as individual's quality.

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