





Reflections of the Concept of Empathy the School Environment¹

Empati Kavramının Okul Ortamına Yansımaları

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Abstract. This qualitative research, which aims to examine the reflections of the concept of empathy in the school environment in terms of students, teachers, school administrators and parents according to teachers' views, is structured in a phenomenological design. The study group of the research consists of 30 teachers. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers and consisting of open-ended questions. The data obtained were structured under common categories and themes according to similar characteristics by content analysis method. The findings of the study are presented under 10 themes. According to the results of the research, the participants expressed the concept of empathy as empathy and developing a perspective to understand the other person, and stated that high empathy skills of school stakeholders have a positive effect on school success, school social environment and human relations. It was concluded that the concept of empathy is important and the school environment will be healthier as empathy behavior increases. Organizing in-service training activities, seminars, student and parent activities to improve the empathy skills of stakeholders were among the prominent results. In addition, the inclusion of courses and practices aimed at improving the empathy skills of pre-service teachers in teacher training programs, and the guidance of school administrators and educational supervisors, who have a leadership role in education, to all stakeholders in developing empathy behaviors and related issues are among the recommendations.

Keywords: *Empathy, Human Relations, School Environment, Teachers' Views, Affective Competences, Healthy Communication.*

Öz. Empati kavramının okul ortamına yansımalarını öğrenciler, öğretmenler, okul yöneticileri ve veliler açısından öğretmen görüşlerine göre incelemeyi amaçlayan bu nitel araştırma olgubilim deseninde yapılandırılmıştır. Araştırmancının çalışma grubunu 30 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Veriler, araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen ve açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi yöntemiyle benzer özelliklerine göre ortak kategoriler ve temalar altında yapılandırılmıştır. Araştırmancının bulguları 10 tema altında sunulmuştur. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre katılımcılar, empati kavramını duygudaşlık ve karşısındakini anlamaya yönelik bakış açısı geliştirme olarak ifade ederken, okul paydaşlarının empati becerilerinin yüksek olmasının okul başarısı, okulun sosyal ortamı ve insan ilişkileri üzerinde olumlu etkiye sahip olduğu yönünde görüş belirtmişlerdir. Empati kavramının önemli olduğu ve empati davranışı arttıkça okul ortamının daha sağlıklı olacağına yönelik sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Paydaşların empati becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik hizmet içi eğitim faaliyetlerinin, seminerlerin, öğrenci ve veli etkinliklerinin organize edilmesi öne çıkan sonuçlar arasında yer almıştır. Ayrıca öğretmen adaylarının empati becerilerinin geliştirilmesine yönelik dersler ve uygulamaların öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına dahil edilmesi, eğitimde liderlik rolüne sahip olan okul yöneticilerinin ve eğitim denetmenlerinin empati davranışlarını geliştirme ve bununla ilgili konularda tüm paydaşlara rehberlik yapmaları öneriler arasında yer almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Empati, İnsan İlişkileri, Okul Ortamı, Öğretmen Görüşleri, Duyuşsal Yeterlilikler, Sağlıklı İletişim.*



Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş. İnsanlar doğası gereği etrafındaki diğer bireylerle iletişim kurmak zorundadır. İletişim, sağlıklı olduğu zaman toplumdaki uyumsuzluklar en aza iner. Kılıç'a (2005) göre bu iletişimin daha kaliteli hale gelmesi, insanların birbirlerini anlamaları yani empati yapmalarıyla mümkün olmaktadır. Okullar da insanların birbirleri ile sürekli iletişim kurdukları sosyal alanların başında yer almaktadır. Öğrenciler ve öğretmenlerin eğitim öğretim faaliyetlerinin gerçekleştiği sınıf, yalnızca tarafların birbirlerine davranışlarını sunduğu ortam olmayıp aralarında karşılıklı ilişkilerin bulunduğu sosyal ortamları da içerisinde barındırır (Hoy & Forsyth, 1988). Okullarda uygulanan eğitim öğretim faaliyetleri sırasında planlar, programlar etkili bir öğretim için şarttır. Bu faaliyetler sırasında daha verimli sonuçlar alabilmek için empati becerisinin kullanılması da en az plan ve program kadar önemlidir (Elikesik, 2013). Okul yöneticisinin de öğrenciler, öğretmenler ve okulun diğer çalışanlarına empatiyle yaklaşması onun sosyal etkileme gücünü artırır. Bunun sonucunda da okulun amaçlarına ve okulla etkileşim kuran kişilerin de beklentilerine daha çok yaklaşmış olur (Fidan & Erden, 1993). Bu bağlamda empati kavramının tüm okul paydaşlarını etkilediği söylenebilir. Alanyazın incelendiğinde empati kavramının öğretmen, öğrenci, okul yöneticisi ve veli şeklinde tüm grupları içine alacak şekilde incelendiği bir araştırmanın bulunmadığı görülmüştür. Bu bağlamda empati kavramının öğretmen, okul yöneticisi, öğrenci ve veli tarafından kullanılmasının okul ortamına ne gibi etkileri olacağına yönelik öğretmen görüşlerinin alındığı bu çalışmanın alana katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Yöntem. Empati kavramının okul ortamına yansımalarının araştırıldığı bu çalışma nitel olgu bilim (fenomenoloji) deseninde yapılandırılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunun oluşturulmasında amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden tipik örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışma grubu 30 öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmanın verileri yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu aracılığıyla katılımcılarla görüşmeler yapılarak toplanmıştır. Veriler içerik analizi yöntemi ile çözümlenerek tablolar halinde sunulmuştur.

Bulgular. Araştırma bulgularına göre empati kavramına ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri incelendiğinde duygudaşlık ve bakış açısı kategorilerinin ön plana çıktığı görülmektedir. Katılımcılar *empatiyi* aynı duyguları paylaşmak, kendini karşıdakinin yerine koyabilmek, karşıdaki kişinin hislerini anlayabilmek olarak yorumlamışlardır. Katılımcıların, empati kavramının insan ilişkilerini nasıl etkilediğine ilişkin olarak anlaşılmayı sağlama, insanların birbirlerine hoşgörülü olması, doğru ve etkili bir iletişim kurma ifadelerini daha çok kullandıkları görülmüştür. Okul yöneticisinin empatik bir yaklaşıma sahip olmasına ilişkin olarak sağlıklı iletişim, güven, okul kültürü, başarı ve okul-çevre ilişkileri kategorilerinin ön plana çıktığı saptanmıştır. Empati becerisi yüksek bir öğretmenin sınıf ortamına katkıları, daha çok güvende hissetme, birbirini anlama, sağlıklı iletişim ifadeleriyle açıklanırken, empati becerisi yüksek bir öğrencinin diğer arkadaşlarına etkisi daha çok akranlarla iyi ilişkiler, örnek davranışlar sergileme, güçlü arkadaşlık bağları ve sağlıklı iletişim kavramlarıyla ifade edilmiştir. Empati becerisi yüksek bir velinin öğrenci başarısına katkıları konusunda iş birliği kategorisi ön plana çıkmıştır. Okulda empati becerisini geliştirmek için öğretmenlere, yöneticilere, velilere ve öğrencilere yönelik neler yapılabileceğine ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri incelendiğinde tüm kategorilerde seminer ve hizmet içi eğitim önerileri ön plana çıkarken, Millî Eğitim Bakanlığının öğretmen, okul yöneticisi, veli, öğrenciler ve okul ortamına yönelik empatik yaklaşımları konusunda daha çok "hayır" ve "yeterli değil" kategorilerinin ön plana çıktığı



görülmüştür. Çalışmada bulunan empati kavramı ile ilgili metafor sorusu ile ilgili olarak yapılan tüm benzetmelerin olumlu olduğu (Başarma güdüsü, Adalet, İlaç, Yaşam vb.) tespit edilmiştir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç. Araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçlara göre çalışmaya katılan öğretmenler, empati davranışı gösterebilme düzeyi ile insan ilişkileri arasında pozitif yönlü bir ilişkinin olduğunu düşünmektedirler. Empatik davranış gösterebilen insanların birbirlerini daha iyi anlayabileceğini, birbirlerine karşı daha hoşgörülü davranabileceklerini, doğru ve etkili bir iletişim kurabileceklerini ifade etmektedirler. Böylece öğretmenler, empati davranışının bireyler arası insan ilişkilerini olumlu etkilediği, örgütsel ortamda sağlıklı iletişime katkı sağladığı, iş birliği ve kontrolü artırdığı yönünde görüşlere sahip olduklarını ortaya koymuşlardır. Çalışmada yöneticilerin empati becerilerinin okul ortamına olumlu etkileri olduğu yönünde sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Buna göre öğretmenler empati becerisi yüksek olan okul yöneticilerinin okul ortamında daha etkili iletişim kurdukları, çalışanlara daha çok güven sağladıkları, olumlu bir okul kültürü oluşturabildikleri yönünde görüş belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca empati düzeyi yüksek yöneticilerin okullarında okul-çevre ilişkilerinin daha iyi olduğu ve sonuç itibarıyla bu okullarda öğrenci başarısının yüksek olduğu ve hedeflerine ulaşabilme konusunda okulların daha iyi sonuç elde ettikleri düşüncesinin öne çıktığı görülmektedir.

Öğretmenlerin, empatinin sınıf yönetimine yansımalarına ilişkin görüşlerinden ortaya çıkan bulgular üç boyutta değerlendirilmiştir. Buna göre öğretmenler, empati becerisi yüksek bir öğretmenin sınıfta yapıcı ve etkili bir sınıf atmosferi oluşturabileceği ve sınıfın psiko-sosyal özelliklerine daha fazla katkı sağlanabileceği düşünülmektedir. Empati becerisi yüksek bir öğretmenin sınıfta iletişim becerisini geliştirme, sınıf yönetiminde başarılı olma ve sınıfın sosyal psikolojik özelliklerini geliştirme boyutlarında daha iyi sonuçlar aldığını göstermektedir. Olumlu katkılar psiko-sosyal özellikler kategorisi bağlamında ele alındığında, öğretmenlerin öğrencilere güven verme, karşılıklı anlayış geliştirme, öğrencilerin kendilerini mutlu hissetmesi, sağlıklı iletişim, samimiyet ve güçlü bağlar kurabilme gibi alanlarda daha avantajlı algılandıkları anlaşılmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında elde edilen diğer bir sonuç ise empati yapabilen velilerin eğitim süreçlerine olan katkılarına ilişkindir. Araştırmada empati yapabilen velilerin okulla iş birliği yapabilme, öğrenci başarısına ve öğrencilerin kişisel gelişimine katkıda bulunabilme düzeylerinin de artacağı inancı ortaya çıkmıştır. Benzer durum öğrenciler için de geçerlidir. Öğrenciler bileşeni üzerinden bulgular ele alındığında, empati becerisi yüksek öğrencilerin diğer arkadaşlarına rol model olma, akranlarıyla iyi ilişkiler kurabilme ve olumlu örnek davranışlar sergileme konularında daha avantajlı oldukları düşünülmektedir. Bu öğrencilerin aynı zamanda güçlü arkadaşlık bağları kurabilme, sağlıklı iletişim becerilerine sahip olma ve daha iyi akademik başarı elde etme konularında daha avantajlı algılandıkları görülmektedir.



Introduction

By nature, people need to communicate with other individuals around them. When communication is healthy, disharmony in society is minimized. Many definitions of the idea of empathy, which is highly significant in social life, have been proposed. According to the Turkish Language Association (2022), empathy is the capacity to experience emotions and thoughts through the eyes of another. Kalliopuska (1983), on the other hand, interpreted empathy as behaving appropriately within society, respecting those around oneself, and acting as an obstacle to aggressive behaviours. The term empathy is today used to represent a vast range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural phenomena, extending much beyond its initial definition (Davis 1996 & Batson et al., 2004). Deonna (2007) describes empathy as "feeling in sync with" another person's emotional state. This definition clearly suggests mirroring, reflecting, and envisioning others' sentiments. In terms of emotion, empathy can also involve feeling something appropriate that is not the same as the other person's sentiments. For instance, expressing interest and sympathy in another person's suffering can also be a sign of empathy (Batson et al., 2002).

Empathy is the foundation of effective communication and mutual understanding and trust (Ioannidou & Konstantikaki, 2008). Schools are also at the forefront of social areas where people constantly communicate with each other. The classroom, where students and teachers engage in educational activities, is not only the environment in which the parties present their behaviours to each other, but also includes social environment for presenting behaviours to each other but also a social setting where mutual relations exist (Hoy & Forsyth, 1988). Plans and programs are essential for effective teaching during the educational activities in schools. The use of empathy skills is as important as the plan and programs in achieving more productive results (Elikesik, 2013). Küçükahmet et al. (2000) also stated that communication holds a significant place in the education process because education cannot occur without communication. In schools, during education and training, administrators, teachers, students, parents, staff, the external environment, interact. The school administrator is responsible for using the financial and human resources needed to achieve the school's goals in the most practical and effective method (Doğuş, 2011). The school administrator's empathy towards students, teachers and other school staff increases their social influence power. Consequently, this helps the school get closer to its goals and meet the expectations of those who interact with the school (Fidan & Erden, 1993).

According to humanistic approaches, one of the most important conditions for creating a supportive learning atmosphere in the classroom is empathy (Kandemir & Özbay, 2009). Eisenberg & Strayer (1996) compared children with empathy skills to those with low empathy skills and found that children with empathic skills were more prominent in terms of cooperation and positive social behaviours. Platt & Keller (1994) stated that empathy is an innate or developed trait that needs to be nurtured at an early age, and this skill can be enhanced when appropriate environments are provided. Karaca, Açıkgöz & Akkuş (2013) indicated that programs designed to develop empathy skills are effective in enhancing this ability.

Empathy is recognized as an essential competency for educators, healthcare providers, social workers, and other professionals engaged in interpersonal interactions (Stojiljkovic et al., 2012). Given Dogan, S., Topcu, I., Kocak Kayaci, E. & Tuncer Gunay, E. (2024). Reflections of the concept of empathy the school environment. *Western Anatolia Journal of Educational Sciences, 15(2), 1145-1168.*
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the significance of both cognitive and affective dimensions of empathy, this skill is particularly advantageous in professions that necessitate the provision of emotional support. Communication skills, general pedagogical skills, and competences specific to the course material are essential components of a teacher's competences. Studying the roles of teachers is necessary because effective performance can enhance the quality of the educational process and, consequently, the quality of society's human resources (Zlatkovic & Petrovic, 2011). Tettegah & Anderson (2007) define empathy as a teacher's ability to communicate with, understand, and see situations from the perspectives of their students.

Furthermore, Cooper (2010) discovered that teachers can transform situations into educational opportunities by meeting the needs of students and addressing their concerns. Positive social behaviours are emphasized in schools as the foundation for standards like emotional self-awareness and emotion management (Preston & De Waal, 2002; Zins et al., 2004). According to Roorda et al. (2017), students' academic success is influenced by the emotional and positive connections between teachers and students. A study by Vandenbroucke et al. (2018), found that the rapport between the teacher and students positively affects students' cognitive abilities. Zhou (2021) focused on the relationship between teachers and students and how it influences students' motivation in the classroom clarifying the beneficial impact of positive teacher-learner connections on learner engagement.

In the field of education, there is a considerable body of research on various aspects related to the concept of empathy. These studies explore empathy and its effects on teacher-student relationships (Aydın, 2009; Ugurlu, 2013; Durmuşoğlu Saltalı & Erbay, 2013), empathetic tendencies of teachers (Çelik & Çağdaş, 2010; Akbulut & Sağlam, 2010; Yılmaz, 2011; Saygılı, Kırıkaş & Gülsoy, 2015), level of empathy of teacher candidates (Köksal Akyol & Koçer Çiftçibaşı, 2005; Pala, 2008; Genç & Kalafat, 2008; İkinci & Aybek, 2010; Onay, Eguz & Ünal, 2015), empathy training programs and empathy skills (Yüksel, 2004; Kahraman & Akgün, 2008; Karaca, Açıköz & Akkuş, 2013; Şahin & Akbaba, 2010), the use of empathy in lessons (Keskin, 2007; Çorapçı, 2019; Kaygısız, 2019), students' communication skills and empathy levels (Tutuk, Al & Doğan, 2002; Akgün & Çetin, 2018; Türk, Kaçmaz, Türnüklü & Tercan, 2018), the relationship between students' empathy skills and problem-solving (Yurttaş & Yetkin, 2003), the relationship between empathy and aggression (Filiz, 2009), the empathy status of students' parents (Günindi & Kandır, 2012; Alkış, 2015; Derman, Türen & Buntürk, 2020), thinking about how to show empathy to an entire class and teachers' role on it (Verschelden, 2017), how the interaction between students and teachers affect empathy level of classroom (Kaufman & Schipper, 2018).

Upon reviewing the existing literature, it becomes clear that comprehensive research on empathy among teachers, students, school administrators, and parents is lacking. This gap highlights the need for an in-depth investigation into empathy's role within the educational ecosystem. This study aims to explore teachers' perspectives on how empathy, exhibited by various school stakeholders, impacts the school environment. Key areas of focus include the emotional climate, quality of interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, and student well-being. By gathering and analyzing teachers' opinions, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of empathy's effects and to offer evidence-based recommendations for integrating empathy into school practices.



Ultimately, this study aims to fill a significant gap in the literature by examining empathy's role across different groups within schools. It aspires to pave the way for future research and interventions that promote a more empathetic and supportive educational environment.

Method

This section contains details on the research model, the study group, the data gathering method, and the data analysis. The research was carried out by Sivas Cumhuriyet University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Social and Human Sciences. It was found ethically appropriate with its decision dated 28.06.2022 and numbered 050.06.04-180891-E.60263016.

Model of the research

This study, which investigates the reflections of the concept of empathy on the school environment, is structured in the phenomenology pattern. Phenomenology research is a qualitative research method created by evaluating the experiences of people (Jasper, 1994). While the concept of empathy has been used since the 1800s, it has also been an important concept in educational activities. Phenomenological studies explore concepts that are considered but for which we do not have detailed information (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Considering this importance, the reflections of the concept of empathy in schools were seen as a phenomenon that should be investigated in the research and the phenomenology design was preferred in this research. It has been attempted to learn how high empathy skills in schools affect success, the school environment, and human relations.

Study group

The study group of the research was formed according to the typical case sampling is the determination and selection of a typical, in other words, an ordinary and average situation from among the many situations that exist in the universe related to the research. This method is generally used in studies on large populations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this study, teachers working in various provinces of Turkey. Thus, it is aimed to reveal the different aspects of the phenomenon of empathy. The data were collected in October 2022. Participants are shown as P1, P2, P3... by pseudonyms. While selecting the participants, information about the research was given and they were determined on a voluntary basis. The meeting place and time were arranged in accordance with the participants. 18 of the participants are male and 12 are female. The study group consists of teachers who have been teaching for 1 to 31 years. 16 of the participants work in high schools, 9 in secondary schools, 4 in primary schools and 1 in kindergarten. The branches of the participants also differ.

Data collection

The data of the study were collected through a semi-structured interview form. During the interviews, the teachers who lives in Sivas were interviewed face to face, the teachers who lives in different cities were interviewed over the Zoom application and the interviews were recorded within the knowledge of the participants. According to Saban et al., (2017), semi-structured interview forms



are more advantageous than structured interview forms in terms of reflecting the perspectives of the participants during the interview. The interviews were conducted individually with the participants. The interview forms were developed by the researchers and were finalized by taking the opinion of an academician who is an expert in educational sciences. Following questions are used for interview:

1-What is empathy?

2-How does a school administrator with high empathy skills affect the school environment?

3-How does a teacher with high empathy skills affect the classroom environment?

4-How does a parent with high empathy skills affect student success?

5-How does a student with high empathy skills affect his/her other friends?

6-What can be done for teachers, administrators, parents, and students at school to improve empathy skills?

7-Do you think the Ministry of National Education can empathize with teachers, school administrators, parents, students, and the school environment? Why?

8-Complete the following sentences:

a-Empathy is like..... Because.....

Data analysis

The research data was analysed using content analysis. According to Weber (1989), content analysis is a research method that reveals legitimate interpretations from text through a series of systematic procedures. The sender, the message, and the recipient are all mentioned in these remarks (cited by Koçak & Arun, 2006). By grouping the facts in the data into distinct categories and themes, content analysis aims to make the information more intelligible (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The data gathered in this framework was read to identify the codes, after which categories were made, and themes were derived from these categories. In this context, the initial step involved coding the data obtained from the research. Codes representing similar concepts were then grouped to form categories, leading to the identification of themes. Subsequently, the identified codes and themes were systematically organized and analysed through the stages of defining and interpreting the findings. Additionally, direct quotations were incorporated into the study to enhance the findings derived from the content analysis.

Validity and reliability in research

Convincing the results of the problem investigated in qualitative research is one of the most important conditions of being scientific (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Researchers use validity and reliability to ensure credibility. According to Lakshmi & Mohideen (2013), reliability is the consistency of measurements without errors. Gregory (1992) also explained validity as a test focusing only on what it is measuring while measuring and making a clean measurement without mixing any other factors. Credibility and transferability instead of the concept of validity in qualitative research; The concepts of consistency and confirmability are used instead of reliability (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). During the interviews with the participants throughout the research, a friendly atmosphere was created, sufficient time was allocated for the interview, and at the end of the interview, the participants' statements were summarized and asked if there were any places they would like to add or correct. In doing so, it is aimed to increase credibility. In order to ensure transferability, the opinions of the

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participants were included in the findings section. During the interviews, the same approach was tried to be shown to all the participants, and all the interviews were conducted to ensure the consistency of the research. The data collected during the research and the results obtained afterwards were frequently compared and confirmed.

Findings

Teachers' views on what empathy is structured in two categories, empathy, and perspective, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Teachers' Views on the Concept of Empathy

Categories	Codes	F
Empathy	Sharing the same feelings	25
	Understanding the other person's feelings	50
	Being able to put yourself in the other person's shoes	50
	Making the person feel that they understand them	12
<i>Total</i>		<i>137</i>
Perspective	Understanding feelings and thoughts from the right perspective	15
	Understanding the person's situation and circumstances	19
	Giving the most appropriate response	14
	Being able to show understanding to the other person	19
<i>Total</i>		<i>67</i>
Grand total		204

When the teachers' opinions on the concept of empathy are examined, it is seen that the categories of empathy and perspective come to the forefront. When the table is evaluated in general, the answers given are close to each other. It was determined that the answers of sharing the same emotions (f: 25), being able to put yourself in the other person's shoes (f: 50), understanding the feelings of the other person (f: 50), the ability to understand the other person correctly (f: 22), and to be able to look at things from the other party's point of view (f: 23) were used more by the participants. The prominence of the point of view regarding the concept of empathy in the table can also be expressed as the understanding of the perspectives of the people related to empathy as the most basic condition of empathy. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

"Empathy is a kind of insight we develop to understand what the other person is going through; it is the ability to see one's life through their eyes." (P 25).

Teachers' views on how empathy skill affects human relations are structured in four categories as positive, healthy communication, cooperation and control and are presented in Table 2.



Table 2.
Teachers' Views on How Empathy Skill Affects Human Relations.

Categories	Codes	F
Positive	Building positive relationships	7
	Being tolerant	9
	Feeling valued	6
	Ensuring understanding	13
<i>Total</i>		35
Healthy communication	Developing communication skills	6
	Remove misunderstandings	5
	Communicating accurately and effectively	8
	Solution-oriented communication	4
	Avoiding prejudice	3
	Ensuring quality communication	5
<i>Total</i>		31
Cooperation	Increasing cooperation and solidarity	3
	Dealing with problems together	3
	Exhibiting constructive behaviour	2
	Making yourself feel like you belong in the group	2
	Ensuring sincerity and co-operation	2
<i>Total</i>		12
Control	Controlling things easily	2
<i>Total</i>		2
Grand total		80

When the teachers' opinions on how the concept of empathy affects human relations are examined, it is seen that positive and healthy communication categories come to the forefront. When the table was evaluated in general, it was found that the expressions of ensuring understanding (f: 13), being tolerant of each other by people (f: 9), communicating accurately and effectively (f: 8) were used more by the participants. In the table, it is seen cooperation skills positively affect human relations, benefit a healthy communication, increase, and control. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

"Thanks to empathy, human relations develop and effective communication is established. Disagreements between people are reduced. No one judges anyone without understanding and listening. Empathy frees people from selfishness." (P13).

"Communication is one of the most important elements in human relations. They try to express themselves through communication. People want to be understood, to be cared for, and to feel valued." (P17).

The views of teachers on the effects of a school administrator with high empathy skills on the school environment are structured in five categories as healthy communication, trust, school culture (climate), success and school-environment relations and are presented in Table 3.



Table 3.
Teachers' Views on the School Administrator with High Empathy Skills

Categories	Codes	F
Healthy Communication	Being considerate	19
	Effective and efficient communication	17
	Building good relationships	19
	Motivating style	4
<i>Total</i>		<i>59</i>
Trust	Feeling peaceful and safe	12
	Solution oriented	5
	Respectful	7
	Being Caring	6
<i>Total</i>		<i>30</i>
School Culture School Climate	Sense of commitment to school	5
	Healthy management	2
	Feeling like family	4
	Positive atmosphere	3
	Avoiding conflict	3
<i>Total</i>		<i>17</i>
Success	Efficient work	4
	A comfortable working environment	3
	Dedicated work	2
	Quality education	2
<i>Total</i>		<i>11</i>
School-Environment Relations	Establishing good relations with parents	3
	Understanding school stakeholders	2
<i>Total</i>		<i>5</i>
Grand Total		122

When the opinions of the teachers regarding the empathetic approach of the school administrator are examined, it is seen that the categories of healthy communication, trust, school culture, administrative success and school-environment relations come to the forefront. When the table was evaluated in general, it was found that the expressions of being considerate (f: 19), effective and efficient communication (f: 17), building good relationships (f: 10), feeling peaceful and safe (f: 12) and positive relationship (f: 9) were used more by the participants. In the table, it was seen that teachers interpreted the presence of an empathetic approach in the school administrator as increasing healthy communication and trust. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

"The quality of education in the school environment increases as it will be more docile, kind, polite and respectful in its behaviour towards both students and teachers. Students' sense of self develops and excesses in the school environment are prevented. In peer education, the classroom environment becomes more constructive and better." (P 19).



Teachers' views on the effects of a teacher with high empathy skills on the classroom environment are structured in three categories as communication, success and psychosocial characteristics and are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

Sayfa | 1156

Teachers' Views on the Effects of a Teacher with High Empathy Skills on the Classroom Environment

Categories	Codes	F
Communication	Healthy communication	19
	Responding to needs	4
	Understanding each other	15
Total		38
Trust	Dominating the class	7
	Positive classroom environment	7
	Effective motivation	5
	Use of appropriate technique	5
	Class attendance	4
	Academic efficiency	8
Total		36
Psycho-social Features	Strong emotional bond	3
	Social skills	5
	Problem solving skill	4
	Sincerity	8
	Feeling safe	11
	Happy students	9
	Equality	4
Unconditional acceptance	3	
Total		47
Grand Total		126

When the opinions of the teachers regarding the contributions of a teacher with high empathy skills to the classroom environment are examined, it is seen that the category of psycho-social characteristics comes to the forefront. It was seen that the answers to feeling safe (f:11), understanding each other (f:15), healthy communication (f:19) were given more. In line with the teacher's opinions, communication with the teacher who has the ability to empathize becomes higher quality, and the success of the students also increases. In addition, it has been seen that teachers with empathy skills contribute to the psycho-social development of students. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

"If there is an empathetic communication in the classroom by the teacher, the student will develop a positive attitude towards the teacher and the school. Knowing that he/she is accepted and understood by his/her teacher will enable students to establish strong emotional bonds with their teachers, make them spend more effort on learning and increase their desire for class participation." (P 17).



Teachers' views on the effects of a parent with high empathy skills on student achievement are structured in three categories: academic achievement, contribution to personal development and cooperation, and are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

Teachers' Views on the Effects of a Parent with High Empathy Skills on Student Achievement

Categories	Codes	f
Academic Success	The student involved in the course	13
	Quality education	9
	Successful student	15
	Positive classroom environment	8
<i>Total</i>		45
Contribution to Personal Development	Confident student	7
	Parent who is a role model	16
	Conscious learner	5
	Unconditional acceptance	4
<i>Total</i>		32
Cooperation	Producing solutions	9
	Strong social bond	26
	Positive work environment	8
	Coordinated progress	4
	Using a positive language	9
	Shared posts	7
	Supporting the teacher	15
	Safe environment	5
Quality communication	7	
<i>Total</i>		90
Grand Total		167

When the teachers' opinions on the contributions of a parent with high empathy skills to student success are examined, it is seen that the cooperation category comes to the forefront. It was seen that the answers of powerful social connection (f:26), supporting the teacher (f:15), understanding each other (f:18), parent who is a role model (f:16), successful student (f:15), and the student involved in the course (f:13) were given more. In line with the teachers' opinions, it is argued that there is more cooperation with parents who have empathy. We can also draw the conclusion that parents with empathy make positive contributions to the personal development and academic success of the students. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

"Students always need parents who understand them. When this is achieved, if the student feels understood, his/her success will increase." (P 5).

"One of the most important learning environments for children is the family. Parents are role models for their children. I believe that the statement stating that smoke will not come out of a curved chimney is also true in terms of child development" (P 25).



Teachers' views on how a student with high empathy skills will affect his/her friends are structured in two categories as academic achievement and role model and are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

Sayfa | 1158

Teachers' Views on How a Student with High Empathy Skills Will Affect His/ Her Friends.

Categories	Codes	F
Adaptation to the School Environment	Academic success	11
	Efficient education	9
	Positive classroom climate	7
	Feeling of belonging to school	5
<i>Total</i>		32
Being a Role Model	Exhibiting exemplary behaviour	15
	Problem solving skill	9
	Strong bonds of friendship	33
	Healthy communication	14
	Easy adaptation	9
	Be helpful	7
	Cooperation	8
	Love /respect	11
	Constructive behaviours	6
Being reliable	7	
Total		119
Grand total		151

When the teacher's views on the effect of a student with high empathy skills on his/her friends are examined, it is seen that the category of being a role model comes to the fore. Strong bonds of friendship (f:33), good relations with peers (f:17), exhibiting exemplary behaviour (f:15), healthy communication (f:14), academic achievement (f:11) were given more answers. In line with the teacher's views, students with empathy skills display positive behaviours as role models to their friends. The academic success of these students is also revealed as a result of being more advanced than other students. Some of the participants' views on the subject are presented below:

"A student with developed empathy skills will stay away from peer conflicts as much as possible. A student who can understand his friends and think from their point of view will move away from selfishness and create a more moderate friend environment." (P 1).

"It has positive effects on course success and peer relations, so classroom order is not disrupted and students' behaviour towards each other becomes more frugal and constructive since it will not create an atmosphere of chaos." (P 19).

Teachers' opinions on what to do for teachers, administrators, parents, and students to develop empathy skills in school are structured in four categories as teachers, administrators, parents and students and presented in Table 7.



Table 7.
Teacher Insights into What Can Be Done to Teachers, Administrators, Parents and Students to Improve Empathy Skills.

Categories	Codes	F
For Teachers	In-service training	27
	Moderate school climate	3
	Opportunity to express yourself	2
	Relieving anxiety	3
	Sporting or cultural activities	1
	Movie or book recommendations	3
	Drama activities	5
	Making role play	1
Total		46
For administrators	In-service training	6
	Moderate school climate	1
	Opportunity to develop yourself	2
	Colleague information sharing meetings	1
	Social-cultural activities	1
	Movie or book recommendations	4
	Seminars	12
	Drama activities	5
	School events	2
	School-environmental activities	2
	Making role plays	3
Questionnaire	1	
Total		40
For Parents	Seminars	18
	Making role plays	6
	Parent events	13
	Drama	2
	Movies	3
	Social-cultural activities	4
	Recommend books	2
	Poster-brochure	1
Total		49
	Being a role model	4
	Extra classes	7
	Video-slide presentations	1
	Writing story-letter	1
	Drama	6
	Seminars	8
	Doing Activities	7
	Theatre	2



For Students	Prepare a suitable environment	3
	Making role plays	2
	Recommending books	1
	Getting empathy into the lesson plan	3
	Emotional coaching	1
<i>Total</i>		48
Grand total		183

When the opinions of teachers about what to do for teachers, administrators, parents and students to improve empathy skills at school were examined, it was determined that the expression "seminar" was used more by the participants in all categories. It has been determined that the statements that administrators and teachers can receive in-service training to develop the concept of empathy are also used a lot. Some of the participants' views on the subject are presented below:

"Seminars can be given to parents on empathy, and events can be organized at the school with parent participation. Brochures on the subject can be prepared and delivered to parents. (P 17).

"Students can be given seminars on empathy, activities/games can be organized. Empathy can also be included in classroom guidance plans." (P 22).

The opinions of the Ministry of National Education regarding empathy for teachers, school administrators, parents, students, and school environment are structured in three categories as yes, no, and not sufficient and presented in Table 8.

Table 8.
Teachers' Views on Empathy for the Ministry of National Education, Teachers, School Administrators, Parents, Students, and School Environment.

Categories	Participants	f
Yes	P13, P16, P18, P19	4
<i>Total</i>		4
No	P3, P4, P5, P7, P9, P10, P17, P22, P23, P24, P26, P27, P30	13
<i>Total</i>		13
Not Enough	P1, P2, P6, P8, P11, P12, P14, P15, P20, P21, P25, P28, P29	13
<i>Total</i>		13
Grand Total		30

When we look at the answers of the Ministry of National Education regarding empathy towards teachers, school administrators, parents, students, and the school environment, three categories Dogan, S., Topcu, I., Kocak Kayaci, E. & Tuncer Gunay, E. (2024). Reflections of the concept of empathy the school environment. *Western Anatolia Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15(2), 1145-1168.
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emerged as *yes*, *no*, and *not enough*. When we examine the table, the rate of those who say *yes* (f:4) is the least among the other categories. We see that there is an equality between those who say *no* and *not enough* (f:13). When we look at the answers given, we see that the Ministry of National Education is thought to be lacking in empathy. Some of the participants' views on the subject are presented below:

“Unfortunately, it cannot be done adequately. Because its importance is not believed and there is no knowledge of how it should be.” (P11)

“Yes, it does, the teaching profession law, the constant regulations and the 2023 education vision studies are proof of this.” (P18)

The opinions of the teachers regarding the question of what is lacking in a school without empathy are structured in four categories as peace, success, communication, and discipline and are presented in Table 9.

Table 9.
Teachers' Views on the Question of What Is Missing in a School without Empathy.

Categories	Codes	f
Peace	Mobbing	2
	Distrust	7
	Unrest	5
	Respect- Love	10
	Loyalty	4
	Unsympathetic individuals	3
<i>Total</i>		<i>31</i>
Success	Academic success	4
	Quality education process	2
	Common goal	3
<i>Total</i>		<i>9</i>
Communication	A healthy relationship	8
	Healthy communication	15
<i>Total</i>		<i>23</i>
Discipline	Conflict	2
	Peer bullying	4
	Behavioural disorders	5
<i>Total</i>		<i>11</i>
Grand total		74

When teachers' opinions about what is missing in a school without empathy are examined, it is seen that the categories of peace and communication come to the fore. Love-respect (f:9), distrust (f:7), healthy communication (f:15) answers were given more frequently. It can be stated that there will be an uneasy environment in schools where empathy is lacking, and it can be interpreted that not establishing a healthy communication may cause some problems. Some of the participants' views on the subject are presented below:



“In a school without empathy, success decreases and peer bullying occurs. Mobbing happens.” (P6).

“A relationship based on trust cannot be established between school-teacher-parent-student in a school without empathy. Communication barriers arise. Cooperation and solidarity are reduced.” (P13).

The metaphor examples given by the teachers regarding the concept of empathy are presented in Table 10.

Table 10.
Examples of Metaphors Related to the Concept of Empathy.

METAPHOR NAME	f	METAPHOR NAME	f
The drive to success	1	Window	1
Tree	1	Shoes	1
Book	1	Magnet	1
Dessert	1	Fall off the roof	1
Theatre	1	Rose	1
Social relationship organizer	1	Justice	1
Identification	1	Dependence	1
Mirror	5	Soul	1
Sun	1	Blanket	1
Source of healing	2	The foundation of the building	1
Water	1	Medicine	1
Holding a pen	1	The cog of the wheel	1
Life	1	TOTAL	30

As can be seen in the table, teachers' metaphor examples of have always been positive. Some of the views of the participants on the subject are presented below:

“Empathy is like a tree. Because it grows and spreads as you water it.” (P 2).

“Empathy is like a book. Because in order to understand a book, you put yourself in that character's shoes. You start reading the book and as you progress you will understand how the events developed and on what basis they are based, and after the book is finished, you will have absorbed all the events. So is empathy.” (P 3).

Discussion and Conclusion

The most basic feature of educational organizations is that they have environments where communication and interaction processes are intense. For educational organizations to be efficient, they need to make these interactions qualified in their management processes. One of the prominent concepts in making communication and interaction qualified is to exhibit empathy behavior. The empathy of stakeholders who come together in educational organizations towards each other facilitates cooperation, solidarity and goal achievement.



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Empathy behavior, which is one of the skills of the future and one of the skills that make a difference, has a decisive effect on educational leadership and school administration in today's world of rapid change. Because "Making a difference includes empathizing, being aware of your feelings, being curious and open-minded, being brave and flexible, being thoughtful and ethical, and contributing to social transformation" (Akbaş & Yöney, 2019, s. 6). It is seen that there is a strong link between the ability to create a positive learning environment at school, which is one of the most fundamental goals of educational leadership, and the emotional characteristics of administrators. It is stated that empathy and sensitivity, which are among the emotional characteristics, have a very important place in creating a positive climate in schools. At the classroom level, teachers' empathetic behaviors make students feel happy and free. The emotions created by teachers and administrators who approach their students with empathy lead to much more positive results. In such situations, students feel accepted, respected and better understood (Stojiljkovic & Dijigicand Zlatkovic, 2012, 961).

In the perceptions of the teachers participating in this study regarding the concept of empathy, the dimensions of sympathy and having a positive perspective come to the fore. The power of sympathy and having a positive perspective in the interaction between stakeholders in educational environments is obvious. The fact that individuals who are stakeholders in educational organizations share the same feelings, can place other individuals in the right perceptions, put themselves in the shoes of other individuals and try to understand their feelings, and look at events from the other party's point of view enables a strong communication to emerge. It is important that the participants emphasized this in this study. This strong communication based on empathy gains even more importance, especially during periods of change and transformation that schools need. In the school environment, it is emphasized that stakeholders cooperate in sympathy and that the parties understand each other correctly. This will naturally reduce resistance to change. Thus, obstacles to the school's self-renewal and development can be eliminated.

This positive atmosphere at the school level is reflected in student behavior. "Empathy, which comes to life in learning environments, provides the mental conditions for children to connect with themselves, with each other and with what they are learning, and to begin to learn. Whatever path people choose or whatever task they undertake, empathizing with others' feelings and perspectives is the foundation for good communication, collaboration, creative problem solving, and strong leadership." (Akbaş & Yöney, 2019, 7). Therefore, teachers and administrators who can develop sympathy and a common perspective in their schools contribute significantly to the achievement of the school's purpose. It is also important to emphasize these two concepts strongly in the study.

The teachers who participated in the research think that there is a positive relation between the level of empathy behavior and human interactions. They think that people who can show empathic behavior can understand each other better, act more tolerant towards each other, and communicate correctly and effectively. Thus, they have the perception that empathy behavior positively affects human relations between individuals, contributes to healthy communication in the organizational environment, and increases cooperation and control. Although there is no generalization in terms of the results of this study, it is seen that the studies conducted on a similar subject are consistent with the findings of this study. In a study conducted by Aytaç (2014), it was revealed that there was a positive relationship between empathy tendency and adaptive behavior, integration and

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reconciliation. In a similar study, Rahim et al. (2000) concluded that employees with high levels of empathy were more successful in managing conflicts and problems with their managers (as cited in Aytaç, 2014, 191). Accordingly, it is understood that school administrators with high empathy skills establish more effective communication in the school environment, provide more trust to employees and create a positive school culture. In addition, school-environment relations are better in the schools of administrators with high levels of empathy, and as a result, student achievement is higher in these schools and the goals of the schools are met.

Teachers' views on their empathy levels and the results of their reflections on classroom management were evaluated in three dimensions. The results show that a teacher with high empathy skills achieves better results in 1) developing communication skills in the classroom, 2) being successful in classroom management and 3) improving the social psychological characteristics of the classroom. For example, when the contribution of teachers with high empathy skills to the classroom environment is considered in terms of psycho-social characteristics, it is understood that they are more advantageous in terms of giving confidence to students, developing mutual understanding, making students feel happy, establishing healthy communication, closeness and strong bonds. All these show the importance of empathy behavior in the quality of classroom management.

In the study, the idea that empathy and communication training given to pre-service teachers and teachers will lead to positive changes in pre-service teachers and teachers emerges. It is accepted that those who receive training in this direction can establish healthier communication with students, parents and colleagues. It is stated that students can express themselves more easily in the classrooms of these teachers. It is thought that teachers with empathy skills can create a classroom environment with a positive climate and at the same time raise individuals with high communication skills.

In a study examining the relationship between teachers' empathy competencies and classroom management skills, it was found that there was a positive and significant relationship between teachers' empathy skills and classroom management skills (Akkaş-Ergün, 2021). In the related study, it was concluded that teachers with high empathy skills also have high classroom management competencies. Genç & Kalafat (2010) examined the relationship between pre-service teachers' empathy tendencies and problem-solving skills and concluded that there is a positive relationship between these two.

The teachers who participated in the study think that administrators with high empathy skills have important effects on developing a sense of trust, establishing a healthy communication network, creating a positive school culture and school success. The empathy behavior of administrators who are thought to be effective in the dimensions of trust between stakeholders, healthy communication, positive school culture and school success is important. Developing empathy skills in administrator training and appointment processes and appointing individuals with high empathy skills will help schools to manage more effectively and achieve their goals.

Another result obtained within the scope of the research is the one related to parents. The participation and support of parents' school education is important in the success and achievement of schools. In the research, it is thought that parents with high empathy skills can contribute more to the



education process. The belief that parents with high empathy skills can contribute to student success and students' personal development by cooperating with the school has emerged. The same is also true for students. When the findings related to the student component are examined, it is thought that students with high empathy skills are more advantageous in being role models for their peers, establishing good relationships with their peers and exhibiting positive exemplary behaviors. According to the participants of the study, these students also have positive views on establishing strong friendship bonds, having healthy communication skills and achieving better academic success. In line with the findings and conclusions of the research, the following recommendations were developed:

1. In teacher training programs, courses and practices aimed at developing empathy and communication skills of prospective teachers can be included.
2. In-service training programs for teachers can include courses to develop empathy skills.
3. In-service trainings and seminars on empathy and communication can be organized for administrators and teachers.
4. Inspectors and administrators, who are expected to play a leadership role in education, can guide teachers in developing empathy behaviors and related issues.
5. Information on effective communication, empathy skills, self-confidence and self-esteem can be provided to students in schools.
6. Similarly, seminars and activities can be organized for parents to develop effective communication and empathy skills.



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