

# Teachers' Communication Skills as a Factor For A Good Organizational Climate In The Schools

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## Abstract

Communication is something that enriches our life as well as the life of others. It is one of the key terms of our time. Also, it is much more than an exchange of words, thoughts and ideas. We meet our basic physical and social needs with communication, and that is why its importance is big.

In these modern times, teachers are given new roles as an addition to the ones related to teaching and learning. Considering the fact that the teacher is constantly establishing relationships with other people (students, parents, other teachers, the rest of the school staff, the principal..), the teacher is engaging the different instances of his/her personality. Modern changes in the overall system of educating and education require the teacher to be a person of trust, an educator, a counselor, an organizer, a coordinator, a collaborator, an innovator, an assessor, a mentor: in one word, to be a versatile person that with the communication abilities and skills will affect the creation of a healthy organizational climate in the school.

**Key words:** communication, communication skills, organizational climate, assertiveness, emotions, teachers, school

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## I. Introduction

The goal of communication is nothing but the establishment of a community and sociability. Communication fulfills the basic human need - to be in touch with other people. We all communicate in one way or another, and we are all able to communicate. The essence is to find the right channel through which we will send a right and well-defined message to the recipient. Everything we do in life requires communicating. It is the basis of interpersonal relationships and it is one of the most dynamic, complex and comprehensive activities of people in society.

Also, communication represents the basis of educating and education, and is the foundation for successful teaching. The basic tool for educating and education is the conversation between the teacher and the students, between the teachers themselves, between the students, between school staff.

The teacher that possesses communication skills and is constantly improving the communication competencies, is more successful in the interaction with students, and the students are more productive. But, the interaction with the other teachers and employees of the school is improved as well.

Assertiveness is a way of communication that enables the expression of attitudes, needs, wishes and emotions in such a way that will not violate the emotions and rights of others. Teachers who are assertive and communicate in that way have no problem expressing their wishes, opinions, attitudes and needs. The efficiency of pedagogical communication lies in mutual respect, and honest and equal treatment. Assertive communication in education is of big importance for the formation of positive interpersonal relationships, and a quality pedagogical climate. Teachers who possess assertive communication skills teach students about respect and empathy, thus eliminating the development of discrimination.

## II. Theoretical Knowledge Related To The Subject Of The Research

The subject of the research are the needed communication skills of the teachers in the school in order to build a healthy organizational climate. This is about important factors for ensuring quality teaching, and good work of the school.

The organizational climate is the feeling for the organization, i.e., the individual and shared perceptions and attitudes of the members in the working organization. The climate in the schools reflects the beliefs about the feeling that the teachers have for the schools, including the other employees in the school as well. This

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individual perception related to how they feel about school comes from what employees think and believe about the activities undertaken, the way life and work at the school unfold. These activities affect both individual motivation and job satisfaction, as well as joint and team work.

Schools with a healthy climate are characterized by:

- An established neat and pleasant working environment;
- An established value and reward system;
- An established atmosphere of order and discipline;
- An established good collaboration with the parents and the children;
- An established system for developing positive attitudes among staff;
- An established system for decision-making and implementation of the same;
- An established system of open and honest communication.

The established communication system in one organization has the same role as the bloodstream in the human body. If there is no continuous transmission of information to the employees, then it can be seen as an "anemia" of the organization, and it loses its vitality and vigor in the work, hence apathy prevails among employees. Communication means sharing, sharing of information, ideas or feelings. The most important moment in communication is the transmission of information. In principle, communication is done through four different channels:

- With facts (or at least what people think are facts based on their own experience);
- Through feelings (people's reactions to some emotional plan in a specific situation);
- Through values (long-lasting and unchanged beliefs of people, about themselves, society and culture);
- Through opinions (attitudes that people give about their own position in a given situation, i.e., their views that are subjective and not objective).

The most common misconceptions about communication are the following:

- Good communication skills are natural;
- People communicate through words only;
- Communication is always a conscious and deliberate activity;
- Communication always leads to better understanding and better solving of the problems.

In the context of strengthening the school climate, the assertive behavior and communication of the teachers are of special importance. Assertiveness is a very important feature in the behavior of every person, and therefore deserves special attention, especially for the need to appear, given the fact that the effects of non-assertive behavior are clear and proven in everyday experience. The existence of assertive behavior, and the use of assertive communication is an important factor in the ethos of any educational organization. Assertive behavior and communication is, in fact, proactive behavior and communicating.

When it comes to communicating between people, in everyday life, but also on a professional level, then we can not but touch on the issue of the role of emotions, and of course emotional intelligence in people. This is especially important for teachers.

Emotions are the ones that drive people to make or change something in life and work, to master or overcome various obstacles or problems, to build a different relationship with the people around them, to re-evaluate a given situation or to accept something. These emotions lead people to constantly adapt to new conditions and situations.

The theory of emotional intelligence was set by Ayman Sawaf (Co-Founder of Advanced technologies for intelligence and president of the Foundation for knowledge in educational literacy), and Robert Cooper from Q-metrics Executive EQ. They look at emotional intelligence as "the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power of emotions", and they point that there are three broad aspects of emotional intelligence with 14 factors in them:

1. Emotional literacy (emotional self-awareness, emotional expression and emotional consciousness for others);
2. Emotional competencies ( purposefulness, creativity, elasticity, interpersonal relationships and constructive dissatisfaction);
3. Values and benefits (compassion, intuition, value radius or radius of trust, personal power and integrity).

The psychologist Daniel Goleman has formulated the most familiar theory about emotional intelligence in 1995. According to Goleman, "emotional intelligence is about a different approach towards what it means to be smart. That is not the personal IQ. That is about how good one person works in a team, the ability to lead. That is the capacity to recognise the personal feelings and the feelings of others in order to motivate each individual to better lead the personal emotions (in relationships as well), or interact with other people."

### III. Empirical Research

The research was conducted in March 2022 in 17 primary schools, and has included 177 teachers/respondents out of which 114 (64 %) were women, and 63 (36 %) were men.

There was a questionnaire designed for the purpose of the research, in the form of a scale with attitudes and opinions, with given 17 statements (claims). Each respondent had to grade each statement with a grade from 1 to 4, with the following meaning of each grade:

- 1- don't agree with the statement/claim
- 2- partially agree
- 3- agree
- 4- completely agree

To continue, a quantitative analysis was made based on the collected, filled and processed information. As a result, the following table has been compiled.

	Teachers in schools have these needed characteristics in the communication with students, their parents and other employees	1	2	3	4
1	Self-control in communication	24	84	63	6
2	Tolerance	15	72	75	15
3	Collegiality – collaboration	27	75	66	9
4	Openness	15	72	78	12
5	Selflessness	24	72	72	9
6	Consistency	24	75	69	9
7	Responsibility	24	72	69	12

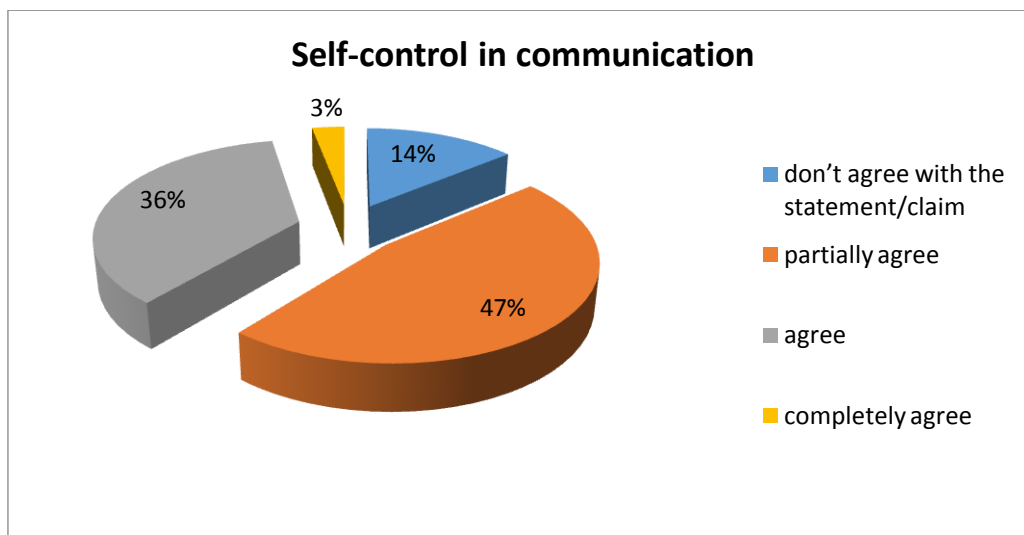
Table 1: Attitudes and opinions of the respondents about the communication skills of the teachers  
Based on the results from the previous table 1, the average value or coefficient of significance for each statement was calculated.

		Average
1	Self-control in communication	2.29
2	Tolerance	2.51
3	Collegiality – collaboration	2.32
4	Openness	2.49
5	Selflessness	2.37
6	Consistency	2.36
7	Responsibility	2.39

Table 2: Average value or coefficient of significance for each statement

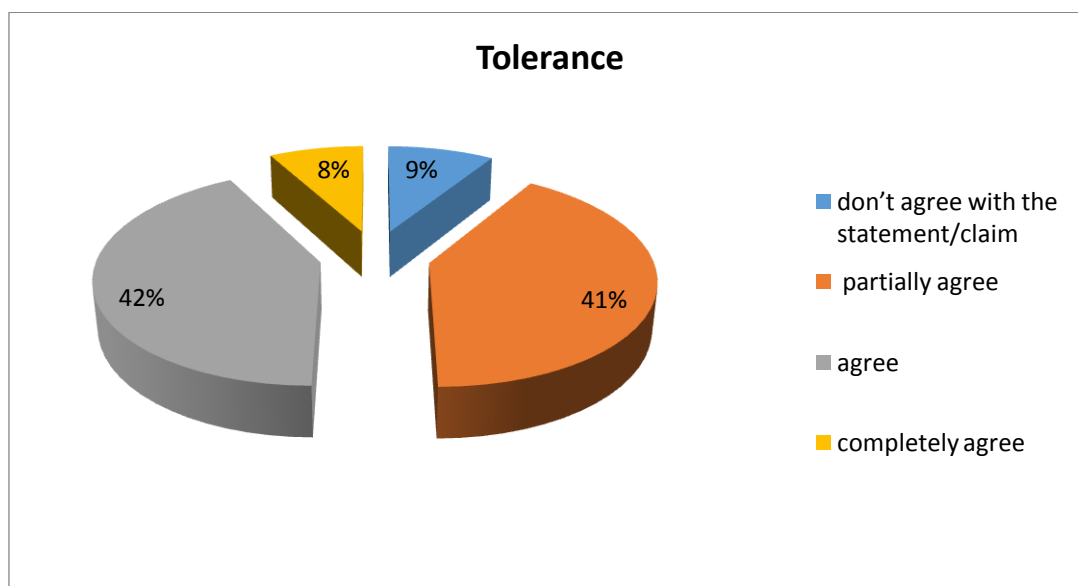
A quantitative analysis was made based on Table 1 and Table 2, and a graphic representation is given for each statement.

In statement no.1: “Self-control in communication”, the biggest number of respondents 84 (47.5 %) responded that they “partially agree”, and 63 (35.6 %) that “they agree.” Attributively, 24 respondents (13.6 %) “don't agree.” The calculated average/ coefficient is very low (2.29). As a conclusion, related to self-control in communication and according to the respondents: teachers are not on the needed level. This leads to dissatisfaction of students and their parents on the one hand, and a deteriorating school climate on the other.



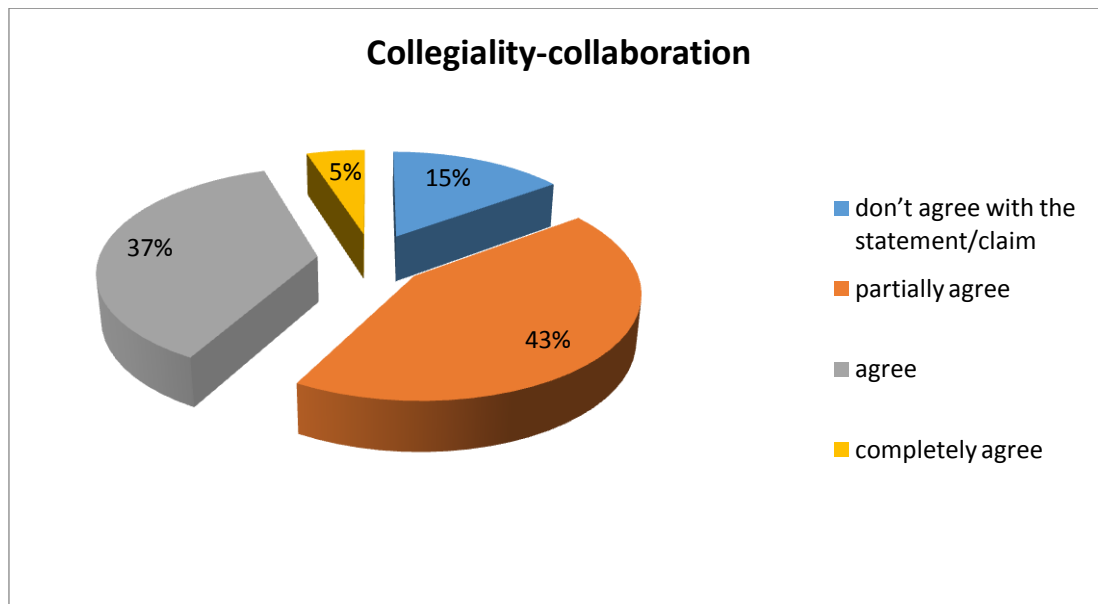
Graph 1: Self-control in communication

Related to statement no.2: “Tolerance”, the results are slightly better compared to the previous two. Namely, the biggest number of respondents, 75 (42.4 %) answered that they “agree”, and 72 (40.7 %) “partially agree.” But, it is worth to mention that 15 respondents (8.5 %) completely agree with the given statement. According to this, we can conclude that 90 respondents (50.8 % - more than half) are with the attitude that teachers are tolerant with students, their parents and with the other employees. The calculated coefficient is 2.51, which affirms the statement “I agree.”



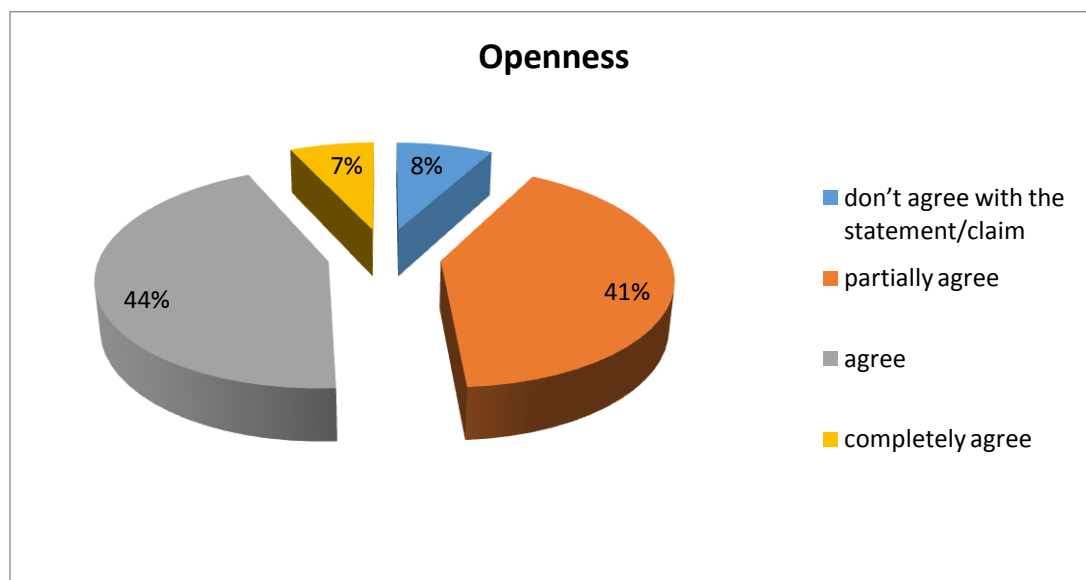
Graph 2: Tolerance

Almost identical results are received with statement no.3: “Collegiality – collaboration.” Namely, 75 respondents (42.4 %) responded with “partially agree”, and a relative high number of 27 respondents (15.2 %) responded with “don't agree.” An affirmative response has been received by 75 respondents (42.4 %) or a smaller number of teachers i.e., by that they've shown dissatisfaction of the quality of teachers' behaviour (average grade 2.32). An unsatisfactory grade for collegiality i.e., collaboration between teachers is an indicator for a bad working climate in the school.



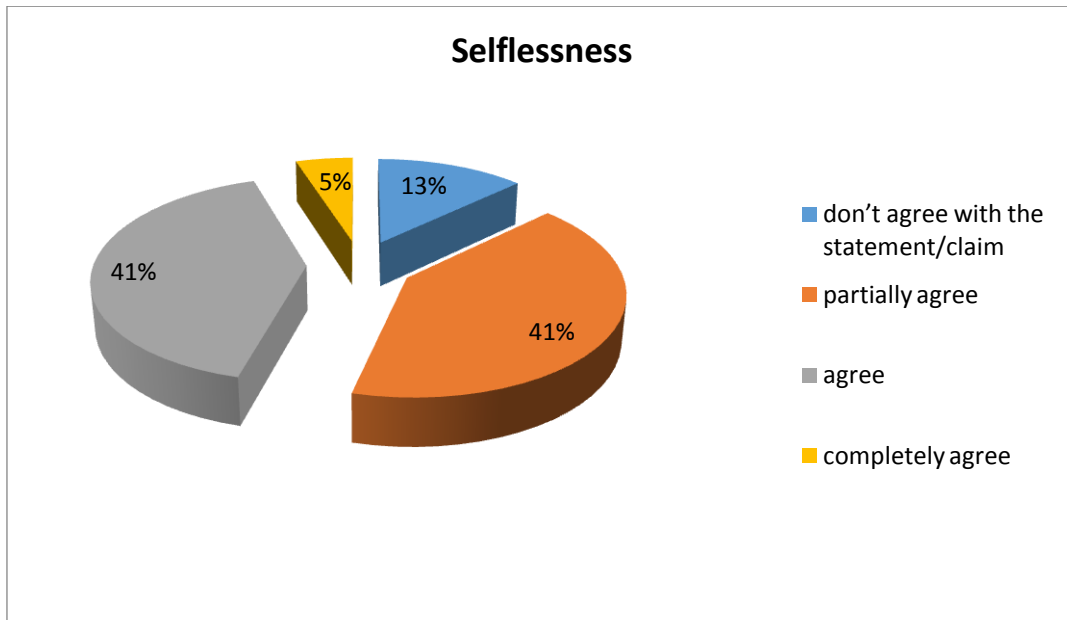
Graph 3: Collegiality – collaboration

The situation related to statement no.4 is relatively better: “Openness.” It is about an individual trait in communicating i.e., as an indicator for confidence while doing teacher-related things. But, that affirmativeness can be relativized depending on the situation, i.e., the managing and the climate in the school. In this case, the average grade is 2.49, i.e., almost half of the answers of the respondents are affirmative, but the other half indicates their disagreement with the statement.



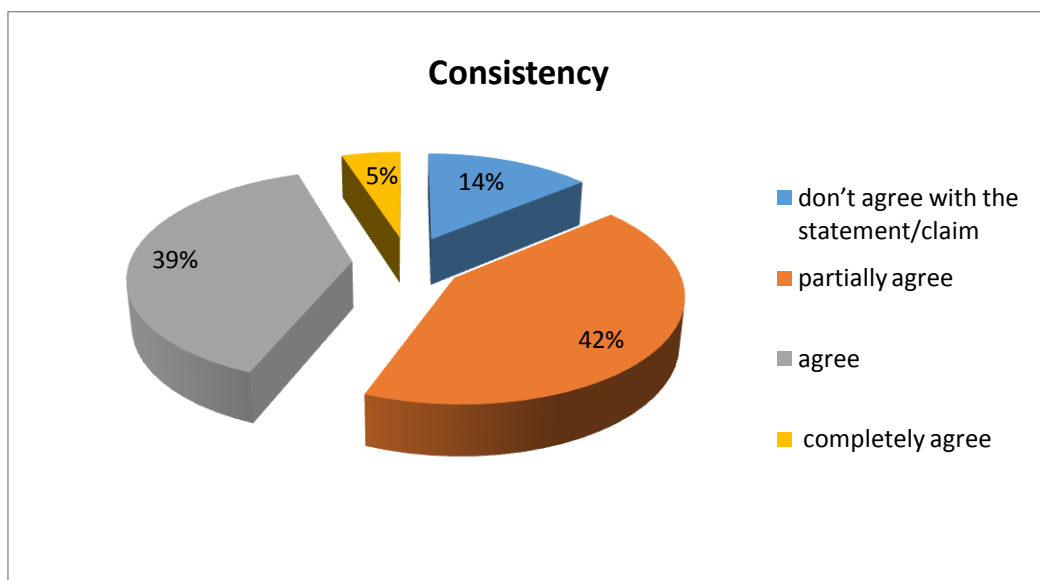
Graph 4: Openness

In statement no.5: "Selflessness", 72 respondents (40.7%) expressed the attitude "partially agree", and 24 respondents (13.6%) "disagree." Accordingly, 96 respondents (54.3%) generally don't have a positive attitude, which is confirmed by the average grade of 2.37. The low rating of the trait "selflessness" is an indicator of the unsatisfactory climate for work in the school, which has a bad effect on the satisfaction of students, their parents and of course the school staff.



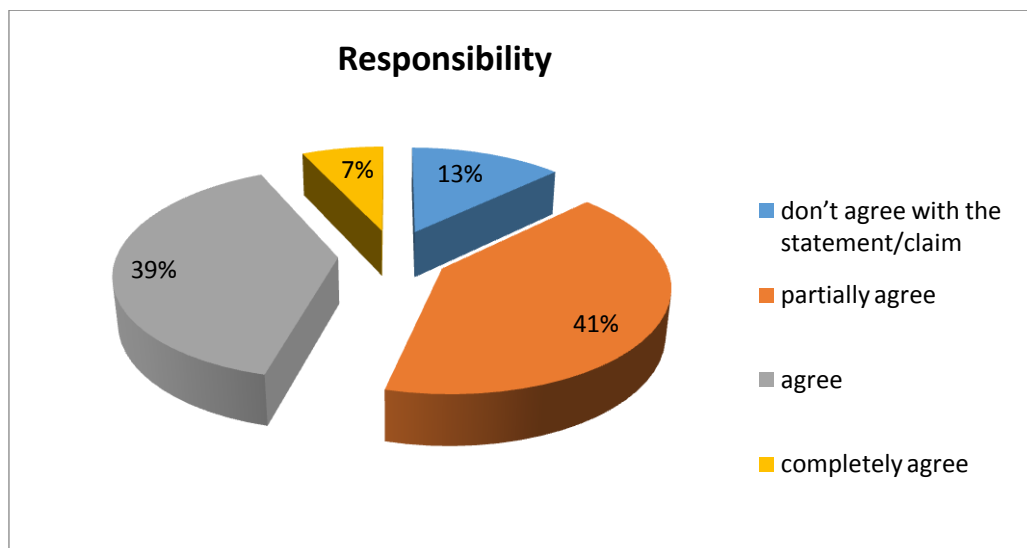
Graph 5: Selflessness

In statement no. 6: "Consistency" there are almost identical results as in statement 5. A total of 99 respondents (56%) have the attitude that they generally don't agree. Namely, 75 (42.4%) "partially agree", and 24 (13.6%) "do not agree." This results in a low average grade of 2.36. The inconsistency in communication is an indicator of dissatisfaction of all involved parties in the school, but it is also a sign of a bad organizational climate.



Graph 6: Consistency

Similar results were obtained with statement no. 7: "Responsibility." Namely, a total of 96 respondents (54.2%) express disagreement with the statement. Out of these, 72 (40.6%) "partially agree", and 24 (13.6%) "disagree." The average grade is relatively low at 2.39. Taking into consideration the importance of responsibility for the execution of work tasks, it is visible that the majority of the respondents - teachers have expressed their dissatisfaction. It should be noted that the lack of responsibility within employees in an organization disrupts interpersonal relationships, and has a negative effect on the work climate in the organization. A graphic display will follow.



Graph 7: Responsibility

The analysis based on the received results presents a clear picture that according to the results, teachers do not have sufficiently developed communication skills. This reflects on the quality of teaching, collaboration with students and their parents, professional collaboration with other employees in the school, and certainly has a negative impact on the school climate. This means that teachers need training in "soft skills" or social skills, especially in communication skills, and strengthening the emotional competencies.

#### IV. Summary

Communication skills and competencies of the teacher should be an incentive for the development of communication competencies of the student, but also a factor for the development of a healthy organizational climate in the school. Successful communication of the teacher with students, parents, school staff and the principal, has an affect on the relationship of students towards peers, teachers, parents, school. It also contributes to the development of social competencies, which are the basis for the development of social relations in school and in society. By developing their communication skills and applying assertive behavior, teachers will be able to eliminate or avoid unnecessary conflicts and misunderstandings, avoid unreasonable demands in an acceptable way, for themselves and others in the school environment. They can influence the behavior of other important participants in school life, in order to build a positive school climate.

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