European Journal of Contemporary Education

ELECTRONIC JOURNAL

Empowerment and Power of a Teacher through Contributing to Positive Relationships and Using Positive Discipline in the School Environment: Teachers' Experiences in Two Baltic Countries

Vilma Žydžiūnaitė [a, b, *], Baiba Martinsone [c]

[a] Educational Research Institute, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania
[b] Institute of Pedagogy, Silesian University, Katowice, Poland
[c] Department of Psychology, University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

Abstract
There is growing evidence of the role of relationships in teaching, learning and disciplining. This research aimed to compare Latvian and Lithuanian teachers' experiences regarding their empowerment through contributing to positive relationships and power through using positive discipline in school environment. The research questions were two: What does empowerment mean to teachers through their contribution to positive relationships in the school environment? What does the use of positive discipline in the classroom mean for teachers in regard to their power? The total sample consisted of 152 teachers from LV and LT. The research was implemented by applying semi-structured interviews with focus groups and using latent qualitative content analysis for data analysis. Findings showed that LT teachers express their expectations for relationship improvement, while Latvian teachers speak about actions for implementing empowering relationships in the school environment; LT teachers emphasize their power through creating the dyadic trustful, group-related relationships with students as a basic for teaching/learning, while LV teachers use the potential of the school community. Conclusions highlight that LT teachers relate positive discipline to learning from experience which means learning knowledge and skills through direct practice. This entails teachers and students reflecting on the experience they have had to identify new skills and knowledge that they can use within the specific context, case or situation. Regarding their power to apply positive discipline, LV teachers highlight their individual responsibility for structuring the learning environment and managing the classroom, which is related to the teacher's professional expertise/teaching methodology.
Keywords: focus group, positive discipline, positive relationships, qualitative research, school, semi-structured interview, student, teacher empowerment, teacher power.

* Corresponding author
E-mail addresses: vilma.zydziunaite@vdu.lt (V. Žydžiūnaitė)

1. Introduction

Teacher empowerment attracts the increasing attention of researchers many areas, due to its correlations with teaching/learning quality and outcomes, teachers' input into job satisfaction, organizational commitment and professional identity (Lee, Jie 2014). Empowerment means that the school affords teachers the motivation towards professional growth and development, and continuous learning (Sharp, 2009; Warrah et al., 2019; Gülşen, Çelik, 2021). Empowered teachers make greater contributions into the school environment, and add to creating positive relationships between teachers, students, parents, and school administration (Amoli, Youran, 2014). Empowerment of the teacher through creating positive relationships is an important tool to help students to be successful in any context at school and in society (Mlalazi et al., 2016). Teacher-student relationships have long-lasting implications for students' learning achievements and social development. Positive teacher-student relationships strengthen students' desire to learn (Rimm-Kaufman, Sandilos, 2023). Positive working relationships between teachers empower them to assist their colleagues. They feel safe to be a part of the community of practice at schools (Folasade Akinyemi et al., 2020). A trusting relationship between teacher and school administration is a crucial component of the educational process. A school climate with trust empowers teachers for professional growth and self-confidence (Parker, 2019).

The term 'power' is commonly employed in a wide variety of academic disciplines. The definitions of the term are dissimilar from one discipline to another (Reddy et al., 2021). Power refers to a teacher's ability to affect in some way the student's well-being beyond the student's own control. This narrow view means the absence of intellectual influence on the student (Hurt et al., 1978). Broader views of power are expressed by McClelland (1975), Zaleznik and Kets de Vries (1975). Power is an individual's potential to have an effect on another person's or group of persons' behaviors. This means that the person changes her/his behavior, attitudes or beliefs as an outcome of influence from someone else (McCroskey, Richmond, 1983).

Power and positive discipline within the teacher's work are interrelated. Positive discipline, as a component of teacher power is a crucial in the students' learning. Its aim is to create an educational environment for meaningful learning (Tartari, 2018). Positive discipline means the teacher's role in forming and supporting students' self-esteem, nurturing their autonomy, and fostering their sense of self-confidence (Bej, 2016). Positive discipline ensures educational tools that focus on students' growth through instruction, allowing them to develop their potential (Mlalazi et al., 2016). Positive discipline emphasizes such supportive behaviors as mutual respect, effective communication, collegial planning, setting standards, addressing the causes of misbehavior, and constantly assessing the implementation of discipline (Tartari, 2018). Generally, discipline is student-teacher collaboration based on their positive relationships characterized by warmth and closeness, responsiveness, and high level of positive affect (O'Connor et al., 2011; Hughes, Cao, 2018).

Literature review on an international scale showed that the majority of research is focused on specific aspects – positive relationships at school or positive discipline in the classroom. The fundamental focus in research studies on positive relationships is exclusively related to the teacher-student dyad. When it comes to the use of positive discipline in the classroom, research mostly focuses exclusively on the psychological attitude by emphasizing specific strategies. Consequently, the research findings represent a fragmented perspective on the phenomenon. So here it is necessity to build an integrated research approach with the focus on teacher empowerment seen through teacher-created multidirectional positive relationships in the school environment and positive discipline used as a component of teacher's power in the classroom. Neither in Lithuania, nor in Latvia, nor on an international scale, was it possible to find such kind of studies, even more so, comparative ones based on the qualitative research paradigm. Thus, the research questions were the following: What does empowerment mean to teachers through their contribution to positive relationships in the school environment? What does the use of positive discipline in the classroom mean for teachers in regard to their power?

The research aimed to compare Latvian and Lithuanian teachers' experiences regarding their empowerment through contributing to positive relationships and power through using positive discipline in school environment.

2. Literature review
Teacher empowerment

Empowerment is a process of bringing into a state of ability or capacity to act. In this process teachers develop the competence to take responsibility of their professional development and solving problems, and adapting to situation in order to improve it (Chamberlin, 2008). Teacher empowerment involves critical thinking in problem solving and being a part of decision-making process, sense of self-efficacy and impact (Eaker, 2008). In decision-making within the school environment teachers feel that they control their professional lives, teaching and learning in a classroom, and that they are appreciated and are capable of making input into positive relationships at school (Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008). Empowered teachers use their professional autonomy and professional expertise to improve teaching and learning processes (Shaver, 2004). Empowerment and self-effectivenness correlate with increased teacher professional and self-confidence, improved fellow teacher cooperation and collaboration, higher professional motivation and learning achievements of students (Fleck, 2005).

In terms of using positive discipline in relationship with students, teacher empowerment is related to their interaction with students, student behavior and achievements (Squire-Kelly, 2012). Empowered teachers create rules, implement mutual reinforcement through mutual discussions and managing the classroom by engaging students into sustaining discipline within it (Buksnyte-Marmiene et al., 2022).

The school environment as a set of relationships between the members of a school community is important in supporting teachers' empowerment through professional autonomy and teacher involvement in problem solving, respectful mutual communication and supportive cooperation (Blasé, Blasé, 2001; Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020).

Communication is an aspect of teachers' input into positive relationships in the school environment. Open communication between teachers and administrators means their ability to share information, opinions, attitudes, resources and news (Kiral, 2020; Calisici Celik, Kiral 2022).

Positive relationships in school provide opportunities for teachers, students, parents and school administration to learn from each other (Bogler, Somech, 2004). Teachers perceiving a stronger sense of empowerment believe that they can impact the work of school and positive relationships within it, facilitate the control of students in a classroom through positive discipline, and that they have the power to set the issues, initiate teaching and learning innovations and institutional change (Ubben et al., 2001).

Positive relationships of a teacher

Positive teacher-student relationships promote students' development (Pianta, Hamre, Stuhlman, 2003; Williford, Wolcott, 2015). Students' self-efficacy beliefs and self-confidence to succeed within different domains at school, has an impact on their learning achievements. Within the teacher-student relationship, teachers contribute to individual students' positive identity as learners (Jederlund, von Rosen, 2022). Teachers who maintain positive relationships with students have had an impact on their adjustment (Wentzel, 2012), including improvement in students' behavior in non-classroom settings (Cash et al., 2019).

For students, a positive teacher relationship is about being listened to and having their teacher take an interest in their lives. Students want to be respected and understood as individuals by a teacher who communicates with them and provides caring and positive feedback at a time (Telli, den Brok, 2012). For teachers, a positive relationship with students is about being supportive, and being aware of the teacher's position of power. It requests teacher self-reflection as an important aspect of effective teaching (Mena Marcos et al., 2008; Martinsone, Damberga, 2016; Pihlaja, Holst, 2013). By setting high expectations for learning and attempts to keep the classroom conflict-free the teacher needs to evoke trust with students, to set clear boundaries and to promote motivation for learning (Martin et al., 2015).

Teachers' relationships at school are multidirectional. They spend a lot of energy and time building relationships with their students and the parents of students. Building relationships with one's colleagues can provide advice and guidance (Folasade Akinyemi et al., 2020).

Positive relationships between the teacher and school administration maintain the teacher's empowerment at school (Reddy et al., 2021). One of tasks of the school's administration is to support and empower teachers. This builds the trust and confidence of teachers (Parker, 2019).

Power of the teacher

A teacher's power through teaching and student learning influences teacher-student relationships, learning outcomes and motivation of students, teaching experiences and achievement of teaching/learning goals (Finn, 2012).

Gordon (1989) highlights four types of power in terms of knowledge, expertise, acquisition of skills, and job-related power. It provides authority for teachers to influence others. Teachers use their expertise-based and job-related power, focusing on commitment and contractual arrangements, to influence students positively and achieve their cooperation (Hawamdeh, 2013).

Larrivee (2004) claims that expertise-based power relates to a teacher's subject knowledge and competence. The referent power pertains to the communication-based teacher-student relationship and involves students' respect for teachers (McClelland, 1975).

Thompson (2019) emphasizes that influence is the capacity to persuade others to believe certain things and behave in particular ways or to cause processes to move in a particular direction. These results reflect the vision, values and expectations of the person exercising the power of influence. If a person in a position of authority has more power, her/his concerns about trust are less in dealing with others who have less relative power, because s/he can sanction a person who violates the authority's trust. If the person in a position of authority has limited power, s/he is more vulnerable in relationships in which s/he has limited trust in others (Turner, 2005; Hurley, 2006; Overbeck, 2010).

Four traits are crucial in recognition of teacher authority and power: interaction between teacher and students, learning activities based upon predetermined educational objectives, organized teaching/learning design with the focus on context and facilities, developing student learning opportunities and facilitating students' learning (Esmaeili et al., 2015). So, the styles of conversations teachers have with students represent the message how they use power to develop relationships with students, influence their learning behavior and motivation (Reid, Kawash, 2017).

Positive discipline used by a teacher

In a classroom the teacher implements teaching for student learning so that they develop individually and socially (Khalkhali, 2010). Positive discipline in education is associated with classroom management, which is directed at creating a calm atmosphere for supporting the learning and holistic development of students (Stronge et al., 2011; Stevens, 2018). Teachers understand that conflicts with students lead to a negative classroom climate. Teachers are aware that good relationships with students help to keep them attentive and engaged in learning (van Tartwijk et al., 2009).

Building positive classroom discipline is considered to be of significant concern for teachers, school administration, students and parents. Teachers and school administration strive to achieve educational outcomes and implement effective teaching/learning, students expect to receive a good quality of education, and parents would like to have more positive discipline in the classroom by influencing their children's learning process and achievements, and positive changes in students' behavior (Hawamdeh, 2013). Positive discipline in a classroom is related to the students' acceptance and recognition of teacher power through the authority of teachers. This relates to the teacher's use of positive discipline while they manage students' individual and group learning and everyday education situations (Larrivee, 2008; Kyriacou, 2018). Using positive discipline in a classroom includes the teacher's ability to engage students in a dialogue, guiding and managing learning activities and situations. When it comes to using positive discipline, teachers need to develop clear patterns with students and have to ensure that the agreed rules are effective as they correlate with teachers' and students' learning expectations in a classroom (Hawamdeh, 2013; Kyriacou, 2018). Positive discipline is effective when students and teachers develop learning environments that encourage students to think critically but favorably of themselves. Also, it promotes students' and teachers' reflection on their thinking, behaviors, attitudes and actions as related to improvements of learning and teaching (Tartari, 2018).

3. Research methodology

Sample

The total research sample consisted of 152 teachers from two Baltic countries – Latvia and Lithuania. Purposeful sampling strategy was applied in both countries.

Samples of Lithuania and Latvia in this study support the depth of case-oriented analysis that is fundamental to the qualitative mode of research. These samples were purposive, that is, selected by virtue of their capacity to provide rich-text-based narratives, relevant to the phenomenon under the study. Thus the purposive sampling selects 'information-rich' cases (Malterud et al., 2015). Sample size determination was guided by the criterion of informational redundancy: sampling was terminated when no new information was elicited (Denzin, Licoln, 2017). Such approach is related to the concept of 'information power', which leads the sample size formation in qualitative research and claims that the more information power the sample provides, the smaller the sample size needs to be, and vice versa (Malterud et al., 2015). The concept of 'data saturation' was also applied in this study when forming the research sample. It means an iterative process of data collection and data analysis when data collection is governed by emerging new information rather than predefined characteristics of the population (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

In the qualitative study, the principle of homogeneity of the sample was ensured in both countries based on the following principles: i) professional principle – the selected focus groups represented the teaching profession, i.e. persons with the professional qualification of a teacher who share the same characteristics in terms of occupation participated in the study; ii) methodological principle – five groups of research participants were formed in each country and the study participants were asked the same interview questions (Nyumba et al., 2018).

Being professionally homogeneous focus groups (teachers) allowed participants felt more comfortable discussing their experiences because their fellow group shared nearly similar experiences (Roller, Lavrakas, 2015). Providing the same interview questions ensured the possibility to analyze the obtained qualitative data based on the same research methodology, and to compare the obtained results (Poliandri et al., 2023) between countries.

Latvia: Focus group participants-teachers were from five schools involved in the 'Teach to Be' project's participatory action research. Two schools were in the capital city, and three were in various regions of Latvia. All schools were municipality-founded general education secondary schools (grades 1–12). The sample consisted of 83 teachers divided into five focus groups. Three focus group semi-structured interviews were implemented in every school: Group A – 15 participants from a town near the capital city Riga; Group B – 15 participants from Riga; Group C – 18 participants from a regional city; Group D – 19 participants from Riga; and Group E – 16 participants from a regional city. According to gender, 78 participants were women and five were men.

Lithuania: Five schools – participants of the Project 'Teaching to Be' – were invited to form focus groups of teachers. The schools represented both big and small cities, and rural areas – in striving to highlight the variety of issues. Five focus groups of teachers participated in the research: Group A (15 teachers); Group B (10 teachers); Group C (15 teachers); Group D (14 teachers); and Group E (15 teachers). In total, 69 teachers-research participants. Demographic characteristics of a sample: groups A and B with 25 teachers in total represented major cities, Group C with 15 teachers was from a small city, Group D, with14 teachers represented a small town, and Group E, with 15 teachers was from a rural area. According to gender, 53 participants were women and 16 were men.

Data collection

The data was collected from September 2021–February 2022 in Latvia and Lithuania by implementing semi-structured interview-based focus groups.

The semi-structured interview was a powerful type of interview in this qualitative research because it allowed researchers to acquire in-depth information and evidence from interviewees while considering the focus of the study (DeJonckheere, Vaughn, 2019). Focus groups helped to discover new aspects and information, as the participants owned and contributed together and provided diverse perspectives on the selected topic than it would be by implementing the individual interviews (Gundumogula, 2020).

Interview questions focus on event, experience, how it unfolded and what it was like in order to elicit the response relevant to research questions (Roberts, 2020). The two research questions for the current research were posed:

Q1. How do teachers experience their empowerment through contributing to relationships with colleagues and students?

Q2. How do teachers perceive their power through using positive discipline for students?

"An interview question can be evaluated with respect to both a thematic and a dynamic dimension: thematically with regard to producing knowledge and dynamically with regard to the

interpersonal relationship in the interview" (Brinkmann, Kvale, 2015: 157). Developing an initial set of interview questions is part of the research process (Rubin, Rubin, 2012).

While considering what kind of interview questions should be, researchers might review the literature to assist in the clarification of possible key concepts to explore in the beginning stages of the qualitative study (Roberts, 2020). The interview questions should be broad that they do not limit the research participants 'responses for exploring what is unknown, rather than leading the course of the interview through the structure of the particular theory or concept. Interview questions should be free of assumptions and convey that the researcher is open to complex aspects of participants 'experience" (Brinkman, Kvale, 2015; Rubin, Rubin, 2012).

The specific interview questions asked in both countries were as follows:
- How do you contribute to positive relationships at school with students, parents, school administration?
- What are some visible, recognizable characteristics of your contribution to positive relationships at school?
- What kind of discipline you use in a classroom? For what reasons?
- How do you use the positive discipline in a classroom?

In this study, the literature review made it possible to explore concepts of 'teacher empowerment' (e.g., Chamberlin, 2008; Eaker, 2008; Fleck 2005; Shaver, 2004; Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008; Squire-Kelly, 2012 and etc.), 'positive relationships of a teacher' (e. g., Pianta et al., 2003; Williford, Wolcott, 2015; Jederlund, von Rosen, 2022; Pihlaja, Holst, 2013; Wentzel, 2012 and etc.), 'power of the teacher' (Finn, 2012; Hawamdeh, 2013; Reid and Kawash, 2017; Thompson, 2019 and etc.) and 'positive discipline used by teacher' (Hawamdeh, 2013; Kyriacou, 2018; Tartari, 2018 and etc.). The literature review revealed that teacher empowerment and positive relationships (Reddy et al. 2021; Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008; Blasé, Blasé, 2001; Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020) and teacher power, and positive discipline (Esmaeili et al., 2015; Hawamdeh, 2013; Larrivee, 2008) are interrelated. Thus the interview questions were formulated taking into account the two research questions, which reflect the mentioned four concepts and the relationships between them, in order to obtain detailed narratives based on the teachers' experiences at school.

The conceptual information in this qualitative research was used retrospectively, what means that at the end of the study, when the data was analyzed and it was necessary to give meaning to the findings. Hence, the conceptual literature was used purposefully as a post-hoc activity to strengthen the theoretical thrust of a piece of qualitative work. Thus the theory has not driven the research from its outset. This is a typical decision in the qualitative research space, which means that choosing not to apply theory to the qualitative study is not the single or exceptional case (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2014). Because in qualitative research, it is not the conceptual literature that determines the direction of the empirical research, but the findings of the conducted empirical qualitative research guide the researchers to select the literature purposefully in order to support the empirical findings (Giles, Harrison, 2023).

Semi-structured interviews with focus groups of teachers were conducted in Lithuania and Latvia using the state languages: in Lithuania, communication with research participants was conducted in Lithuanian language, and in Latvia – in Latvian language. The collected information was transcribed and analyzed. The product of the final stage of the research was translated into English - formed categories with subcategories and accompanying interview excerpts. This ensured linguistic sensitivity (Karhunen et al., 2018) and content validity as the categories generated use the language of interviewees and reflect the content of qualitative statements made by the interviewees (Brod et al., 2014). The minimum duration of one focus group interview was two hours. The longest duration was three hours and twenty minutes.

Data analysis

Latent qualitative content analysis (LQCA) is used in cases where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when it is fragmented. LQCA looks at the meaning of information (content) in textual data by isolating small pieces of the data that represent salient concepts by examining the data (Kleinheksel et al., 2020). This method was used in this study to explore complex phenomena, such as teachers' experiences regarding their empowerment through contributing to positive relationships and power through using positive discipline in school environment. It allowed researchers to gain insights into the subjective experiences of teachers,

and to develop a deep understanding of the contexts that shape those experiences (Hsieh, Shannon, 2005).

LQCA with four stages was implemented in this research (Erlingsson, Brysiewicz 2017; Kleinheksel et al., 2020; Lindgren et al., 2020):

1. Decontextualizing with open coding: familiarizing with qualitative data, reading transcriptions, obtaining thee holistic sense, breaking the text into meaning units, labeling each unit with inductive code.

2. Recontextualizing: checking whether all aspects of the content were covered by meaning units in relation to the research questions, re-reading the original text and finalizing the list of meaning units, excluding meaning units that were not related to research questions.

3. Categorizing with condensation: condensing extended meaning units before creating subcategories and grouping them into categories rooted in the empirical data from which they emerged.

4. Compilating: analyzing once the categories were created, immersing researchers themselves into the data for identifying implied meanings in the interview texts, choosing specific meaning units (quotations) for each category to be presented.

lQCA involved analyzing data without preconceived categories or theories. This flexibility allowed the data to guide the researchers' analysis in order to identify emerging patterns and concepts (Kleinheksel et al., 2020). Both authors discussed their autonomously identified categories and reached a consensus. Similarities and differences of categories were identified and discussed.

In this study, the researchers took into account the concerns regarding using software for qualitative data analysis such as deterministic and rigid processes, privileging of coding, and retrieval methods; reification of data, increased pressure on researchers to focus on volume and breadth rather than on depth and meaning and distraction from the real work of analysis (st. John, Johnson, 2000). Therefore, the researchers made the decision to perform data analysis combining the manual method with the use of NVivo 12 software for Qualitative Research.

Coding or categorising the data involved subdividing the huge amount of raw data was performed by NVivo 12 software. Creating subcategories and assigning them into categories were performed manually by both researchers. The software removed the tremendous amount of manual tasks and allowed more time for the researchers to explore trends, identify subcategories and reflect on categories and its relationships with subcategories in relation to units of meaning from semi-structured interviews (Wong, 2008; Lester et al., 2020).

Research ethics

Ethical permission to implement the study in both countries was received from the Educational Research Ethics Committee at Educational Research Institute, Vytautas Magnus University (February 17, 2022, Protocol No. 5) and from the Research Board at Vytautas Magnus University (March 1, 2022, Protocol No. 17).

4. Results

To answer the question about teacher empowerment with the focus on teachers' contribution to relationships with colleagues and students, three similar categories from Latvian and Lithuanian teachers' responses were developed, namely, 'practicing positivity', 'strengthening mutuality' and 'improving communication':

- 'Practicing positivity' for teachers means motivating feedback. For LT teachers, it is related to dyads of teacher-student/student-teacher, teacher-teacher, teacher-parents/parents-teacher. For LV teachers, it is focused on managing conflicts in a classroom by teacher's modeling of expected strategy, and noticing, when students independently use the strategy.

- 'Strengthening mutuality' involves collaboration/cooperation (for LT and LV teachers it means strengthening professional mutuality with colleague teachers and students while performing a variety of activities through creating, forming and/or sharing professional tools, materials and projects); support (LV and LT teachers value the support of the professional teachers' community at school and school administration when facing issues, solving problems and striving for achievement), friendliness (for teachers from both countries it is related to professional caring, being heard while communicating about (non)professional problems), openness (for LT and LV teachers it is based on mutual trust between teachers and working in the school community where is possible to share different opinions and attitudes while knowing that it will not be

punished) and learning from each other (for LV and LT teachers it means a teacher's learning from colleague teachers, students and their parents when sharing different attitudes).

- 'Improving communication' consists of sharing experiences through conversations (LT and LV teachers treat it as a possibility to have non-formal talk, to tell a joke or to narrate a story), listening and hearing various opinions and attitudes (LT teachers see communication as a tool of personal learning and development, while LV teachers treat communication as a channel to share professional opinions), and listening to advice (LT and LV teachers value each other's advice on professional matters).

In the Table 1, each subcategory is illustrated by excerpts from focus group interviews with teachers from both schools – LT and LV – as empirical evidence of similarities between teachers' experiences from two countries.

Table 1. Teachers' empowerment through contribution to relationships with colleagues and students: similarities between Latvian and Lithuanian teachers' experience-based perceptions, opinions and attitudes

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
Practicing positivity	Motivating feedback	Feedback has a big impact. It doesn't matter who it is – fellow teachers, students, their parents or the school administration. I always try to transform even difficult, negative things into positive things through feedback – something that can be improved or something that can be learned from. LT GrB
		When there is a conflict in my class, I always ask: 'How can I help you?' instead of asking who is guilty. I have recognized that now my students use this approach independently in their conflicts. LV GrA
Strengthening mutuality	Collaboration/ cooperation	Cooperation is a necessary and important value in strengthening mutual solidarity between teachers and the educational relationship between teachers and students. It manifests itself in various contexts – in meetings, in solving problems, in making decisions, in discussions about teaching materials, in creating and implementing projects, and in many other activities. It means mutual trust. LT GrA
		Collaboration between subject teachers – parallel class teachers work together to develop tests and uniform requirements; exchange of experience and teaching materials between teachers. LV GrC
		When regulations are developed in the school, such as the school's internal rules, they are never adopted by management alone. All these documents are discussed collectively. Sometimes it is that something is on paper, but we see that in real life it does not work, then the school administration listens to the teachers and makes changes. Ability to cooperate – if you work as a teacher – it is impossible to do without it. Individualists cannot survive in this profession. LV GrB
	Support	Support is like a lifeline in school life. It is both practical, moral and social. For teachers it is important to be reinforced when they have to face professional problems. The support of school administration is important when teaches want to implement innovations and for teacher's reinforcement to the students when it is necessary to solve the issues in learning process and striving for achievements. Without it, you won't go anywhere and won't achieve the goals. LT GrC

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
		Due to mutual support during a meeting, even as a young teacher, I felt if I was working in the school for years. LV GrE
	Friendliness	Friendliness and support go hand in hand. I'm talking about professional friendliness. Especially among teachers. It is necessary when you need professional advice, when you just need a hearing about problems that have arisen. LT GrE
		There is always coffee in the morning, a snack left on the table as a greeting from a colleague. So, someone has thought of me. The feeling that we care about each other. LV GrB
	Openness	Communion, solidarity and mutual understanding are impossible without openness. Openness is inseparable from mutual trust and it strengthens the school community. When you can talk about a variety of topics, you can ask difficult questions and talk about it out loud without hesitation. When you know that you will not be condemned and punished. LT GrC
		There are no intrigues in our school, that could be typical of women's team. It makes life very easy. It's important to ask for help on time and help to each other. Sharing is much faster and more efficient than reading a book or finding it online. Learn to share and not be stingy with your skills and share. Be open. It makes everyday life much easier. LV GrC
	Learning from each other	Learning from each other is important when it is part of the school culture and that mutual learning is between teacher and student, between teachers, between student's parents and teacher, and between school administration and teacher. These are such important dyads to realize and become aware of. We learn by heart – both from innovations, and from mistakes, and from experiences. When we talk, we share feelings and emotions when we talk about experiences. LT GrA
		There are many students in the school, and we also learn from them – every day is like a day of professional development – every day there is a new situation, communication with colleagues, parents, problem solving, etc. LV GrC
		I work in this school for 40 years and I enjoy learning form young colleagues, they are more relaxed and difference in their attitude is visible. LV GrD
Improving communication	Sharing experiences through conversations	The value of peer-to-peer conversations at school is invaluable. It is important to find time and make time for it. It's not just about giving and receiving feedback, I mean just talking. During conversations, we learn to communicate clearly, accurately, and respectfully. Through conversations, we share experiences – all kinds – bad and good, and learn from them. LT GrD
		Teacher's room - if I want to meet a colleague, just talk or joke, I always go there in my spare time. This is a place where you can communicate with colleagues. This is how well-being can be created – through relationships, problem solving through communication with colleagues. LV GrB

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
	Listening and hearing various opinions and attitudes	It is not always easy to listen and hear different opinions and attitudes. Because they often do not match your personal ones. Therefore, it is an important communication tool for personal learning and development. And at the same time, it is also an instrument for the school community to learn to communicate. Yes, I mean conversations. About essential questions important to the school, teacher, and student. LT GrC
		I teach critical thinking through asking of opinions and substantiations. You must listen not only to the teacher, but also to your colleagues. LV GrE
	Listening to advice	We often say that we listen to advice, but do we do it as advised? This is where the important learning point comes in. And maybe even the moment of the teacher's commitment – to himself and the school community. When we ignore advice, we don't reflect on it, we don't improve. We get stuck in the cycle of our thinking and decisions, so after a while, we don't see progress, movement, and the results we achieve start to disappoint. LT GrE
		Even during the breaks, I was able to get advice from my colleague. LV GrA

Despite aforementioned similarities, LT and LV teachers see their empowerment through contribution to relationships with colleagues and students also from different positions.

Both LT and LV teachers speak about practicing positivity while they see it through different lenses:

- Only LT teachers highlight friendliness, which they treat as communication feature within the school culture with the focus on mutuality, respect, dignity and equal dialogue.

- Encouragement of creativity is noted exceptionally by LT teachers. They see creativity as a part of school culture, in which creative teaching and learning helps teachers and students to achieve goals and implement missions.

- Only LV teachers mention facilitation of positive relationships that are seen as emotional connection between the teacher and students in a classroom.

- Only LV teachers talk about encouragement of positive behavior with the focus on advantages.

- Exclusively LV teachers emphasize building of personal relationships with colleagues and students. This means, for example, to remember names of all students to make a personal contact and meaningful communication.

Strengthening mutuality for both, LT and LV teachers seem to be important, but it has different meaning for teachers from different countries:

- LV teachers give priority to personal responsibility, which is unavoidable by teacher either during working hours, after work or on weekends, e.g., the phone is not turned off, discussions are not postponed, substitution situations are rethought in advance.

- LT teachers are focused on learning from, in and for practice what means for them reflection through communication with colleagues, students and their parents, school administration in order to listen and hear opinions, attitudes, perceptions and recommendations.

Teachers from both countries highlight improvement of communication, but they authentically treat this:

- For LT teachers, it means providing and receiving feedback. When they talk about feedback with fellow teachers, then it emphasizes professional solidarity. In relation to students, this means increasing their motivation to learn and strive for better academic achievement.

- LV teachers accentuate recognition of teacher's personal self. Humanity is important for teachers, so they show to students their human side, which is imperfect. They believe that it helps to create more in-depth and personal connection with the students.

The Table 2 and Table 3 provide differences between LT and LV teachers based on their experiences and opinions, so it is logical that only examples of interview excerpts of LT teachers are given to one category, and only examples of interviews of LV teachers to the other.

Table 2. Teacher's empowerment through contribution to relationships with colleagues and students: differences between Latvian and Lithuanian teacher's experience-based perceptions, opinions and attitudes

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
Practicing positivity	Friendliness	Friendliness is an important communication feature of the school culture. It's not familiarity. It is an opportunity for the entire school community to learn equal dialogue, where there is no place for rudeness, status-based relationships. It is a human relationship in which the person himself must feel the limit of lack of respect. And that is not easy. It is a respectful and at the same time uplifting mutual communication, based on a focus on teaching and learning, realizing the meaning and value of both processes in the school. LT GrA
	Encouraging creativity	Encouraging creativity both in the work of the teacher, in the learning of students, and in the decisions of the school administration. That support of the culture of creativity, when the norm is to implement innovations, when various initiatives are supported. Such an environment is perfect for students to grow, for teachers to become stronger, and for the entire community to realize its missions and goals. LT GrC
	Facilitating positive relationships	I purposefully build a positive relationship with the class, and I have emotional connection with them; a good lesson is a good relationship. LV GrD
	Encouraging positive behavior	Positive behavior is emphasized. We focus on the positives rather than the negatives at school. LV GrC
	Building personal relationships	It may seem like a trifle to know the name of a colleague or student, but it's important for me. I really try to memorize my students' names, and I use them both in class and when meeting students in the hallway or outside of school. I see that some children are pleasantly surprised that I remember their name. LV GrE
Strengthening mutuality	Learning from, in and for practice	We learn from practice, in practice and for practice. The teacher's entire activity is professional, so that learning is related to social, value, ethical, physical and other aspects. It is based on self-reflection, self-analysis. It is great when there is an opportunity to reflect together with colleagues, students, school administration and with parents of students and receive advice, opinions, considerations through feedback. LT GrB
	Personal responsibility	I can't take the sick leave and turn off the phone, I have to be available and leave everything ready for my lessons so that a colleague doesn't have to prepare if there is a need to replace me. LV GrC

Improving communication	Providing and receiving feedback	Giving and receiving feedback is not just about intent or intention. It must be and remain one of the essential features of school culture. From my experience, I can say that the reciprocity helps me to show solidarity with my fellow teachers and my class relations with the students are great because of it. Students understand better, are more motivated, they feel respected because they are listened to and taken into account. And I am happier because I see better learning results. LT GrA
	Recognizing teacher's self	I often admit to students that I don't know, I'm wrong, I don't understand how it happened and then we try to deal with it together. Children also understand that I am just a human being. LV GrA

To answer the second research question about teacher power by emphasizing the teachers' use of positive discipline while working with students in a classroom, only some categories appeared with the same names, but their contents, according to the answers of LT and LV teachers, differ:

- Only LT teachers highlight creation of agreements. It includes of them development of general rules together, following agreed rules, changing rules by the agreement of both sides and assuming individual moral responsibility for breaking agreed rules.

- Both LT and LV teachers accentuate mutual reinforcement. For LT teachers, it includes listening to advice from both sides and discussing teaching and learning strengths and limitations. LV teachers incorporate into it the engaging students in sustaining discipline and involving 'external' participants, e.g., parents.

- Learning from experience is meaningful only for LT teachers. They emphasize here two aspects – discussing possible solutions for teaching /learning issues and seeing mistakes as opportunities for improvement.

- While structuring the educational environment is highlighted exceptionally by LV teachers. They accentuate here three components – visualizing the rules or expected structure, setting clear rules in a classroom and using proactive strategies to classroom management.

- Only LV teachers note the management of classroom with the focus on using audio signals, eye contact, empowering student leaders, practicing positive reinforcement, and integrating humor.

- Merely LV teachers mention experiencing the limits of communication through crossing boundaries, and motivating students through communion-based support.

Table 3. Teachers' power through using positive discipline for students: differences between Latvian and Lithuanian teachers' experience-based perceptions, opinions and attitudes

Category	**Subcategory**	**Quotes from interviews**
Creating agreements	Developing general rules together	It is important to agree on common rules with the students and follow them. It is not easy to develop them, because you need to agree on each one, find out the contexts of its operation and difficult situations. But talking and making decisions together lead to progress in communication, teaching and learning. LT GrB
	Following agreed rules	Following the rules developed together with the students is not a problem. Both I, as a teacher, and the students know and understand them. So if they do violate it, talking about the situation, although not easy, but is understandable for all parties involved. This contributes to the strengthening of mutual trust, mutual respect and solidarity in a classroom and beyond. LT GrE

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
	Changing rules by the agreement of both sides	We make the rules together. After all, they play a symbolic role in the relationship between teacher and students. Even if we change them, discuss, negotiate, there is no one-sided solution here. LT GrC
	Assuming individual moral responsibility for breaking agreed rules	If the rules are violated, individual moral responsibility is assumed. The rules are a kind of self-learning tool for both the teacher and the students. Therefore, their violation is often deliberate – a person who violates them knows in advance that he does not follow them. I like that you talk to the students, they rarely make excuses. We talk, they recognize their steps and we reflect on what we have learned from a specific situation. Such positivity does not cause tension and gives hope to the team that we are together in mutual respect. LT GrD
Mutual reinforcement	Listening to advice from both sides	I am a teacher. Therefore, I learn to listen not only to myself, but also to my students. My advice to students is often important. But I am also learning to listen to the advice of the students and not to consider them as wishes, but to see them as advice. This approach helps me to be more open and hear what the students are saying to me. LT GrA
	Discussing teaching and learning strengths and limitations	I initiate a weekly conversation with students about teaching and learning. This is how we learn to reflect together through ourselves and through others, about ourselves and about others openly, respectfully, with dignity. LT GrB
	Engaging students in sustaining discipline	If the situation is related to the class, then I turn to my class and ask how we can deal with this situation. LV GrC
	Involving 'external' participants	I have a problematic student, who breaks everything. We collaborate several colleagues as well as the support staff to solve this situation. LV GrC There is a responsiveness from parents. Most parents are supportive and willing to cooperate. LV GrE
Learning from experience	Discussing possible solutions for teaching /learning issues	I especially value discussions with students and fellow teachers about teaching and learning, successes and failures. When we share specific examples and experiences related to it. It's not just talking about techniques and wishes, it's a living conversation that reflects people, their actions, feelings, emotions, decisions and intentions. Then we can make wise decisions together. LT GrC
	Seeing mistakes as opportunities for improvement	I think seeing mistakes as opportunities and learning and improving is important. And for students, and teachers, and parents of students, and the school administration. Such thinking helps to change the culture of the school, where a mistake is not punished and it is not a tragedy. This is an opportunity. But again, it doesn't mean that the person shakes hands and travels down the same path. No, learning from mistakes requires a lot of willpower,

Category	Subcategory	Quotes from interviews
		awareness and focus. LT GrD
Structuring the educational environment	Visualizing the order for participation	We have pictograms to regulate the order who can speak. LV GrA
	Setting for clear rules in a classroom	The same rules apply to both teachers and students – If the students have to turn off the phones, then I also have to turn it off. LV GrB
	Using proactive breaks to calm down	To mitigate collective stress, I time to time switch in the deep concentration music. Children put their hands on the table, support your head and stay calm for 2–3 min relaxation. LV GrE
Managing classroom	Using audio signals	Clapping your hands if there is noise in the classroom; ringing a bell to draw attention. If my students are loud, I will fell silent/stop speaking. I say 'STOP' to interrupt escalation and rumination. LV GrA
	Using eye contact	I have the anaconda gaze when everyone understands that it will be bad now – when the teacher's eyes are cold and she is silent, then there is peace in the classroom. LV GrB
	Empowering student leaders	I try to get a student who is an authority in the class to be on my side. If successful, the student in the class also sets the tone and helps maintain order. Then it's easier, I'm not alone, but we're a team. LV GrC
	Practicing positive reinforcement	I promise that after a task it will be allowed to play. LV GrE
	Integrating humor	Sense of humor allows you to overcome difficulties. LV GrD
Experiencing the limits of communication	Crossing boundaries	I draw on the blackboard stripes indicating the level of my annoyance. When there are three stripes – I stop the lesson, and give a test on the matter that was to be learned that day. I choose hard questions to show them that they can't learn well without me. LV GrC
Motivating students	Communion-based support	I call parents not only when a student has done something wrong, but also when he has behaved well. And then usually the parents are surprised and the child really tries to behave well the next few days. LV GrA

5. Discussion

Findings revealed what empowerment means to teachers through their contribution to positive relationships in the school environment and highlighted what their power to use positive discipline in the classroom means for teachers.

The results of this qualitative research showed that LT and LV teachers have some similar experiences regarding empowerment through their contribution into positive relationships at school:

- By providing positive multidirectional feedback within the positive relationships with students, parents and fellow teachers at school: LV teachers especially focus on positive interaction with students within the classroom. Interaction between the teacher and school administration is not accentuated. Findings prove that insufficient involvement of school administration in positive interaction with teachers may reduce the amount of support provided for teachers, and teachers direct their essential attention to positive interactions with students (Mlalazi et al., 2016). LT teachers tend to rely on the community of the professional community of teachers, students and their parents, and make a positive contribution to it through communication. In this way, teachers feel safe as a recognized, accepted and trusted part of the professional teaching community and the school community (Folasade Akinyemi et al., 2020). As teachers are not empowered by school administration, they motivate themselves for empowerment, respectively teachers use their power to take control of their professional life and to take responsibility for their words, thoughts, actions and behavior.

- By strengthening mutuality and improving communication while performing activities, providing/receiving support and/or advice, communicating in a friendly and open manner, sharing experiences and attitudes, and learning from each other. Findings reveal that for LT and LV teachers, empowerment means sharing of feelings and actions, and relating to all members of the school community at all levels. The mutual relationship with fellow teachers here seems to be the most evident for teachers from both countries. It is in line with findings of other research that, for teachers, empowerment through mutuality means building professional relationships based on openness, trust, respect between all individuals involved within the school life (Rimm-Kaufman, Sandilos, 2023). Thus, support for teachers from their professional community at school means conversations, meetings, sharing expertise, and working collaboratively for improving teaching and the academic performance of students.

Results revealed that LT and LV teachers experience some differences in regard to empowerment through their contribution into positive relationships at school:

- Both LT and LV teachers are empowered through practicing positivity. However, for LT teachers it means friendly, respectful mutual communication as equal dialogue, and creativity through teaching and learning for achieving educational goals. Communication empowers teachers for decision-making and participation in changes, and building trust and loyalty (Hurley, 2006). While decision-making among empowered teachers has a significant impact on their job satisfaction and professional growth (Blasé, Blasé, 2001). For LV teachers, practicing of positivity means building of personal relationships, emotional connection and positive behavior in relation to fellow teachers and students. This finding indicates Latvian teachers' awareness of a key role of modeling of positivity, because previous research supports that students tend to be more motivated to learn and become engaged in the classroom when their teacher cares about them, and building of positive relationships leads to better teaching (Pianta et al., 2003; Sukawati et al., 2020; Williford, Wolcott, 2015).

- Findings showed that for both LT and LV teachers, strengthening mutuality is related to their empowerment. For LV teachers, it means personal responsibility, that in literature is associated with the opportunity to act autonomously and to be accountable for one's own actions (Chamberlin, 2008). For LT teachers, the mutuality means interconnectedness between learning and practice, reflection and communication. Teachers' reflection helps them to move from experiencing a lesson to understanding what happened and why. Reflecting teaching practices help teachers to see the wholeness of teaching and learning within the classroom and beyond (Tartari, 2018).

- Findings prove that for teachers from both countries, empowerment is inseparable from communication improvement. In their answers, Latvian teachers specifically address the role of personal self and humanness. LT teachers find meaning of their empowerment in provision and receiving of mutual feedback. Communication influences students' learning motivation and enhancement of their various abilities while understanding that learning is hard work (McCroskey, Richmond, 1983; Tartari, 2018). The focus from communication actions directed at students and teachers to communication actions exchanged with students and teachers is the component of the shift from being a student or teacher manager to being learner empowerer (Kiral, 2020; Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020).

Regarding teachers' power through applying positive discipline for students, the findings revealed mostly differences between LT and LV teachers':

- For LT teachers, it means development of consensus, with students and teachers learning from experience. Through the consensus process and learning from experience, teachers gain a broader understanding of their students' needs, abilities, and concerns. Students learn how to participate responsibly in their classrooms, acquiring skills and attitudes that will serve them in life (Fin, 2012). Consensus-based decision-making is a dynamic approach to creating a learning community in the classroom. The key to consensus is the acceptance and validation of each person's point of view and way of operating in the world (Sartor, Young Brown, 2004).

- For both LT and LV teachers, power is related to mutual reinforcement. But for LT teachers it means the possibility to discuss learning/teaching and receive professional advice from fellow teachers. It is related to professionalism, which helps the teacher to gain the trust of parents, students, colleagues and school administrators. When the teacher has the integrity to communicate, and complete the job responsibilities with excellence, it gives students confidence in their abilities to guide learning and for teachers to manage a classroom (Buksnyte-Marmiene et al., 2022). LV teachers consider mutual reinforcement through engaging students in sustaining a positive learning environment. Developing a teacher's classroom management skills is the key to maintaining a respectful and learning-positive environment (Bej, 2016). The crucial role of building positive learning environments is supported by findings of other authors (Bradley et al., 2018; Hughes, Coplan, 2017).

6. Limitations

Opinions in focus groups are constructed collectively - it means a group process of collaboratively constructing a joint perspective, or argument, which emerges very much as a collective procedure which leads to consensus, rather than as any individual's view. The collective voice which emerges in this context may reflect individuals' already held opinions, or it may be an active product of the group interactions. It may not express the views of all the participants in the focus group (Smithson, 2000). Focus groups have the "feeling" that they are under a microscope. Participants with introverted personalities find it difficult to voice their opinion freely (Somekh, 2022). Focus groups consisted of samples of the professional teachers' communities from two countries, but these groups are biased representation of whole professional communities in LT and LV. Thus the opinions expressed by the participants might not represent the views of professional teachers' communities as a whole (Somekh, 2022) in two mentioned countries.

LQCA provided insights into the presence and patterns of content but did not provide a causal explanation for why certain content occurs or what is its impact on individuals (students, teachers), professional teachers' community or school community.

7. Conclusion

The current research was aimed at understanding two important aspects of teachers' professional wellbeing, namely empowerment and power through building positive relationships and implementation of positive discipline. Qualitative analysis of teachers' answers led to the following findings:

1. For teachers for both countries – Latvia and Lithuania – empowerment through their contribution to positive relationships means connectedness and specific qualities of communication and interactions such as motivating feedback, friendliness, openness, support, cooperativeness and collaboration in the school environment in order to promote effective and meaningful education. Teachers' practicing of positivity in relation to their empowerment through relationships is mainly focused on students and fellow teachers, and means the idea of how the teacher educates and influences the members of school community, not only what is taught. Thus, infusing positive relationships into teaching and learning, and also non-academic environments at school, allows wellbeing to be built in classrooms and teaching/learning subjects across all the school.

2. LV and LT teachers value the learning from each other in relation to strengthening mutuality in regard to their empowerment through contribution to positive relationships in the school environment. Learning from each other means social learning, which is an efficient way to learn things and enable participants of learning to get to know others better, and better understand how to behave within the school community. It means collaboration and cooperation, which include higher-level thinking, communication and leadership, self-management, self-confidence, responsibility and promotion of different kind of interactions within the school environment. So, learning from each other means connectedness between members of the school community and connecting the prior knowledge through sharing experiences, advice, listening and hearing

opinions and attitudes, and creating new knowledge and experiences. This process allows teachers and students to relate what they read and observe, what and how they experience, to themselves and the context in which they live and act.

3. Speaking of differences, LT teachers emphasize friendliness and creativity as qualities of relationships in regard to their empowerment. LV teachers emphasize facilitating positive relationships, behaving positively and personalizing relationships in the school environment. This finding reveals that Lithuanian teachers express their expectations for relationship improvement, while Latvian teachers talk about specific actions for fostering positive relationships in the school environment.

4. The use of positive discipline by teachers is seen differently by LT and LV teachers:

- Consensus formation is relevant specifically for LT teachers. They implement positive discipline through interactions between teachers themselves and between the teacher and student. Latvian teachers focus on communication and cooperation with students that is related to democratization of teaching and learning. Latvian teachers speak of different proactive classroom management strategies, which facilitate development and sustaining of positive learning environment.

- Mutual reinforcement is seen differently: LT teachers focus on mutual communication and learning from each other, while LV teachers engage students for sustaining a positive discipline in their classrooms, as well as involve fellow teachers and student parents for implementation of positive discipline. LT teachers create the dyadic trustful, group-related relationships with students as a basis for teaching and learning, while LV teachers use the potential of the school community; however, support of the school's administration is not mentioned.

- LT teachers relate positive discipline to learning from experience which means learning knowledge and skills through direct practice. This entails teachers and students reflecting on the experience they have had to identify new skills and knowledge that they can use, and is related to context and is sensitive to case or situation. Regarding their power to apply positive discipline, Latvian teachers highlight their individual responsibility for structuring the learning environment and managing the classroom, which is related to the teacher's professional expertise or teaching methodology.

8. Acknowledgements

Declaration of interest statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

VŽ: key contribution to designing the research, arranging the research in Lithuania, collecting and analyzing data, writing. BM: arranging the research in Latvia, collecting and analyzing data, writing. Both authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets can be made available upon request by contacting Vilma Žydžiūnaite and Baiba Martinsone.

References

Amoli, Youran, 2014 – *Amoli, F. A., Youran, M.* (2014). Delving the relationship between teacher empowerment and job satisfaction among Iranian EFL teachers in Tehran Aviation University. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies.* 4(4): 771-777. DOI: 10.4304/tpls.4.4.771–777

Bej, 2016 – *Bej, M.* (2016). Social skills and programs of positive discipline in school environment – a literature review. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences.* 7(2): 84-87.

Blasé, Blasé, 2001 – *Blasé, J. R., Blasé, J.* (2001). Empowering Principals: What Successful Principals Do. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Bogler, Somech, 2004 – *Bogler, R., Somech, A.* (2004). Influence of teacher empowerment on teachers' organizational commitment, professional commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 20: 277-289.

Bradbury-Jones et al., 2014 – *Bradbury-Jones, C., Taylor, J., Herber, O.* (2014). How theory is used and articulated in qualitative research: development of a new typology. *Social Science & Medicine.* 120: 135-141. DOI: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.09.014

Bradley et al., 2018 - *Bradley, C., Cordaro, D.T., Zhu, F., Vildostegui, M., Han, R.J., Brackett, M., Jones, J.* (2018). Supporting Improvements in Classroom Climate for Students and Teachers with the Four Pillars of Wellbeing Curriculum. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science.* 4(3): 245-264. DOI: 10.1037/tps0000162

Brinkmann, Kvale, 2015 – *Brinkmann, S., Kvale, S.* (2015). Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brod et al., 2014 – *Brod, M., Pohlman, B., Tesler Waldman, L.* (2014). Qualitative Research and Content Validity. In: Michalos, A.C. (eds). Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Netherlands: Springer, Dordrecht. DOI: 10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_3848

Buksnyte-Marmiene et al., 2022 - *Buksnyte-Marmiene, L., Brandisauskiene, A., Cesnaviciene, J.* (2022). The Relationship between Organisational Factors and Teachers' Psychological Empowerment: Evidence from Lithuania's Low SES Schools. *Social Sciences.* 11: 523. DOI: 10.3390/socsci11110523

Calisici Celik, Kiral, 2022 – *Calisici Celik, N., Kiral, B.* (2022). Teacher empowerment strategies: Reasons for nonfulfillment and solution suggestions. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education.* 29: 179-202. DOI: 10.14689/enad.29.7

Cash et al., 2019 - *Cash, A.H., Debnam, K.J., Waasdorp, T.E., Wahl, M., Bradshaw, C.P.* (2019). Adult and student interactions in nonclassroom settings. *Journal of Educational Psychology.* 111(1): 104-117. DOI: 10.1037/edu0000275

Chamberlin, 2008 – *Chamberlin, J.* (2008). A Working Definition of Empowerment. National Empowerment Center. [Electronic resource]. URL: http://www.power2u.org/articles/empower/working_def.html

DeJonckheere, Vaughn, 2019 – *DeJonckheere, M., Vaughn, L.M.* (2019). Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: a balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health.* 7: e000057. DOI: 10.1136/ fmch-2018-000057

Denzin, Lincoln, 2017 – *Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S.* (2017). The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

De Wever et al., 2006 – *De Wever, B., Schellens, T., Valcke, M., Van Keer, H.* (2006). Content analysis schemes to analyze transcripts of online asynchronous discussion groups: A review. *Computer & Education.* 46: 6-28.

Eaker, 2008 – *Eaker, R.* (2008). Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work: New Insights for Improving Schools. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Esmaeili et al., 2015 – *Esmaeili, Z., Mohamadrezai, H., Mohamadrezai, A.* (2015). The role of teacher's authority in students' learning. *Journal of Education and Practice.* 6(19): 1-15. DOI: 10.1088/1742-6596/1778/1/012020

Fin, 2012 – *Fin, A.N.* (2012). Teacher use of prosocial and antisocial power bases and students' perceived instructor understanding and misunderstanding in the college classroom. *Communication Education.* 61(1): 67-79.

Fleck, 2005 – *Fleck, F.* (2005). What Successful Principals Do. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Folasade Akinyemi et al., 2020 – *Folasade Akinyemi, A., Rembe, S., Nkonki, V.* (2020). Trust and Positive Working Relationships among Teachers in Communities of Practice as an Avenue for Professional Development. *Education Sciences.* 10(5): 136. DOI: 10.3390/educsci10050136

Giles, Harrison, 2023 – *Giles, E., Harrison, S.L.* (2023). Reflecting on the importance of theory-informed qualitative research in people with chronic respiratory disease and their carers. *Chronic Respiratory Disease.* 20: 1-2. DOI: 10.1177/14799731231185128

Gordon, 1989 - *Gordon, T.* (1989). Discipline That Works: Promoting Self-discipline in Children. New York: Random House.

Gundumogula, 2020 – *Gundumogula, M.* (2020). Importance of Focus Groups in Qualitative Research. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies.* 8(11). DOI: 10.24940/theijhss/2020/v8/i11/HS2011-082

Gülşen, Çelik, 2021 – *Gülşen, F.U., Çelik, Ö.* (2021). Secondary School Teachers' Effective School Perception: The Role of School Culture and Teacher Empowerment. *International Journal of Progressive Education.* 17(5): 332-344.

Hawamdeh, 2013 – *Hawamdeh, B.A.* (2013). Teacher power bases as perceived by secondary (high) school students: a field study at Jerash city, Jordan. *European Scientific Journal.* 9(4): 63-72.

Hsieh, Shannon, 2005 – *Hsieh, H.-F., Shannon, S.E.* (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research.* 15(9): 1277-1288.

Hughes, Cao, 2018 – *Hughes, J.N., Cao, Q.* (2018). Trajectories of teacher-student warmth and conflict at the transition to middle school: Effects on academic engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Psychology.* 67: 148-162. DOI: 10.1016/j.jsp.2017.10.003

Hughes, Coplan, 2017 – *Hughes, K., Coplan, R.J.* (2017). Why Classroom Climate Matters for Children High in Anxious Solitude: A Study of Differential Suspectibility. *School Psychology Quarterly.* 33(1): 94-102. DOI: 10.1037/spq0000201

Hurley, 2006 – *Hurley, R.* (2006). The decision to trust. *Harvard Business Review.* September. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://hbr.org/2006/09/the-decision-to-trust

Hurt et al., 1978 – *Hurt, H.T., Scott, M.D., McCroskey, J.C.* (1978). Communication in the Classroom. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Jederlund, von Rosen, 2022 – *Jederlund, U., von Rosen, T.* (2022). Teacher–student relationships and students' self-efficacy beliefs. Rationale, validation and further potential of two instruments. *Education Inquiry.* 14(4): 529-553. DOI: 10.1080/20004508.2022.2073053

Karhunen et al., 2018 – *Karhunen, P., Kankaanranta, A., Louhiala-Salminen, L., Piekkari, R.* (2018). Let's talk about language: a review of language-sensitive research in international management. *Journal of Management Studies.* 55(6): 980-1013. DOI: 10.1111/joms.12354

Khalkhali, 2010 – *Khalkhali, A.* (2010). Presenting a model for establishing management of healthy classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology of Islamic Azad University,* first year. *Tonekabon.* 2: 60-71.

Kiral, 2020 – *Kiral, B.* (2020). The relationship between the empowerment of teachers by school administrators and organizational commitments of teachers. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET).* 7(1): 248-265. [Electronic resource]. URL: http://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/767

Kleinheksel et al., 2020 – *Kleinheksel, A.J., Rockich-Winston, N., Tawfik, H., Wyatt, T.R.* (2020). Demystifying Content Analysis. *American Journal of Pharmacy Education.* 84(1): 7113. DOI: 10.5688/ajpe7113

Kyriacou, 2018 – *Kyriacou, C.* (2018). Essential Teaching Skills. Oxford, UK: Oxford university Press Children.

Larrivee, 2008 – *Larrivee, L.* (2008). Authentic Classroom Management: Creating a Learning Community and Building Reflective Practice. London: Pearson.

Lee, Jie, 2014 – *Lee, A. N., Jie, Y.* (2014). Understanding teacher empowerment: Teachers' perceptions of principal's and immediate supervisor's empowering behaviours, psychological empowerment and work-related outcomes. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 41(2014): 67-79. DOI: 10.1016/j.tate.2014.03.006

Lester et al., 2020 – *Lester, J.N., Cho, Y., Lochmiller, C.R.* (2020). Learning to Do Qualitative Data Analysis: A Starting Point. *Human Resource Development Review.* 19(1): 94-106. DOI: 10.1177/1534484320903890

Malterud et al., 2015 – *Malterud, K., Siersma, V. D., Guassora, A. D.* (2015). Sample size in qualitative interview studies: guided by information power. *Qualitative Health Research.* 26: 1753-60. DOI: 10.1177/1049732315617444

Martin, Rimm-Kauffman, 2015 – *Martin, D.P., Rimm-Kauffman, S.E.* (2015). Do student self-efficacy and teacher-student interaction quality contribute to emotional and social engagement in fifth grade math? *Journal of School Psychology.* 53: 359-373. DOI: 10.1016/j.jsp.2015.07.001

Martinsone, Damberga, 2016 – *Martinsone, B. Damberga, I.* (2016). Qualitative analysis of teachers' written self-reflections after implementation of social emotional learning program in Latvia. *International Journal of School and Educational Psychology.* DOI: 10.1080/21683603.2016.1225236

McClelland, 1975 – *McClelland, D.C.* (1975). Power: The inner Experience. New York: Irving Publishers Inc.

McCroskey, Richmond, 1983 – *McCroskey, J.C., Richmond, V.P.* (1983). Power in the classroom: teacher and student perceptions. *Communication Education*. 32: 175-184. DOI: 10.1080/03634528309378527

Mena Marcos et al., 2009 – *Mena Marcos, J.J, Sanchez Miguel, E. Tillema, H.* (2009). Teacher reflection on action: what is said (in research) and what is done (in teaching). *Reflective Practice*. 10(2): 191-204. DOI: 10.1080/14623940902786206

Mlalazi et al., 2016 – *Mlalazi, L., Rembe, S., Shumba J.* (2016). Implementation of guidance and counseling as a positive discipline management strategy in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province secondary schools. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 47(3): 191-205. DOI: 10.1080/09718923.2016.11893559

Nyumba et al., 2018 – *Nyumba, T. O., Wilson, K., Derrick, Ch. J., Mukherjee, N.* (2018). The use of focus group discussion methodology: Insights from two decades of application in conservation. *Methods in Ecology and Evolution*. 9(1): 20-32. DOI: 10.1111/2041-210X.12860

O'Connor et al., 2011 – *O'Connor, E.E., Dearing, E., Collins, B.A.* (2011). Teacher-child relationship and behavior problem trajectories in elementary school. *American Educational Research Journal*. 48: 120-162. DOI: 10.3102/0002831210365008

Overbeck, 2010 – *Overbeck, J.R.* (2010). Concepts and historical perspectives on power. In: Guinote, A., and Vescio, T. K. (Eds.). *The Social Psychology of Power*. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Parker, 2019 – *Parker, W.S.* (2019). Administrator-teacher relationships: building trust. *Graduate Programs for Educators*. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.graduateprogram.org/2019/11/administrator-teacher-relationships-building-trust/

Pianta et al., 2003 – *Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B., Stuhlman, M.* (2003). Relationships between teachers and children. In W. Reynolds and H. Miller (Eds.) Handbook of psychology: Educational Psychology. 7: 199-234. DOI: 10.1002/0471264385.wei0710

Pihlaja, Holst, 2013 – *Pihlaja, P.M., Holst, T.K.* (2013). How reflective are teachers? A study of kindergarten teachers' and special teachers' levels of reflection in day care. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*. 57: 182-198. DOI: 10.1080/00313831.2011.628691

Poliandri et al., 2023 – *Poliandri, D., Perazzolo, M., Pillera, G. C., Giampietro, L.* (2023). Dematerialized participation challenges: methods and practices for online focus groups. *Frontiers in Sociology*. 8: 1-18. DOI: 10.3389/fsoc.2023.1145264

Reddy et al., 2021 – *Reddy, L.A., Dudek, C.M., Kettler, R., Arnold-Berkovits, I., Lekwa, A., Crouse, K., Kurz, A., Hu, J.* (2021). The Relationship Between School Administrator and Teacher Ratings of Classroom Practices and Student Achievement in High-Poverty Schools. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*. 46(2): 87-98. DOI: 10.1177/1534508419862863

Reid, Kawash, 2017 – *Reid, L.F., Kawash, J.* (2017). Let's talk about power: How teacher use of power shapes relationships and learning. *Papers on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching: Proceedings of the University of Calgary Conference on Learning and Teaching*. 2: 34–41.

Rimm-Kaufman, Sandilos, 2023 – *Rimm-Kaufman, S., Sandilos, L.* (2023). Improving Students' Relationships With Teachers to Provide Essential Supports for Learning. Applications of Psychological Science to Teaching and Learning modules. American Psychological Association, University of Virginia. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.apa.org/education-career/k12/relationships

Roberts, 2020 – *Roberts, R.E.* (2020). Qualitative Interview Questions: Guidance for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*. 25(9): 3185-3203. DOI: 10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4640

Roller, Lavrakas, 2015 – *Roller, M.R., Lavrakas, P.J.* (2015). Applied Qualitative Research Design: A Total Quality Framework Approach. pp. 107-109. NYC: The Guilford Press.

Rubin, Rubin, 2012 – *Rubin, H.J., Rubin, I.S.* (2012). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Sartor, Young Brown, 2004 – *Sartor, L., Young Brown, M.Y.* (2004). Consensus in a Classroom. Fostering a Lively Learning Community. Mt. Shasta, CA: Psychosynthesis Press.

Sharp, 2009 – *Sharp, D.C.* (2009). A study of the Relationship Between Teacher Empowerment and Principal Effectiveness. PhD dissertation in Educational Leadership. Baldwin city, Kansas, USA: Graduate Department and Faculty of the School of Education of Baker University.

Shaver, 2004 – *Shaver, H.* (2004). Organize, Communicate, Empower! How Principals Can Make Time for Leadership. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008 – *Schwarzer, R., Hallum, S.* (2008). Perceived teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job stress and burnout: Mediation analyses. *Applied Psychology*. 57: 152-171. DOI: 10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00359.x

Squire-Kelly, 2012 – *Squire-Kelly, V.D.* (2012). The Relationship between Teacher Empowerment and Student Achievement. Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 406. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/406

Smithson, 2000 – *Smithson, J.* (2000). Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology.* 3(2): 103-119. DOI: 10.1080/136455700405172

Somekh, 2022 – *Somekh, S.* (2022). Disadvantages of Focus Groups (And How to Avoid Them): The Complete Guide. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.revuze.it/blog/disadvantages-of-focus-groups/

St. John, Johnson, 2000 – *St. John, W., Johnson. P.* (2000). The pros and cons of data analysis software for qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship.* 32(4):393-7. DOI: 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2000.00393.x

Stevens, 2018 – *Stevens, A.* (2018). Positive Discipline as a Part of Effective Classroom Management. Honors Theses. 2973. Kalamazoo MI, USA: Western Michigan University, Lee Honors College. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses/2973

Stronge et al., 2011 – *Stronge, J.H., Ward, T.H., Grant, L.W.* (2011). What makes good teachers good? A cross-case analysis of the connection between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. *Journal of Teacher Education.* 62(4): 339-355. DOI: 10.1177/0022487111404241

Sukawati et al., 2020 – *Sukawati, N.N., Gunawan, I., Prayoga, A.G., Wardani, A.D.* (2020). Performance, and Professionalism in the Learning Process: A Qualitative Study. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Education and Technology (ICET 2020). *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research.* 501: 250-254.

Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020 – *Tapia-Fonllem, C., Fraijo-Sing, B., Corral-Verdugo, V, Garza-Terán, G., Moreno-Barahona, M.* (2020). School Environments and Elementary School Children's Well-Being in Northwestern Mexico. *Frontiers in Psychology.* 11: 510. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00510

Tartari, 2018 – *Tartari, E.* (2018). The impact of positive discipline in the learning process. *Proceedings of ICERI 2018 Conference.* Pp. 8245-8249. Spain: Seville.

Telli, den Brok, 2012 – *Telli, S., den Brok, P.* (2012). Teacher-student interpersonal behaviour in the Turkish primary to higher education context. In D.B. Wubbels, van Tartwijk, Levy (Eds.). Interpersonal relationships in education. An overview of contemporary research. Pp. 187-206. Sense Publisher: Rotterdam.

Thompson, 2019 – *Thompson, C.S.* (2019). Reimagining Educational Leadership in the Caribbean. Mona, Jamaica: The University of the West Indies Press.

Turner, 2005 – *Turner, J.C.* (2005). Explaining the nature of power: a three-process theory. *European Journal of Social Psychology.* 35: 1-22.

van Tartwijk et al., 2009 – *van Tartwijk, J., den Brok, P., Veldman, I., Wubbels, T.* (2009). Teachers' practical knowledge about classroom management in multicultural classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 25(3): 453-460. DOI: 10.1016/j.tate.2008.09.005

Vasileiou et al., 2018 – *Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Thorpe, S., Young, T.* (2018). Characterising and justifying sample size sufficiency in interview-based studies: systematic analysis of qualitative health research over a 15-year period. *BMC Medical Research Methodology.* 18(148): 1-18. DOI: 10.1177/1049732315617444

Warrah et al., 2019 – *Warrah, S.M., Bing, K.W., Yusof, H.* (2019). Investigating the relationship between teacher quality and students' academic performance with empowerment as a mediator. *Journal of Contemporary Issues and Thought.* 9: 61-74. DOI: 10.37134/jcit.vol9.7.2019

Wentzel, 2012 – *Wentzel, K.R.* (2012). Teacher-student relationships and adolescent competence at school. In T. Wubbels, P. den Brok, J. van Tartwijk, and J. Levy (Eds.). *Interpersonal Relationships in Education.* Pp. 19-36. Rotterdam: Sense.

Williford, Wolcott, 2015 – *Williford, A.P., Wolcott, C.S.* (2015). SEL and Student–Teacher Relationships. In J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.). Handbook of Social and Emotional learning: Research and Practice. New York: Guilford.

Wong, 2008 – *Wong, L.* (2008). Data analysis in qualitative research: a brief guide to using nVivo. *Malaysian Family Physician.* 3(1): 14-20.

Zaleznik et al., 1975 – *Zaleznik, A., Kets de Vries, M.F.R.* (1975). Power and the Corporate Mind. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.