

# The Importance of Teacher-Student Relationships for Teachers' Use of Management Strategies with Students with Challenging Behavior

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## Abstract

*The aim of the present study is to investigate if teachers' self-estimated teacher-student interpersonal relationships with students with 7-9 symptoms of ADHD Inattentive Type and emotional-behavioral disorder serve as a possible mediator between the symptoms of ADHD and teachers' use of management strategies. Altogether, 539 classroom teachers participated in the research (female = 484, which is 89.8%; M age = 43.65; SD = 9.82) from 125 elementary schools. Teachers evaluated the behavior of their students through a checklist of symptoms of ADHD according to DSM-V criteria, and the subsample consisted of students who showed at least 7 of the possible 9 symptoms. Teachers also completed the Relationship with Pupil Scale, Student Behavior Symptom Scale, and Undesirable Behavior Management Strategies Scale. The mediation effect of the teacher-student relationship on antisociality (i.e., hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems) was tested and confirmed its existence in relation to positive disciplinary procedures. It was not statistically significant for the association with negative disciplinary actions. It can be concluded that the relationship between teacher and student has an important role in the application of discipline procedures.*

**Key words:** *behavioral problems; classroom management; Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS); Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS); relationship in school culture*

## **Introduction**

Teachers are expected to use effective classroom management strategies to manage the behavior of all students, including those who display behavioral problems. When working with individual students in a classroom, teachers may focus on positive practices to increase positive behaviors or negative practices focused on decreasing problems. The use of positive and preventive management practices is emphasized in multitiered systems of support (MTSS) such as schools implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Frequent interactions to address challenging behavior with students may affect how the teacher approaches management. In this study, we investigate whether the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students contributes to the application of positive classroom management strategies.

Teachers have numerous opportunities to use management strategies to address behavior in the general education classroom. Research investigating teachers' use of management strategies includes the use of positive and proactive practices as well as negative and reactive discipline practices for addressing the problem behavior of students. As Vlah et al. (2022) stated, "The contemporary concept of classroom discipline should be understood not only as a means of maintaining order but also as a formative context that promotes the positive development of students and fosters an optimal working atmosphere for all students" (p. 156). Proactive efforts to prevent problem behavior by increasing positive behaviors in inclusive general education classrooms are in the interest of the positive development of students as such, but also in the interest of creating optimal and safe social functioning of society. The use of positive and proactive management practices is key for schools implementing multitiered systems of support (MTSS) such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The PBIS approach, implemented by all school staff, emphasizes the teaching and reinforcing of expectations and decreasing the use of reactive and exclusionary discipline of problem behavior. School-wide implementation of PBIS "improves social-emotional competence, academic success, and school climate" (Center on PBIS, 2023). In addition to significantly lower rates of the use of exclusionary practices such as disciplinary referrals to the office, research has shown reductions in behavior problems, concentration problems, and increased social-emotional functioning and prosocial behaviors for students in schools implementing PBIS in comparison to schools not implementing PBIS (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2012).

There is broad evidence to show the effectiveness of PBIS across student groups, including students with disabilities (Center on PBIS, 2023). PBIS requires fidelity of implementation across all school settings (e.g., classrooms, common areas) and with all students and includes an emphasis on a higher ratio of recognizing and responding to positive student behavior in comparison to responding with corrective disciplinary actions to problem behavior. The recommended ratio for supporting social, emotional, and behavioral growth is 5 to 1 in providing specific and positive

feedback to encourage growth versus providing correction for behavioral errors (Center on PBIS, 2022). This ratio applies to responding to behavior classwide as well as to the delivery of feedback to individual students.

For some students with disabilities (e.g., ADHD, EBD), the nature of their disability symptoms (e.g., hyperactivity, impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems) provides more frequent opportunities for disciplinary interactions in response to behavior. For example, Berchiatti et al. (2022) examined teacher perceptions of students with ADHD and found that, in comparison to their typically developing peers, teachers reported significantly higher emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, and problems with peers. Students with EBD, by definition, display heightened levels of problem behavior in comparison to their typically developing peers. Gable et al. (2012) noted that “Unfortunately, most general education teachers and special education teachers lack the preparation necessary to work effectively with students with ED” (p. 512). Thus, while teachers may have training in general classroom management, this training may not prepare them for supporting students with more challenging behaviors. Indeed, in the United States, students with disabilities experience disproportionately more exclusionary discipline than their peers without disabilities (Office of Civil Rights [OCR], 2018). When teachers have increased conflicts with students with challenging behavior, this results in more opportunities to respond to behavior, possibly in reactive and less productive ways. In Croatia, a positive correlation was found between the academic performance of students with symptoms of EBD and teacher-student interpersonal relationships. It also was indicated that students with EBD who were deemed to need additional help with behavior (students receiving targeted interventions on the second tier according to PBIS) had more unsatisfactory interpersonal relationships with their teachers (Vlah et al., 2021).

Students who have symptoms of ADHD and related problem behaviors often lack the ability to establish positive, permanent, and long-term optimal social relationships within their social environment with peers and/or teachers. Berchiatti et al. (2022) found that children with ADHD had higher levels of relationship problems with their peers than those children without ADHD. Berchiatti et al. also noted higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems among children with ADHD than their typically developing peers and reported higher levels of peer rejection and lower levels of popularity within peer groups in comparison to their nondisabled peers. In this study, teachers also assessed the quality of their own relationships with students with and without ADHD. While there were no differences between groups in teacher perceptions of the closeness of their relationships with students, teachers reported significantly more conflict in their relationships with students with ADHD than with typically developing students. Tawlin et al. (2025) highlight that teachers view building strong and supportive student-teacher relationships with students displaying ADHD symptomology as highly important and suggest that teachers see value in strengthening these relationships despite known challenges. In a review of research, Ewe (2019) noted that findings indicated that both students with ADHD and their teachers held lower

perceptions of their teacher-student relationships than their peers without ADHD. In contrast to Berchiatti et al. (2022), Ewe reported that teachers experienced less emotional closeness with students with ADHD in comparison to typically developing peers. Also, teachers experienced “less cooperation and more conflicts in their relations with their students with ADHD than with other students” (Ewe, 2019, p. 136). Ewe and Aspelin (2022) noted that research findings indicating the negative effects of symptoms of ADHD (i.e., inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity) on relationships with teachers and peers suggest that “ADHD diagnosis can thus be considered as a risk factor for social integration problems in school” (p. 294). Rushton et al. (2020) examined the longitudinal impact of ADHD symptoms with increased student-teacher conflict and emotional engagement with school. They found that “The more ADHD symptoms children displayed in early primary school, the more conflict teachers reported in their relationships with those students in middle primary school, which was associated with lower student-reported emotional engagement with school” (p. 204).

It is obvious that positive student-teacher relationships are important for student success. Granot (2016) found that for students (ages 8-10; 11-14) with learning disabilities, ADHD, and co-morbid ADHD and LD, teachers' perceptions of security in their teacher-student relationships were associated with lower ratings of internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors and higher student learning proficiency. While students with ADHD and EBD have higher rates of problem behaviors than their typically developing peers and generally poorer student-teacher relationships, it is not known how student-teacher relationships impact how teachers respond to these students' problem behaviors. Since ADHD symptoms in a broader sense also include symptoms of emotional and behavioral problems in students, it is important to frame that the teacher is responsible for establishing and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships between students and teachers (Posavec & Vlah, 2019). Such responsibility of the teacher in the professional context of the inclusive general classroom environment is emphasized as noted by Ewe (2019), “high-quality relationships between teachers and students are especially crucial for students with externalizing or hyperactive behavior (e.g., ADHD)” (p. 146), whereas teachers' rejection of students with ADHD places students at risk educationally and socially. The theoretical focus of this paper is the understanding that students exhibiting symptoms of ADHD and EBD often face significant challenges in establishing and maintaining positive, lasting relationships with their environment. Furthermore, positive relationships are linked to more favorable outcomes.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in the classroom and/or positive behavior management is recognized as an effective approach incorporating evidence-based practices to support students' optimal development and academic success (Karhu et al., 2018; Scheuermann & Hall, 2016). Teachers in Croatia self-assessed their frequency of use of negative disciplinary methods for students with a high intensity of inattention disorder; however, they used positive disciplinary methods more often than negative ones while “additional developmental difficulties

of students are predictors of more frequent use of assertive disciplinary procedures than positive disciplinary procedures” (Vlah et al., 2022, p. 168). However, the positive interpersonal self-assessed relationship between the teacher and the student proved to be a significant predictor for the use of positive disciplinary procedures (Vlah et al., 2022). In addition, Vlah et al. recommended future research to investigate and understand the possible role of teacher-student interpersonal relationships in behavior management strategies in inclusive general education classrooms. So, in the present study, we investigate more deeply the contribution of self-assessed interpersonal relationships of the teacher with the student in the use of disciplinary procedures (with special emphasis on positive disciplinary procedures). It is interesting to investigate whether the relationships between teachers and students contribute to the application of positive classroom management strategies.

Given this, the purpose of this investigation is to examine how teachers’ relationships with students with symptoms of inattention and behavioral problems interplay with the teachers’ use of positive and negative disciplinary strategies in general education environments.

## Aim

The aim of the present study is to investigate if teachers’ self-estimated teacher-student interpersonal relationships with students with 7-9 symptoms of attention deficit disorder and emotional-behavioral disorder (EBD) serve as a possible mediator between the symptoms of ADHD and teachers’ use of management strategies.

## Methodology

### Participants

This research included 539 classroom teachers (484 were female, which is 89.8%;  $M_{\text{age}} = 43.65$ ;  $SD_{\text{age}} = 9.82$ ;  $M_{\text{years of experience in education}} = 18.38$ ;  $SD = 10.49$ ) from 125 elementary schools throughout the Republic of Croatia. Teachers were asked to subjectively detect in their class whether they have one or more students: *Please remember one or more students in your class who you think or feel have behavioral difficulties in class or outside of class (vacation, extracurricular activities, trips, etc.)* (the total number of detected students was  $N=1383$ ), and then on a bipolar scale (YES-NO), i.e., on a checklist of symptoms inattentiveness according to DSM-V criteria evaluated the behavior of these students: *Does not follow the order of instructions and fails to complete tasks (not due to resistance or inability to understand). Has difficulty organizing and creating tasks and activities. Has difficulty persevering with tasks or activities. Avoids, dislikes or refuses to solve tasks that require systematic mental effort. He doesn't pay attention to details and makes mistakes in school because of his inattention. He seems not to listen even when you speak to him directly. It is forgettable in daily activities. His attention is easily distracted by stimuli from the environment. Loses things necessary for writing or other activities (school supplies, books).* Based on

this, only students who showed at least 7 of the possible 9 symptoms of inattention were retained in the subsample (N=539) (88.5% were boys;  $Min_{age}=7$ ,  $Max_{age}=14$ ;  $M_{age}=10.54$ ,  $SD_{age}=2.07$ ). On average, the teacher assessed 1.27 students for whom they identified with at least 7 symptoms of inattentiveness.

The measurement instrument consists of General Data, the Student Behavior Symptom Scale, and the Undesirable Behavior Management Strategies Scale.

### **General data**

In addition to data on age, gender and school size, on the Self-Assessed Relationship with Pupil Scale (Vlah et al., 2018) of 3 levels, teachers assessed their relationship with the pupil (0=unsatisfactory, 1=good, 2=very good) and provided basic information about the student they assessed (age, gender, grade).

### **Student behavior symptom scale**

The student behavior symptom scale was created by translating and adapting the D4 NICHQ - Vanderbilt ADHD Teacher Rating Scale (Wolraich, 2002). It consists of a total of 35 statements divided into 4 subscales whose satisfactory metric characteristics were confirmed in this sample: **Impulsivity-Hyperactivity**, e.g. *Has difficulty in play or other recreational activities where he is expected to sit and work quietly* ( $k=9$ ;  $\alpha=0.93$ ); **Emotional Problems**, e.g. *He is frightened, anxious, or worried* ( $k=7$ ;  $\alpha=0.89$ ); and **Antisociality**, e.g. *Abuses, threatens, or teases others* ( $k=10$ ;  $\alpha=0.92$ ). The inattention subscale was not analyzed to avoid data redundancy namely, the subject sample of this research was made up of students who had already been assessed once according to the same criteria of DSM5 inattention. The teachers used it to assess how often certain behaviors had occurred among students since the beginning of the school year (0 – never to 3 – very often).

### **Undesirable behavior management strategies scale**

As part of the project, the original scale, *The Scale of Misbehavior Management Strategy* (Martin et al., 1999) was adapted according to the previous translation and cultural adaptation of the scale by Beaudoin et al. (2014). Beaudoin et al. established a two-factor model on a representative sample for Croatia that measures positive (strategies that improve desirable behavior) and assertive (strategies that reduce undesirable behavior) disciplining strategies of students with problematic behaviors in Croatia. Since these authors used a scale of a binary measurement mechanism (0-does not use a strategy and 1-uses a strategy) and concluded that due to low reliability, they suggest that a broader range of answers be made in future research, in this research a scale containing 24 items was applied Likert type with 6 points, on which the teachers assessed how often they use certain procedures for managing undesirable behavior when working with the student they are assessing in the aforementioned questionnaire. The two-factor structure was also confirmed in this research on two subscales: positive disciplinary procedures contained in 14 items (e.g., I talk to the

student,  $\alpha = 0.82$ ) and assertive disciplinary procedures contained in 10 items (e.g., I send the student to the corner/ the back of the room,  $\alpha = 0.67$ ).

### Data collection

Teacher studies students (in Rijeka, Osijek, Split and Zadar) participated in data collection in all counties except Zagreb (where interviewers were hired). The Education Agency and the line ministry gave their consent, and an invitation was initially sent to all primary school principals from 13 counties and the city of Zagreb. The purpose and procedure of anonymous and voluntary research were explained to principals, teachers, and school counselors. After the principals' consent, interviews were conducted with the school counselors, which encouraged teachers to cooperate and coordinate between teachers and researchers. Teachers self-assessed their strategies for managing undesirable behavior using questionnaires and evaluated students on a behavioral symptom scale.

## Results

The prerequisites for conducting the regression analysis (Table 1) were met. There were no major deviations from the normality of the distribution.

Table 1  
Descriptive Statistics for Measured Variables (N=539)

Variable in the study	M	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Hyperactivity-impulsivity	539	0.00	3.00	1.72	0.81	-0.33	-0.84
Antisociality	539	0.00	2.90	1.06	0.72	0.39	-0.70
Emotional problems	539	0.00	3.00	0.86	0.68	0.93	0.38
Teacher-student relationship	539	0.00	2.00	1.41	0.58	-0.39	-0.72
Positive disciplinary	539	0.79	5.00	2.87	0.78	-0.02	-0.38
Negative disciplinary	539	0.00	4.50	1.36	0.59	0.74	1.91

A series of regression analyses were performed (Figure 1).

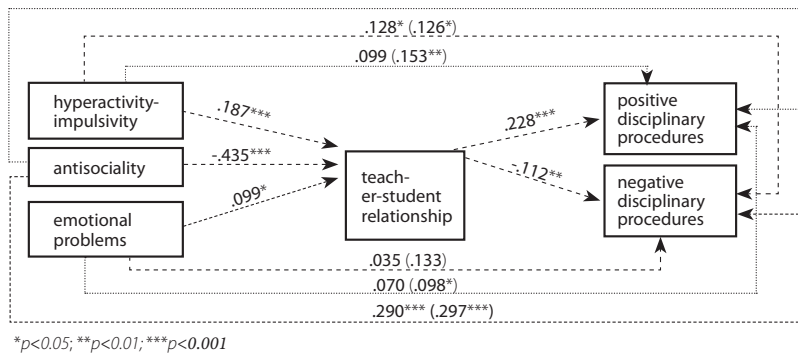


Figure 1. Mediation Model

Note: Mediation model: The relationship between the teacher and the student as a mediator variable in the connection between the symptoms (hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality and emotional problems) and the teacher's disciplinary procedures (positive and negative disciplinary procedures).

Table 2  
Testing the Significance of the Mediation Effect and the Size of the Effect for the Mediator Teacher-Student Relationship

Correlations	Sobel test	SE	Goodman test	SE	$\kappa^2$
Positive disciplinary procedures					
hyperactivity-impulsivity	3.19**	.016	3.22**	.016	.045
Antisociality	5.19**	.026	5.22**	.026	.096
Emotional problems	2.26*	.014	2.28*	.014	.020
Negative disciplinary procedures					
hyperactivity-impulsivity	0.37	.006	0.38	.006	-
Antisociality	0.37	.015	0.37	.015	-
Emotional problems	0.37	.004	0.40	.003	-

\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.001$ ,  $\kappa^2$  – effect size, SE – standard error

First, it was tested whether the symptoms of emotional-behavioral disorders (hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems), which are independent variables, significantly affect the mediator (teacher-student relationship),  $F_{(3,535)} = 24.95$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.123$ . Then, it was tested whether the independent variables (symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems) significantly affected the dependent variables (positive and negative disciplinary procedures) when the mediator (teacher-student relationship) was removed from the regression model, i.e. i.e., for positive disciplinary procedures  $F_{(3,535)} = 9.80$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.052$  and negative disciplinary procedures ( $F_{(3,535)} = 32.71$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.155$ ). Finally, the effect of independent variables (symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems) on dependent variables (positive and negative disciplinary procedures) was checked after the mediator variable teacher-student relationship was added to the model (influence on positive disciplinary procedures  $F_{(1,534)} = 44.33$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.073$ ; influence on negative disciplinary procedures  $F_{(1,534)} = 0.14$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.000$ ).

The statistical significance of the mediation effect was verified by the Sobel and Goodman test (see Table 2). The mediation effect of the relationship between the teacher and the student is significant only for the association of symptoms (hyperactivity-impulsivity, antisociality, emotional problems) with positive disciplinary procedures of the teacher and was not statistically significant for the association with negative disciplinary procedures.

The relationship between the teacher and the student had a full mediation effect on the association of symptoms with the positive disciplinary procedures of the teacher. Under the mediating influence of the relationship between the teacher and the student, the connection between positive disciplinary procedures and: 1) symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity ceased to be statistically significant ( $\beta_1 = 0.153$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0.099$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ); 2) symptoms of emotional problems also ceased to be statistically significant ( $\beta_1 = 0.098$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0.070$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ); 3) symptoms of antisociality became statistically significant ( $\beta_1 = 0.059$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0.184$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). If we consider the

relationship between the teacher and the student, only the symptoms of antisociality predict the more frequent use of positive disciplinary procedures in students with attention difficulties. The size of the mediation effect is shown in Table 3, and according to Preacher and Kelley (2011), a small (for symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity and emotional problems) to a moderate effect (for symptoms of antisociality) was obtained.

Since we did not confirm a statistically significant mediation effect for negative disciplinary procedures of teachers, it was not meaningful to calculate the size of the effect. More symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity and antisociality, regardless of the relationship between the teacher and the student, predict more often the use of negative disciplinary procedures in students with attention difficulties.

## **Discussion**

The mediation effect of the teacher-student relationship (through a series of regression analyses and additional tests for the significance of the effect) was tested and confirmed its existence in relation to positive disciplinary procedures. It can be concluded that the relationship between teacher and student plays an important role in the application of discipline procedures. This aligns with Tawlin et al.'s (2025) findings that "Teachers view their relationships with students with ADHD symptomatology as an essential aspect of student behavior management and overall student success and well-being" (p. 8). In particular, a better relationship between the teacher and the student plays a significant role in the use of positive disciplinary procedures in students with attention difficulties when the student has symptoms of antisociality.

When it comes to impulsivity-hyperactivity and emotional problems in students' behavior, if the teacher has a good relationship with the student, these symptoms will not be related to the application of positive disciplinary procedures. This does not mean that they will not apply them when working with children, but they will apply them in the same way as with other students in the class (regardless of the disorder).

Our findings reinforce the importance of teacher-student relationships for the use of positive management responses, which support the hypothesis that "a close teacher-student relationship may serve as a protective factor for the receipt of corrective feedback in this group" (Staff et al., 2022, p. 287). There is evidence to indicate that teacher-student relationships influence responses to the behavior of students already identified as having ADHD. In semi-structured interviews, 12 of 17 K-8 teachers identified their relationships with students with ADHD as a factor that facilitated their use of specific classroom management practices in the moment. They noted that "strong relationships helped them use the practices more skillfully (e.g., making praise more genuine, knowing when a precorrection would be needed), helped foster student empowerment or buy-in with the intervention, or made it easier for them to use a Tier 1 or Tier 2 intervention" (Lawson et al., 2022, p. 851). Based on this, Lawson

et al. surveyed 56 teachers who reported that student-teacher relationships were factors that made them much more likely to use Tier 1 practices (i.e., specific praise, precorrection, brief and specific error correction) and Tier 2 (i.e., daily behavior reports) with students with ADHD (Lawson et al., 2022). Together with the present findings focused on students exhibiting symptomatology but, prior to identification with ADHD, early attention to improving teacher-student relationships and the use of positive management practices with students with challenging behavior is warranted. Previous findings maintain that “students with ADHD symptoms tend to experience relationships with their teachers that are low in closeness and high in conflict. These results confirm the trends observed in the existing literature. These findings are important when considering how teachers may best support students with ADHD symptomatology in their classrooms and promote positive outcomes in academic, social, and psychological domains of functioning” (MacLean et al., 2023, p. 19).

The adoption of an MTSS model such as provided by the PBIS evidence-based framework to support social, emotional, behavioral, and academic growth is considered best practice for supporting students, including those with disabilities (e.g., ADHD, EBD) and students with challenging behavior (Bradshaw et al., 2012; Center on PBIS, 2023; Rogers et al., 2015). The PBIS framework outlines practices to guide classroom teachers in designing safe environments, establishing positive relationships with their students, developing predictable routines, and teaching positive expectations (Center on PBIS, 2022). It is also a method that requires teachers to emphasize support for positive behavior in direct relation to their use of correction for problem behaviors. Given the likelihood of increased opportunities for responding to instances of conflict with students with challenging behavior, we recommend early adoption of the PBIS framework as it provides both an emphasis on fostering positive relationships with students and increased use of effective positive evidence-based approaches to the management of behavior that can lead to decreases in behavior problems and increases in social-emotional functioning and pro-social behavior (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2012). Thus, when teachers have increased conflicts with their students with greater numbers of problem behaviors, they can turn to more productive responses to both build relationships and support positive social development.

In addition, the results should be considered from the point of view that the sample for this study is a very specific group of students who were rated by the classroom teachers as having 7 to 9 symptoms of inattention. Such a high number of one of the ADHD symptoms indicates the need for educational differentiation in the classroom, i.e. the application of an individualised education plan (IEP) for the students. Such a plan is mandatory for all students with special needs in Croatia, according to the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (2008). Results indicate that IEPs should necessarily include a plan for building and maintaining a positive interpersonal relationship with the students. This is supported by the official document *Guidelines for Working with Students with Difficulties (2021)*, which states

under the didactic-pedagogical principles for working with students with special needs: “Social skills are important for building and maintaining healthy relationships based on cooperation and mutual respect. They include the ability to manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts, resist peer pressure and ask for help when needed” (p. 22). The same chapter also points out that it is “extremely important for a teacher to build quality relationships with students based on mutual respect and understanding” (p.26) and “The most important thing is to establish a cordial and co-operative relationship in order to facilitate open communication and cooperation with the student and his/her parents/guardians” (p.30). Based on the observed documents and prescribed guidelines, the question arises as to the qualification of teachers in Croatia for the challenging and by no means easy task of building and maintaining a positive relationship with students who show high levels of inattention in class, but also emotional-behavioural difficulties. The question is how well the faculties prepare them adequately at the personality level, which relates to their own social and emotional competence and their ability to cope with stress. The analysis of the study programmes shows that this preparation is very modest in Croatia (Vukelić et al., 2020). Teachers’ social competencies and emotional competencies are not well addressed in the curricula of the teachers’ faculties in Croatia. Yet they should be one of the fundamental topics for successful work with students with antisocial behaviour, at least according to the results of our and other previous research.

The methodological limitations of the work relate primarily to the scale for self-assessment of the interpersonal relationships with the student, as it is univariate, so it is not possible to determine the reliability of the measurement. In future studies, a multivariate scale should be used, and an attempt should be made to better understand the results obtained by using qualitative methods (focus groups and interviews with teachers).

## **Conclusion**

The aim of the present study is to investigate if teachers’ self-estimated teacher-student interpersonal relationships with students with 7-9 symptoms of attention deficit disorder and emotional-behavioral disorder (EBD) serve as a possible mediator between the symptoms of ADHD and teachers’ use of management strategies. Results show that if we consider the relationship between the teacher and the student, only the symptoms of antisociality predict the more frequent use of positive disciplinary procedures in students with attention difficulties. Also, more symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity and antisociality, regardless of the relationship between the teacher and the student, predict more often the use of negative disciplinary procedures in students with attention difficulties.

The results obtained can be explained within the concept of the theoretical PBIS system, in which building and maintaining a positive interpersonal relationship between students and teachers is a prerequisite for the successful development

of students. Therefore, a timely investment in training teachers for socially and emotionally competent communication with all students across developmental situations is indicated.

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# Važnost odnosa između učitelja i učenika za učiteljevo korištenje strategija upravljanja učenikovim problematičnim ponašanjem

## Sažetak

Cilj ove studije je istražiti služe li samoprocijenjeni međuljudski odnosi učitelja i učenika s učenicima sa 7-9 simptomima ADHD-a tipa nepažnje i emocionalno-ponašajnim poremećajem kao mogući posrednik između simptoma ADHD-a i učiteljeve upotrebe strategija upravljanja. U istraživanju je sudjelovalo 539 učitelja razredne nastave ( $\bar{X} = 484, 89,8\%$ ;  $M_{\text{dob}} = 43,65$ ;  $SD = 9,82$ ) iz 125 osnovnih škola. Učitelji su ocjenjivali ponašanje svojih učenika na osnovi popisa simptoma ADHD-a prema DSM-V kriterijima, a poduzorak su činili učenici koji su pokazivali najmanje 7 od mogućih 9 simptoma. Učitelji su također ispunili Skalu odnosa s učenicima, Skalu simptoma ponašanja učenika i Skalu strategija upravljanja nepoželjnim ponašanjem. Medijacijski učinak odnosa nastavnik-učenik na antisocijalnost (tj. hiperaktivnost-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi) testiran je i potvrđeno njegovo postojanje u odnosu na pozitivne disciplinske postupke. Nije bilo statistički značajno za povezanost s negativnim disciplinirajućim postupcima. Može se zaključiti da odnos učitelja i učenika ima važnu ulogu u primjeni disciplinskih postupaka.

**Ključne riječi:** Intervencije i podrška pozitivnog ponašanja (PBIS); odnos u školskoj kulturi; problemi u ponašanju; upravljanje razredom; višeslojni sustavi podrške (MTSS)

## Uvod

Od učitelja se očekuje da se koriste učinkovitim strategijama upravljanja razredom u upravljanju ponašanjem svih učenika, uključujući one koji pokazuju probleme u ponašanju. Kada rade s pojedinačnim učenicima u učionici, učitelji se mogu usredotočiti na pozitivne prakse kako bi povećali pozitivno ponašanje ili negativne prakse usmjerene na smanjenje problema. Korištenje pozitivnih i preventivnih praksi upravljanja naglašeno je u višeslojnim sustavima podrške *Multitiered Systems Of Support* (MTSS) kao što su škole koje provode intervencije i podršku pozitivnoga ponašanja *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports* (PBIS). Česte interakcije u rješavanju izazovnoga ponašanja s učenicima mogu utjecati na izbor načina kojim

učitelj pristupa upravljanju. U ovom istraživanju istražujemo doprinose li međuljudski odnosi između učitelja i učenika primjeni pozitivnih strategija upravljanja razredom.

Učitelji imaju dovoljno mogućnosti da se koriste strategijama upravljanja kako bi se pozabavili ponašanjem u razredu općega obrazovanja. Istraživanje kojim se istražuje učiteljska upotrebu strategija upravljanja uključuje korištenje pozitivnih i proaktivnih praksi, kao i negativnih i reaktivnih disciplinskih praksi za rješavanje problematičnoga ponašanja učenika. Kako Vlah i sur. (2022) navode: „Suvremeni koncept razredne discipline treba shvatiti ne samo kao sredstvo za održavanje reda, već i kao formativni kontekst koji promiče pozitivan razvoj učenika i potiče optimalnu radnu atmosferu za sve učenike” (str. 156). Proaktivni naponi za prevenciju problematičnoga ponašanja povećanjem pozitivnih ponašanja u inkluzivnim općeobrazovnim razredima u interesu su pozitivnoga razvoja učenika kao takvoga, ali i u interesu stvaranja optimalnoga i sigurnoga socijalnog funkcioniranja društva. Korištenje pozitivnih i proaktivnih praksi upravljanja ključno je za škole koje provode višeslojne sustave podrške (MTSS) kao što su intervencije i podrška pozitivnoga ponašanja (PBIS). Pristup PBIS-a, koji provodi sve školsko osoblje, naglašava poučavanje i jačanje očekivanja te smanjenje upotrebe reaktivne i isključive discipline problematičnoga ponašanja. Implementacija PBIS-a u cijeloj školi „poboljšava socijalno-emocionalnu kompetenciju, akademski uspjeh i školsku klimu” (Centar za PBIS, 2023). Uz znatno niže stope korištenja isključujućih praksi kao što je disciplinsko upućivanje u ured (npr. stručnoj službi), istraživanje je pokazalo smanjenje problema u ponašanju, problema s koncentracijom i povećano socijalno-emocionalno funkcioniranje i prosocijalno ponašanje za učenike u školama koje provode PBIS u usporedbi sa školama koje ne implementiraju PBIS (npr. Bradshaw i sur., 2012).

Postoje brojni dokazi koji pokazuju učinkovitost PBIS-a u skupinama studenata, uključujući studente s invaliditetom (Centar za PBIS, 2023). PBIS zahtijeva dosljednost implementacije u svim školskim okružjima (npr. učionice, zajedničke prostorije) i sa svim učenicima te uključuje naglasak na veći omjer prepoznavanja i reagiranja na pozitivno ponašanje učenika u usporedbi s reagiranjem korektivnim disciplinskim mjerama na problematično ponašanje. Preporučeni omjer za održavanje društvenoga, emocionalnoga i bihevioralnoga rasta je 5 prema 1 u pružanju specifičnih i pozitivnih povratnih informacija za poticanje rasta u odnosu na pružanje ispravka za pogreške u ponašanju (Center za PBIS, 2022). Ovaj se omjer odnosi na reagiranje na ponašanje u razredu, kao i na pružanje povratnih informacija pojedinim učenicima.

Za neke učenike s invaliditetom (npr. ADHD, EBD), priroda njihovih simptoma invaliditeta (npr. hiperaktivnost, impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi) pruža češće prilike za disciplinske interakcije kao odgovor na ponašanje. Na primjer, Berchiatti i sur. (2022) ispitali su percepciju učitelja o učenicima s ADHD-om i otkrili, u usporedbi s njihovim vršnjacima koji se uobičajeno razvijaju, da su učitelji prijavili značajno veće emocionalne simptome, probleme u ponašanju, hiperaktivnost i probleme s vršnjacima. Učenici s EBD-om, po definiciji, pokazuju povećane razine problematičnoga ponašanja u usporedbi sa svojim vršnjacima. Gable i sur. (2012.)

primijetili su da „Nažalost, većini učitelja općeg obrazovanja i učitelja specijalnog obrazovanja nedostaje priprema potrebna za učinkovit rad s učenicima s ED” (str. 512). Premda su učitelji možda osposobljeni za opće upravljanje razredom, ova im vještina možda nije dovoljna za pružanje podrške učenicima s izazovnijim ponašanjem. Doista, u Sjedinjenim Državama studenti s invaliditetom doživljavaju nerazmjerno više disciplinskih postupaka isključivanja nego njihovi vršnjaci bez invaliditeta (*Office of Civil Rights [OCR]*, 2018). Kada učitelji imaju povećane sukobe s učenicima s izazovnim ponašanjem, to rezultira s više prilika za reagiranje na ponašanje, vjerojatno na reaktivan i manje produktivan način. U Hrvatskoj je utvrđena pozitivna korelacija između akademskoga uspjeha učenika sa simptomima EBD-a i međuljudskih odnosa nastavnik-učenik. Također je naznačeno da su učenici s EBD-om, za koje se smatralo da trebaju dodatnu pomoć u ponašanju (učenici koji primaju ciljane intervencije na drugoj razini prema PBIS-u), imali nezadovoljavajuće međuljudske odnose sa svojim učiteljima (Vlah i sur., 2021).

Učenici koji imaju simptome ADHD-a i srodna problematična ponašanja često nemaju sposobnost uspostavljanja pozitivnih, trajnih i dugoročnih optimalnih društvenih odnosa s vršnjacima i/ili učiteljima u svojem društvenom okružju. Berchiatti i sur. (2022) otkrili su da djeca s ADHD-om imaju više problema u odnosima s vršnjacima nego djeca bez ADHD-a. Berchiatti i sur. (2022) također su primijetili više razine emocionalnih problema i problema u ponašanju među djecom s ADHD-om u odnosu na njihove vršnjake urednoga razvoja i izvijestili o višim razinama odbijanja vršnjaka i nižim razinama popularnosti unutar grupa vršnjaka u usporedbi s njihovim vršnjacima bez invaliditeta. U ovoj studiji učitelji su također procjenjivali kvalitetu vlastitih odnosa s učenicima sa i bez ADHD-a. Iako nije bilo razlika među skupinama u učiteljskim percepcijama o bliskosti njihovih odnosa s učenicima, učitelji su izvijestili o značajno većem broju sukoba u svojim odnosima s učenicima s ADHD-om nego s učenicima bez dijagnosticiranoga ADHD-a. Tawlin i sur. (2025) ističu da nastavnici smatraju izgradnju snažnih i podržavajućih odnosa između učenika i učitelja s učenicima koji pokazuju simptome ADHD-a vrlo važnim i sugeriraju da nastavnici vide vrijednost u jačanju tih odnosa unatoč poznatim izazovima. U pregledu istraživanja, Ewe (2019) je primijetio da nalazi pokazuju da su i učenici s ADHD-om i njihovi učitelji imali nižu međusobnih odnosa od svojih vršnjaka bez ADHD-a. Za razliku od Berchiatti i sur. (2022), Ewe (2019) izviještava da su učitelji doživjeli manju emocionalnu bliskost s učenicima s ADHD-om u usporedbi s vršnjacima vez simptome ADHD-a. Također, učitelji su doživjeli „manje suradnje i više sukoba u odnosima sa svojim učenicima s ADHD-om nego s drugim učenicima” (Ewe, 2019., str. 136). Ewe i Aspelin (2022) primijetili su da rezultati istraživanja koji ukazuju na negativne učinke simptoma ADHD-a (tj. nepažnje, hiperaktivnosti, impulzivnosti) na odnose s učiteljima i vršnjacima sugeriraju da se „dijagnoza ADHD-a stoga može smatrati faktorom rizika za probleme socijalne integracije u škole” (str. 294). Rushton i sur. (2020) ispitali su longitudinalni utjecaj simptoma ADHD-a s povećanim sukobom učenika i učitelja te emocionalnim angažmanom

u školi. Utvrdili su da „Što su više simptoma ADHD-a djeca pokazivala u ranoj osnovnoj školi, učitelji su se u srednoj osnovnoj školi u odnosima s tim učenicima više sukobljavali, što je bilo povezano s manjim emocionalnim angažmanom učenika u školi” (str. 204).

Očito je da su pozitivni odnosi između učenika i učitelja važni za uspjeh učenika. Granot (2016) je otkrio da je za učenike (u dobi 8-10; 11-14) s teškoćama u učenju, ADHD-om i komorbidnim ADHD-om i LD-om učiteljeva percepcija sigurnosti u njihovim odnosima učitelj-učenik bila povezana s nižim ocjenama internalizacije i eksternaliziranje problematičnoga ponašanja i veća osposobljenost učenika za učenje. Iako učenici s ADHD-om i EBD-om imaju više stope problematičnoga ponašanja od svojih vršnjaka koji se obično razvijaju i općenito lošije odnose između učenika i učitelja, nije poznato kako odnosi između učenika i nastavnika/učitelja utječu na to kako učitelji reagiraju na problematična ponašanja ovih učenika. Budući da simptomi ADHD-a u širem smislu uključuju i simptome emocionalnih problema i problema u učenikovu ponašanju, važno je istaknuti da je učitelj odgovoran za uspostavljanje i održavanje pozitivnih međuljudskih odnosa sa svojim učenicima. (Posavec i Vlah, 2019). Spomenutu odgovornost nastavnika u profesionalnom kontekstu inkluzivnoga općeg učioničkog okružja naglašava Ewe (2019, str. 146), koja tvrdi da su „visokokvalitetni odnosi između učitelja i učenika iznimno važni za učenike s eksternalizirajućim ili hiperaktivnim ponašanjem (npr., ADHD)” dok su učenici s ADHD-om koje nastavnici ne prihvaćaju dovedeni u obrazovnu i društvenu opasnost. Teorijski fokus ovog rada usmjeren je na razumijevanje da učenici s simptomima ADHD-a i EBD-a često nailaze na značajne poteškoće u uspostavljanju i održavanju pozitivnih i trajnih odnosa s okruženjem. Nadalje, pozitivni odnosi povezani su s povoljnijim ishodima.

Intervencije i podrška pozitivnom ponašanju u učionici, odnosno upravljanje pozitivnim ponašanjem, prepoznaju se kao učinkovit pristup koji uključuje prakse temeljene na dokazima, a koje se primjenjuju s ciljem pružanja podrške optimalnom razvoju i akademskom uspjehu učenika (Karhu i sur., 2018; Scheuermann i Hall, 2016). Učitelji u Hrvatskoj samoprocjenjuju učestalost korištenja negativnih disciplinskih metoda za učenike s visokim intenzitetom poremećaja nepažnje, međutim, češće su koristili pozitivne odgojne metode nego negativne dok su „dodatne razvojne teškoće učenika prediktori češćeg korištenja asertivnih odgojnih postupaka od pozitivnih odgojnih postupaka“ (Vlah i sur., 2022., str. 168). Međutim, pozitivan međuljudski odnos samoprocjene između učitelja i učenika pokazao se kao značajan prediktor za primjenu pozitivnih disciplinskih postupaka (Vlah i sur., 2022). Osim toga, Vlah i sur., (2022) preporučuju buduća istraživanja kako bi se istražila i razumjela moguća uloga međuljudskih odnosa nastavnik-učenik u strategijama upravljanja ponašanjem u inkluzivnim razredima općega obrazovanja. Stoga, u ovom radu dublje istražujemo doprinos samoprocjene međuljudskih odnosa učitelja i učenika u primjeni disciplinirajućih postupaka (s posebnim naglaskom na

pozitivne disciplinske postupke). Zanimljivo je istražiti doprinose li odnosi između učitelja i učenika primjeni pozitivnih strategija upravljanja razredom.

S obzirom na to, svrha ovoga istraživanja jest ispitati kako su odnosi učitelja s učenicima sa simptomima nepažnje i problemima u ponašanju međusobno povezani s učiteljevim korištenjem pozitivnih i negativnih disciplinskih strategija u općem obrazovnom okružju.

## Cilj

Cilj ovoga istraživanja jest istražiti služe li samoprocijenjeni međuljudski odnosi učitelja i učenika s učenicima sa 7-9 simptoma poremećaja pažnje i emocionalno-bihevioralnoga poremećaja (EBD) kao mogući posrednik između simptoma ADHD-a i korištenje strategija upravljanja kojima se koriste učitelji.

## Metodologija

### Sudionici

U istraživanju je sudjelovalo 539 učitelja razredne nastave ( $\bar{Z} = 484, 89,8\%$ ;  $M_{\text{dob}} = 43,65$ ;  $SD_{\text{dob}} = 9,82$ ;  $M_{\text{godina staža u obrazovanju}} = 18,38$ ;  $SD = 10,49$ ) iz 125 osnovnih škola diljem Republike Hrvatske. Učitelji su zamoljeni da subjektivno detektiraju imaju li u svojem razrednom odjelu jednoga ili više učenika koji ima poteškoće u ponašanju: *Sjetite se jednog ili više učenika u svom razredu za koje mislite ili osjećate da imaju poteškoće u ponašanju u razredu ili izvan razreda (odmor, izvannastavne aktivnosti, izleti itd.)* (ukupan broj detektiranih učenika bio je  $N = 1383$ ), a zatim su na bipolarnoj skali (DA-NE), odnosno na kontrolnoj listi simptoma nepažnje prema kriterijima DSM-V ocjenjivali ponašanje ovih učenika: *Ne pridržava se redoslijeda uputa i ne uspijeva izvršiti zadatke (ne zbog otpora ili nerazumijevanja). Ima poteškoća u organiziranju i kreiranju zadataka i aktivnosti. Teško mu je ustrajati u zadacima ili aktivnostima. Izbjegava, ne voli ili odbija rješavati zadatke koji zahtijevaju sustavan mentalni napor. Ne obraća pažnju na detalje i radi greške u školi zbog svoje nepažnje. Čini se da ne sluša čak ni kad mu se izravno obratite. Zaboravlja se u svakodnevnim aktivnostima. Pažnju mu lako odvlače podražaji iz okoline. Gubi stvari potrebne za pisanje ili druge aktivnosti (školski pribor, knjige).* Na temelju toga, samo učenici koji su pokazali najmanje 7 od mogućih 9 simptoma nepažnje zadržani su u poduzorku ( $N = 539$ ) (88,5 % dječaka;  $Min_{\text{dob}} = 7$ ,  $Max_{\text{dob}} = 14$ ;  $M_{\text{dob}} = 10,54$ ,  $SD_{\text{dob}} = 2,07$ ). U prosjeku svaki je učitelj procijenio 1,27 učenika za kojega je identificirao najmanje 7 simptoma nepažnje.

Mjerni instrument sastoji se od Općih podataka, Skale simptoma ponašanja učenika i Skale strategija upravljanja nepoželjnim ponašanjem.

### Opći podatci

Osim podataka o dobi, spolu i veličini škole, na Skali samoprocjene odnosa s učenicom (Vlah i sur., 2018.) od 3 razine, učitelji su procjenjivali svoj odnos s učenicom (0 = nezadovoljavajući, 1 = dobar, 2 = vrlo dobar) i pružili osnovne podatke o učeniku kojeg su ocjenjivali (dob, spol, razred).

### **Skala simptoma ponašanja učenika**

Skala simptoma ponašanja učenika nastala je prevođenjem i prilagodbom D4 NICHQ - Vanderbilt ADHD Teacher Rating Scale (Wolraich, 2002). Sastoji se od ukupno 35 tvrdnji podijeljenih u 4 podskale čije su zadovoljavajuća metrijska obilježja potvrđene u ovom uzorku: **Impulzivnost-hiperaktivnost**. Npr. Ima poteškoća u igri ili drugim rekreacijskim aktivnostima u kojima se očekuje da sjedi i tiho radi ( $k = 9$ ;  $\alpha = 0,93$ ). **Emocionalni problemi**. Npr. Uplašen je, tjeskoban ili zabrinut. ( $k = 7$ ;  $\alpha = 0,89$ ). **Antisocijalnost**. Npr. Zlostavlja, prijeti ili zadirkuje druge ( $k = 10$ ;  $\alpha = 0,92$ ). Podskala nepažnje nije analizirana da bi se izbjegla redundantnost podataka, naime predmetni uzorak ovoga istraživanja činili su učenici koji su već jednom procijenjeni prema istim kriterijima DSM5 nepažnje. Učitelji su ga koristili kako bi procijenili koliko su se često određena ponašanja javljala među učenicima od početka školske godine (0 – nikad do 3 – vrlo često).

### **Ljestvica strategije upravljanja nepoželjnim ponašanjem**

Kao dio projekta, originalna ljestvica, Ljestvica strategije upravljanja lošim ponašanjem (Martin i sur., 1999) prilagođena je prema prethodnom prijevodu i kulturnoj prilagodbi ljestvice Beaudoin i sur. (2014) uspostavili su dvofaktorski model na reprezentativnom uzorku za Hrvatsku koji mjeri pozitivne (strategije koje poboljšavaju poželjno ponašanje) i asertivne (strategije koje smanjuju nepoželjno ponašanje) strategije discipliniranja učenika problematičnoga ponašanja u Hrvatskoj. Budući da su ovi autori koristili ljestvicu binarnoga mjernog mehanizma (0-ne koristi strategiju i 1-koristi strategiju) i zaključili da zbog niske pouzdanosti predlažu davanje većega raspona odgovora u budućim istraživanjima, u ovom istraživanju primijenjena je skala od 24 čestice Likertova tipa sa 6 bodova, na kojoj su učitelji procjenjivali koliko često koriste određene postupke za upravljanje nepoželjnim ponašanjem u radu s učenikom kojeg ocjenjuju u prije spomenutom upitniku. Dvofaktorska struktura potvrđena je i u ovom istraživanju na dvije podskale: pozitivni disciplinirajući postupci sadržani u 14 čestica (npr. *Razgovaram s učenikom*,  $\alpha = 0,82$ ) i asertivni disciplinski postupci sadržani u 10 čestica (npr. *Šaljem učenika u kut/stražnji dio sobe*,  $\alpha = 0,67$ ).

### **Prikupljanje podataka**

Studenti učiteljskih studija (Rijeka, Osijek, Split i Zadar) sudjelovali su u prikupljanju podataka u svim županijama osim u Zagrebu (gdje su angažirani anketari). Agencija za odgoj i obrazovanje i resorno ministarstvo dali su suglasnost, a poziv je prvotno upućen svim ravnateljima osnovnih škola iz 13 županija i grada Zagreba. Ravnateljima, učiteljima i stručnim službama objašnjena je svrha i postupak anonimnoga i dobrovoljnoga istraživanja. Nakon suglasnosti ravnatelja obavljen je razgovor sa stručnom službom škole koja je potaknula nastavnike na suradnju i koordinaciju učitelja i istraživača. Učitelji su upitnicima samoprocjenjivali svoje strategije upravljanja nepoželjnim ponašanjem i procjenjivali učenike na skali simptoma ponašanja učenika.

## Rezultati

Preduvjeti za provođenje regresijske analize (Tablica 1) su ispunjeni. Nije bilo većih odstupanja od normalnosti distribucije.

Tablica 1

Proveden je niz regresijskih analiza (Slika 1).

Slika 1

Napomena: Model medijacije: Odnos između učitelja i učenika kao posredničke varijable u povezanosti simptoma (hiperaktivnost-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost i emocionalni problemi) i disciplinskih postupaka učitelja (pozitivni i negativni disciplinski postupci).

Tablica 2

Najprije je ispitano utječu li simptomi emocionalno-bihevioralnih poremećaja (hiperaktivnost-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi), koji su nezavisne varijable, značajno na medijator (odnos nastavnik-učenik),  $F(3,535) = 24,95$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ,  $R^2=0,123$ . Potom je ispitano utječu li nezavisne varijable (simptomi hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi) značajno na zavisne varijable (pozitivne i negativne disciplinske postupke) kada je iz regresijskoga modela uklonjen medijator (odnos nastavnik-učenik), tj. za pozitivne disciplinirajuće postupke  $F(3,535) = 9,80$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ,  $R^2 = 0,052$  i za negativne disciplinske postupke ( $F(3,535) = 32,71$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ,  $R^2 = 0,155$ ). Konačno, učinak nezavisnih varijabli (simptomi hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi) na ovisne varijable (pozitivne i negativne disciplinirajuće postupke) provjeren je nakon što je modelu dodana posrednička varijabla odnos nastavnika i učenika (utjecaj na pozitivne disciplinirajuće postupke)  $F(1,534) = 44,33$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0,073$ ; utjecaj na negativne disciplinske postupke  $F(1,534) = 0,14$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0,000$ .

Statistička značajnost učinka medijacije potvrđena je Sobelovim i Goodmanovim testom (vidi Tablicu 2). Medijacijski učinak odnosa nastavnika i učenika značajan je samo za povezanost simptoma (hiperaktivnost-impulzivnost, antisocijalnost, emocionalni problemi) s pozitivnim disciplinirajućim postupcima nastavnika i nije bio statistički značajan za povezanost s negativnim disciplinskim postupcima.

Odnos između učitelja i učenika imao je puni medijacijski učinak na povezanost simptoma s pozitivnim disciplinskim postupcima nastavnika. Pod medijacijskim utjecajem odnosa između učitelja i učenika, povezanost pozitivnih disciplinskih postupaka i: 1) simptoma hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnosti prestala je biti statistički značajna ( $\beta_1 = 0,153$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0,099$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ); 2) simptomi emocionalnih problema također su prestali biti statistički značajni ( $\beta_1 = 0,098$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0,070$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ); 3) simptomi antisocijalnosti postali su statistički značajni ( $\beta_1 = 0,059$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ;  $\beta_2 = 0,184$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ). Promatramo li odnos između učitelja i učenika, samo simptomi

asocijalnosti predviđaju češću primjenu pozitivnih disciplinirajućih postupaka kod učenika s teškoćama pažnje. Veličina učinka medijacije prikazana je u Tablici 3, a prema Preacheru i Kelleyu (2011) dobiven je mali (za simptome hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnosti i emocionalne probleme) do umjeren učinak (simptomi antisocijalnosti).

Budući da nismo potvrdili statistički značajan medijacijski učinak za negativne disciplinirajuće postupke učitelja, nije bilo smisleno izračunavati veličinu učinka. Više simptoma hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnosti i asocijalnosti, neovisno o odnosu nastavnika i učenika, predviđaju češću primjenu negativnih disciplinskih postupaka prema učenicima s poteškoćama pažnje.

## **Rasprava**

Medijacijski učinak odnosa učitelj-učenik (kroz niz regresijskih analiza i dodatnih testova značajnosti učinka) testiran je i potvrđeno je njegovo postojanje u odnosu na pozitivne strategije upravljanja nepoželjnim ponašanjem učenika. Može se zaključiti da odnos učitelja i učenika ima važnu ulogu u primjeni disciplinskih postupaka kao što su naveli Tawlin i sur. (2025, str. 9) „Učitelji svoje odnose s učenicima s ADHD simptomima vide kao bitan aspekt upravljanja ponašanjem učenika i sveukupnim uspjehom i dobrobiti učenika”. Kada je riječ o impulzivnosti-hiperaktivnosti i emocionalnim problemima u ponašanju učenika, ako nastavnik ima dobar odnos s učenikom, ovi simptomi neće biti povezani s primjenom pozitivnih disciplinirajućih postupaka. To ne znači da ih neće primjenjivati, ali će ih primjenjivati na isti način kao i na ostale učenika u razredom odjelu (bez obzira na poremećaj).

Posebice bolji odnos između učitelja i učenika ima značajnu ulogu u primjeni pozitivnih disciplinirajućih postupaka na/za učenika s poteškoćama pažnje kada učenik ima simptome asocijalnosti.

Rezultati ove studije dodatno naglašavaju važnost odnosa nastavnik-učenik za korištenje pozitivnih reakcija vođenja, što podupire hipotezu da „blizak odnos učitelj-učenik može poslužiti kao zaštitni faktor za primanje korektivnih povratnih informacija u ovoj skupini učenika (Staff i sur., 2022, str. 287). Postoje dokazi koji ukazuju na to da odnosi učitelja i učenika utječu na reakcije izazvane ponašanjem učenika koji su već identificirani kao oni koji imaju ADHD. U polustrukturiranim intervjuima, 12 od 17 K-8 učitelja identificiralo je svoje odnose s učenicima s ADHD-om kao čimbenik koji im je olakšao korištenje specifičnih praksi upravljanja razredom. Primijetili su da su im „snažni odnosi pomogli da vještije koriste odgojno-obrazovne postupke (npr. da pohvale budu iskrenije, da znaju kada će biti potreban prethodni ispravak), pomogli u poticanju osnaživanja učenika ili prihvaćanja intervencije ili im olakšali korištenje intervencija Tier 1 ili Tier 2” (Lawson i sur., 2022, str. 851). Na temelju toga, Lawson i sur.(2022), anketirano je 56 učitelja koji su izjavili da su odnosi između učenika i /učitelja čimbenici zbog kojih postoji veća vjerojatnost da će koristiti prakse razine 1 (tj. posebne pohvale, predispravlanje, kratko i specifično ispravlanje pogrešaka) i razine 2 (tj. dnevna izvješća o ponašanju) s učenicima s ADHD (Lawson i sur., 2022). Zajedno sa sadašnjim nalazima usmjerenim na učenike koji pokazuju

simptome ali prije identifikacije s ADHD-om, zajamčeno je rano usmjeravanje pažnje na poboljšanje odnosa učitelja i učenika i korištenje pozitivnih praksi upravljanja s učenicima s izazovnim ponašanjem. Kao što prethodna otkrića potvrđuju da „učenici sa simptomima ADHD-a imaju tendenciju doživljavanja odnosa sa svojim učiteljima koji su nisko bliski, a jako konfliktni. Ovi rezultati potvrđuju trendove uočene u postojećoj literaturi. Ovi su nalazi važni kada se razmatra kako učitelji mogu najbolje podržati učenike sa simptomima ADHD-a u njihovim učionicama i promicati pozitivne rezultate u akademskim, društvenim i psihološkim domenama funkcioniranja” (MacLean i sur., 2023, str. 19).

Usvajanje MTSS modela kao što ga pruža PBIS okvir utemeljen na dokazima za podršku društvenom, emocionalnom, bihevioralnom i akademskom rastu smatra se najboljom praksom za podršku studentima, uključujući one s invaliditetom (npr. ADHD, EBD) i studente s izazovnim ponašanja (Bradshaw i sur., 2012; Center za PBIS, 2023; Rogers i sur., 2015). PBIS okvir opisuje prakse za usmjeravanje učitelja razredne nastave u dizajniranju sigurnih okružja, uspostavljanju pozitivnih odnosa sa svojim učenicima, razvijanju predvidljivih rutina i poučavanju pozitivnih očekivanja (Centar za PBIS, 2022). To je također metoda koja od učitelja zahtijeva da naglase potporu pozitivnom ponašanju u izravnoj vezi s njihovom upotrebom korekcije problematičnoga ponašanja. S obzirom na vjerojatnost povećanih prilika za reagiranje na slučajeve sukoba s učenicima s izazovnim ponašanjem, preporučujemo rano usvajanje PBIS okvira jer daje i naglasak na poticanje pozitivnih odnosa s učenicima i povećanu upotrebu učinkovitih pozitivnih pristupa upravljanju ponašanja utemeljeni na dokazima o upravljanju ponašanjem koji mogu voditi do smanjenja pojavnosti problematičnoga ponašanja i povećanju socijalno-emocionalnoga funkcioniranja i prosocijalnoga ponašanja (npr. Bradshaw i sur., 2012). Stoga, kada učitelji imaju povećane sukobe sa svojim učenicima s većim brojem problematičnih ponašanja, mogu se okrenuti produktivnijim odgovorima kako bi izgradili odnose i podržali pozitivan društveni razvoj.

Osim toga, rezultate treba promatrati sa stajališta da je uzorak za ovo istraživanje vrlo specifična skupina učenika za koje su učitelji razredne nastave ocijenili da imaju 7 do 9 simptoma nepažnje. Ovako visok broj jednoga od simptoma ADHD-a ukazuje na potrebu obrazovne diferencijacije u razredu, odnosno primjene individualiziranoga obrazovnog plana (IOP) učenika. Takav je plan obavezan za sve učenike s posebnim potrebama u Hrvatskoj prema Zakonu o odgoju i obrazovanju u osnovnoj i srednjoj školi (2008). Rezultati pokazuju da bi IOP nužno trebao sadržavati plan izgradnje i održavanja pozitivnoga međuljudskog odnosa s učenicima. Tome u prilog govori i službeni dokument Smjernice za rad s učenicima s teškoćama (2021), koji pod didaktičko-pedagoškim načelima za rad s učenicima s posebnim potrebama navodi: „Socijalne vještine važne su za izgradnju i održavanje zdravih odnosa temeljenih na suradnji i međusobnom poštovanju. One uključuju sposobnost upravljanja i rješavanja međuljudskih sukoba, odolijevanje pritisku vršnjaka i traženje pomoći kada je to potrebno” (str. 22). U istom poglavlju također se ističe da je „iznimno

važno da nastavnik s učenicima izgradi kvalitetan odnos temeljen na međusobnom poštovanju i razumijevanju“ (str. 26) te „Najvažnije je uspostaviti srdačan i suradnički odnos u kako bi se omogućila otvorena komunikacija i suradnja s učenikom i njegovim/njezinim roditeljima/starateljima“ (str.30). Na temelju promatranih dokumenata i propisanih smjernica, postavlja se pitanje osposobljenosti učitelja u Hrvatskoj za izazovan i nimalo lak zadatak izgradnje i održavanja pozitivnoga odnosa s učenicima koji pokazuju visoku razinu nepažnje u nastavi, ali i emocionalne poteškoće u ponašanju. Pitanje je koliko ih fakulteti adekvatno pripremaju na razini osobnosti, što se odnosi na njihovu vlastitu socijalnu i emocionalnu kompetenciju te sposobnost nošenja sa stresom. Analiza studijskih programa pokazuje da je ta priprema u Hrvatskoj vrlo skromna (Vukelić i sur., 2020). Socijalne i emocionalne kompetencije učitelja nisu dovoljno obrađene u nastavnim planovima i programima učiteljskih fakulteta u Hrvatskoj. Ipak, oni bi trebali biti jedna od temeljnih tema za uspješan rad s učenicima asocijalnoga ponašanja, barem prema rezultatima našega i prethodnih istraživanja.

Metodološka ograničenja rada odnose se prvenstveno na ljestvicu za samoprocjenu međuljudskih odnosa s učenikom jer je univarijantna, tako da nije moguće utvrditi pouzdanost mjerenja. U budućim istraživanjima treba koristiti multivarijantnu ljestvicu i pokušati bolje razumjeti rezultate dobivene kvalitativnim metodama (fokusne grupe i intervjui s učiteljima).

## **Zaključak**

Cilj ovoga istraživanja jest istražiti služe li samoprocijenjeni međuljudski odnosi učitelja i učenika s učenicima sa 7 od 9 simptoma poremećaja pažnje i emocionalno-bihevioralnoga poremećaja (EBD) kao mogući posrednik između simptoma ADHD-a i korištenje strategija upravljanja kojima se koriste nastavnici. Rezultati pokazuju da, ako promatramo odnos između učitelja i učenika, samo simptomi antisocijalnosti predviđaju češću primjenu pozitivnih disciplinirajućih postupaka kod učenika s teškoćama pažnje. Također, više simptoma hiperaktivnosti-impulzivnosti i antisocijalnosti, neovisno o odnosu učitelja i učenika, predviđaju češću primjenu negativnih disciplinirajućih postupaka kod učenika s poteškoćama pažnje.

Dobiveni rezultati mogu se objasniti u okviru koncepta teorijskoga PBIS sustava, u kojem je izgradnja i održavanje pozitivnoga međuljudskog odnosa između učenika i učitelja preduvjet za uspješan razvoj učenika. Stoga je indicirano pravovremeno ulaganje u osposobljavanje učitelja za socijalno i emocionalno kompetentnu komunikaciju s različitim učenicima u svim različitim situacijama.

## **Napomena**

Studija je provedena pod punim pokroviteljstvom Sveučilišta u Rijeci u sklopu projekta, potpora broj uniri-iskusni-drustv 23-46 2989 „Socijalno i edukacijsko uključivanje u školama i vrtićima: preliminarna istraživanja”.