

Preservice Teachers' Perspectives on Warm Demanding Pedagogy: A Case Study¹

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Abstract

In this paper, our focus is on Warm Demander Pedagogy. Warm Demanders are teachers who implement a stance in their classrooms due to which they totally support warmly their students, while demanding high academic results from them. The basic characteristics of Warm Demander Pedagogy are: First, teachers' warm care for their students and second, they insist on their demands for high academic work. Our research explored preservice teachers of Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki perspectives on Warm Demander Pedagogy. Our research strategy was Case Study and our main research tool was a structured questionnaire. Our findings show that our participants do care about their student's wellbeing, but they hesitate to demand and be assertive.

Keywords

warm demander pedagogy, classroom management, pre-service teachers

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Theoretical framework

The term warm demander was first used by Kleinfeld in 1975 to describe effective teachers of Eskimo and Indian students (Kleinfeld, 1975). According to Kleinfeld teachers tend to teach Indian and Eskimo students the manners of white society as moral absolutes aiming to reform them (Kleinfeld, 1975). As a result, the students refused to participate overtly in the classroom work and they stayed silent during every lesson (Kleinfeld, 1975).

After her research, she concluded that there are two central characteristics that seem to distinguish effective teachers from ineffective (Kleinfeld, 1975). The first is teacher's ability to create a climate of emotional warmth that dissipates students' fears in classroom and fulfills their expectations of highly personalized relationships (Kleinfeld, 1975). This warmth is achieved by becoming personal friends with students, by using non-verbal cues, such as smiling, close body distance and touching and by opening up but at the same time remaining professional (Kleinfeld, 1975). The second characteristic is the teacher's ability to demand high quality of academic work (Kleinfeld, 1975). Based on these two characteristics she described four types of teachers, the traditionalists, the sophisticates, the sentimentalists and the warm demanders (Kleinfeld, 1975).

Warm demanders, in her research, were successful with all the students, no matter their background (Kleinfeld, 1975). They spent a substantial amount of time at the beginning of the year establishing positive interpersonal relationships between the classroom. And only after a good relationship has been established, they became demanding (Kleinfeld, 1975). They were concerned with what their students learned (Kleinfeld, 1975). And without conscious manipulative intentions, they use the personal relationship to further learning (Kleinfeld, 1975). While demanding a high level of intellectual participation those teachers were highly supportive of any attempt the students did make (Kleinfeld, 1975).

Years later, the phrase began appeared in reference to effective teachers of African American students. Vasquez (1988) used the term to describe teachers who refused to lower expectations for success. Irvine and Fraser supported that warm demanders use culturally responsive pedagogy practices along with a tough-minded, no-nonsense authoritative teaching style that provides a disciplined classroom environment while communicating personal warmth and insisting that students achieve the best of their ability (Irvine & Fraser, 1998).

In 2006, Ware with her research proved that warm demanding pedagogy is an effective way of culturally responsive teaching (Ware, 2006). Warm demanding is situated within this culturally relevant pedagogical framework because it explicates two pedagogical dispositions central to culturally relevant teachers' instructional approach (Ware, 2006). These are care and authority (Ware, 2006). The warm demanders skillfully balance both care and authority to create a task-oriented learning environment that supports a culture of achievement for African American students (Ware 2006).

A primary aim for those who want to become warm demanders is to establish a caring relationship that convinces students that their teachers believe in them. In warm demanding pedagogy what really matters is what the students believe about the teachers' intentions. When students know, that their teachers believe in them, they will interpret even harsh comments as statements of care from someone who wants the best for them. Warm demanders teachers have a positive stance to every student and believe in his or her capacity to academically and socially succeed.

Teachers convey such a caring attitude by taking the following three actions. First, warm demanders should build relationships deliberately (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy, Ross, Hambacher & Acosta, 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher, Acosta, Bondy & Ross, 2016; Irvine & Fraser, 1998; Sandilos, Rimm-Kaufman & Cohen, 2016). This can be achieved, for example, by giving "getting to know you" questionnaires and using the gathered information (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Everyday interactions, such as a smile, a hand on the shoulder, remembering something a student has mentioned, are more important for developing relationships with the students (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Furthermore, warm demanders teachers can connect with the students' families (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Irvine & Fraser, 1998; Sandilos, et al., 2016). Secondly, warm demanders teachers should learn about their students' cultures (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Hambacher et al., 2016). They can observe the students closely to learn more about their interests, experiences and talents (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Through this observation they gain important information for their students, like their after-school activities, the kind of music they like to listen to, the television shows they watch etc. (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Afterwards, they can use this information to make their teaching more approachable to the students (Bondy & Ross, 2008). To acquire cultural knowledge is recommended to warm demanders teachers, in order to learn about their own cultural beliefs and how it affects their interactions with the students (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Furthermore, teachers should be curious about culture and

difference, so that they can imagine how school experiences might feel different to different groups (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Last but not least, warm demanders teachers should communicate an expectation of success (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Boucher Jr. & Helfenbein, 2015; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Irvine & Fraser, 1998; Kleinfeld, 1975; Sandilos, et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). The effective management of the classroom happens only with discipline (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Boucher Jr. & Helfenbein, 2015; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Irvine & Fraser, 1998; Kleinfeld, 1975; Sandilos, et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). The rules and the expectations should be known from the first day (Bondy et al., 2012). Warm demanders believe that if they do not have high expectations, they will not have high results (Hambacher et al., 2016).

Another main characteristic of a warm demander teacher is his/her insistence (Hambacher et al., 2016). Warm demanders teachers insist because they believe with their whole heart that students can and must learn and the teachers are responsible to teach them (Hambacher et al., 2016). The key to the power of insistence is the relationship that the teachers have built with their students (Hambacher et al., 2016). Because they have developed personal relationships, students understand that the teacher has their best interests in mind (Hambacher et al., 2016). In practice, warm demanders insist by reminding and reinforcing their expectations, and by holding students accountable (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). They insist on their high expectations and they do not settle for anything else (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). This insistence is what makes warm demanders different from other teachers, who also use motivational strategies and have high expectations from their students (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Ware, 2006). Warm demanders do not just believe that their students can succeed, they demand their success (Bondy & Ross, 2008).

The following strategies help teachers become successful demanders. First of all, they should provide learning supports (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Students prefer teachers who provide a variety of activities to help different kinds of learners, who explain material thoroughly and in multiple ways until every student understands, who outline steps for getting to an answer and emphasize multiple ways of approaching a problem (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Moreover, teachers should support positive behavior and believe in students' ability to improve (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Warm demanders accept problems as normal and they search for solutions rather than blaming their students or dismissing their concerns. They reach out to students

for help in understanding behavior problems and then they decide how to intervene (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Another strategy is to be clear and consistent with expectations (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Teachers should respectfully and insistently repeat their requests and remind their students of their expectations (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Hambacher et al., 2016). If students do not comply, teachers calmly deliver consequences (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Teachers can be warm and often funny, but there shall be no question that they mean what they say (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Some ways to convey expectations to students clearly are: keeping demands simple and short, dignifying words with actions, telling the students what the “nonnegotiables” are, using words that invite cooperation. Although warm demanders must speak firmly, they should never threaten, demean, or create power struggles (Bondy & Ross, 2008). This way the students will perceive the demands as their teacher’s commitment (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Teachers should have in mind that always giving “one more chance” demonstrates that they do not mean what they say (Bondy & Ross, 2008). They should not be afraid that they may seem “mean” in the eyes of their students, as long as they have created a learning environment based on care and authority (Hambacher et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). This environment requires that the warm demanders in classroom co-construct with their students a culture of mutual respect (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher, et al., 2016). Because their classrooms are grounded in mutual respects, the tone of their insistence is firm, yet warm (Hambacher et al., 2016).

Although warm demanding is an effective teaching practice and warm demanders teachers are necessary on high academic achievement, it may sound harsh to someone who does not know how it works in action (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). But when one listens closely, warm demanders’ assertiveness is not intended to control students. Instead, warm demanders communicate care for students through unrelenting insistence on high-quality performance (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Bondy et al., 2012; Boucher Jr. & Helfenbein, 2015; Ford & Sassi, 2012; Hambacher et al., 2016; Irvine & Fraser, 1998; Kleinfeld, 1975; Sandilos, et al., 2016; Ware, 2006). The authoritative warm demander is not to be confused with the authoritarian teacher, who imposes rigid restrictions, teaches the students to be complacent rather than engaged, and is often feared (Hambacher et al., 2016).

Methodology

Research design

The first of the two researchers introduced in Warm Demander Pedagogy, as a part of the theory related to classroom management and school discipline, two subjects included in an undergraduate module that he offers in his department (of Primary Education at Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki). Noting that Warm Demanding Pedagogy and Warm Demander Teachers are not very familiar to Greek pedagogues. So, in order to fulfill the gap, he decided to work with the second researcher and conducting a research on Warm Demander Pedagogy's key features.

More analytically, the aim of our research was to explore preservice teachers of the Department of Primary Education – Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki perspectives on warm demanding pedagogy. Our research strategy was Case Study. Case Study is an exploration of a 'defined system' or a case (or multiple cases) over time and through a detailed in-depth data collection, various sources of information rich in content (Creswell, 1998). Our research tool was mainly a structured questionnaire and a small number of unstructured interviews.

Before we “entered the field”, we firstly conduct a thorough literature review, in order to explore and understand the existing theory and research. We found that in Greece no one has been involved before in Warm Demander Pedagogy, while in the English - speaking literature there are not many books, articles or researches dealing exclusively with warm demanding pedagogy.

Participants

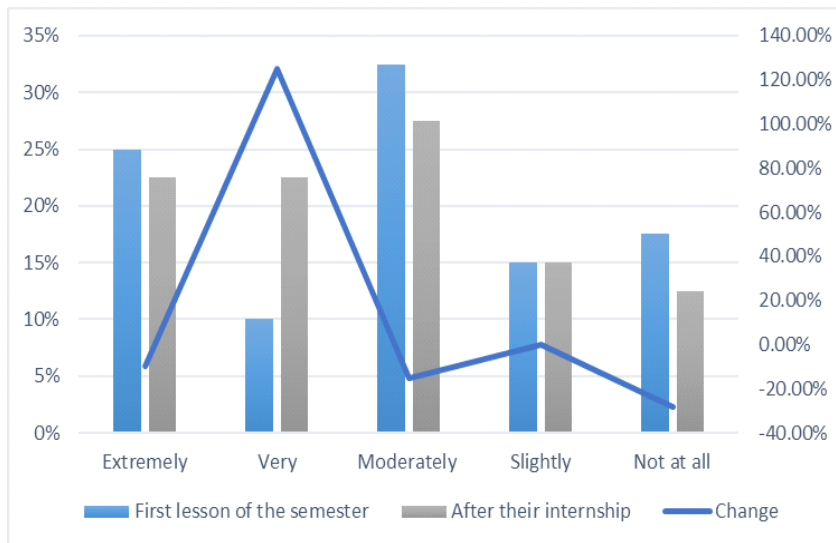
As we already mentioned, in our research participated forty (40) preservice teachers of the Department of Primary Education – Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki in Greece. More analytically, thirty-seven (37) women and three (3) men, all of them were between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-three (21-23). Preservice teachers fulfilled our questionnaire at two different periods: First, at the beginning of the semester and second after the end of their internship. With this design, we tried to explore which were the effects of the acquaintance with warm demander pedagogy in their pedagogical practices. The questionnaire contained 22 questions that covered key issues of Warm Demander Pedagogy concerning didactic practices, classroom management and school discipline. The answers were given in a five-point rating Linkert scale “Extremely – Very - Moderately – Slightly - Not at all”. The questions

were mainly constructed this way, so that we can record their approaches and attitudes concerning those characteristics that form the warm demanding pedagogy before and after they learn about them. Additionally, and as a kind of triangularization, we conducted five (5) unstructured interviews, in order to explore in depth preservice teachers' real views and feelings for “warm” and “demand”.

Results

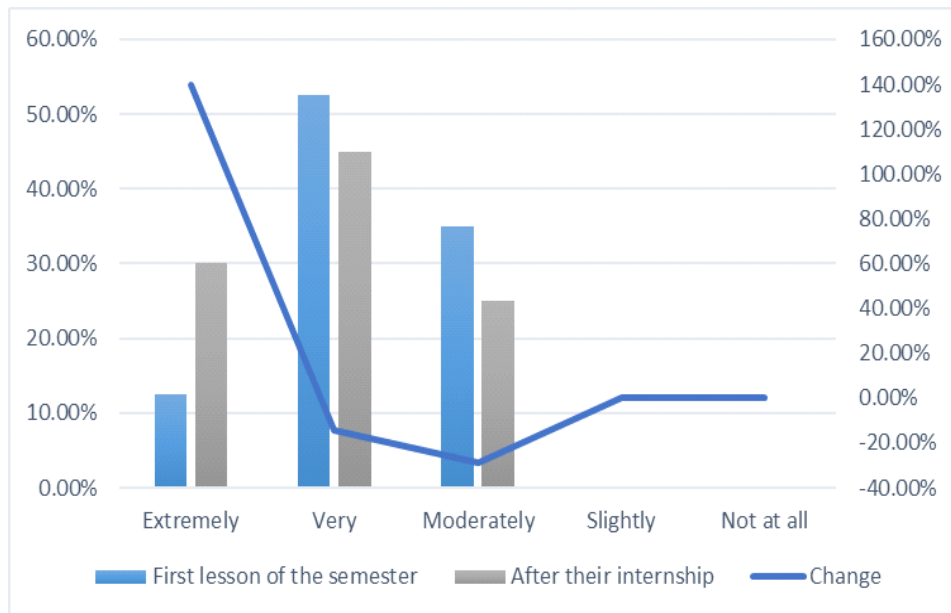
Our analysis is based on the answers given by the students to the twenty-two questions, which are presented in graphs.

The first questions was: “Do you believe that you should have the same requirements from all your students?”



An approximately 30% (12) of our participants supported a “Moderately” approach, before they learn about Warm Demander Pedagogy. What is interesting, is that after the course and the internship, more teachers (N=18, 45%) tend to believe “Extremely” and “Very” that they should require the same from all the students and do not make discriminations.

The second question was: “Do you believe that you can convince your students that they can success in school?”

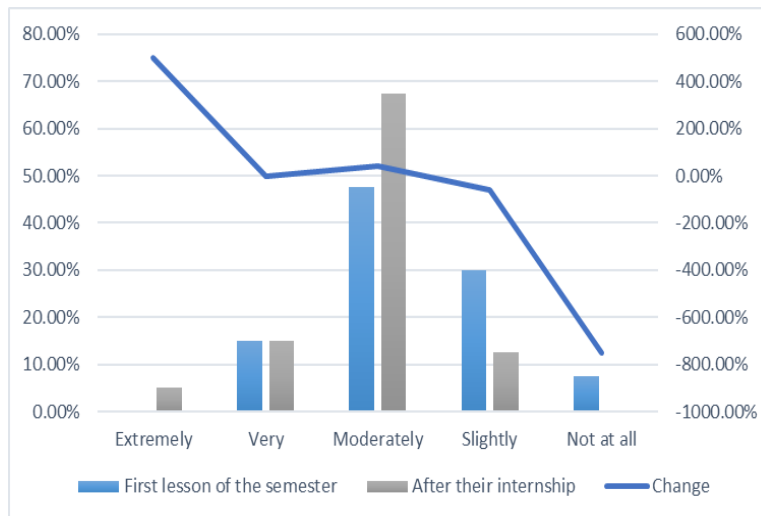


The results show that all (N=40, 100%) preservice teachers who participated in our research are confident (in “Extremely” “Very” or “Moderately” way) that they can convince their students that they have the ability to achieve academically. This belief “goes up” at the second questionnaire, where most of our participants (N=30, 75%) declared that they are “Extremely” or “Very” confident that they can make it. Especially those who answered “Extremely” were almost triple after the semester and internship.

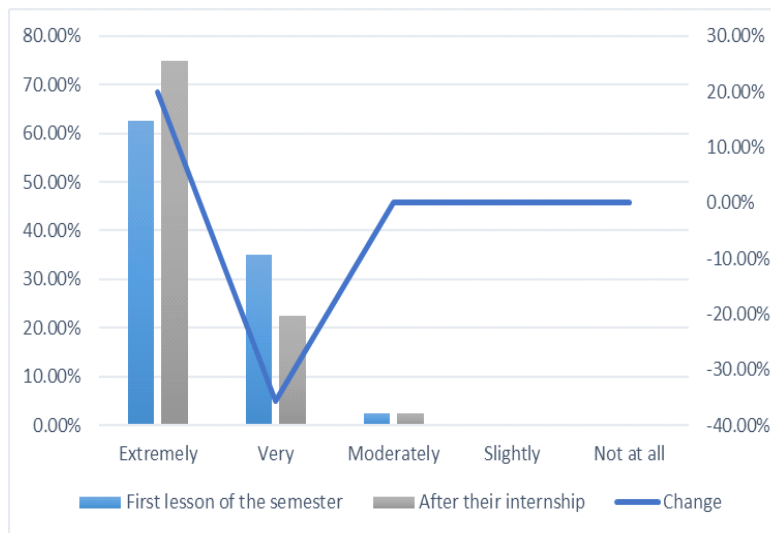
The third question asked: “Do you think that you can give motives to the students, who do not care about school-work?”

All the participants (N=40, 100%) answered that they “Extremely” “Very” or “Moderately” believe that they can make it. As in the previews question, no one answered that can’t “(Not) at all” or “Slightly” make it. Noting saying that after their practicum, at the end of the semester, most of preservice teachers that participated in our research (N=30, 75%), answered that they were “Extremely” sure that they can give motives to all students.

The fourth question was: “Do you think that you should put pressure on the students, who do not care about school-work?”

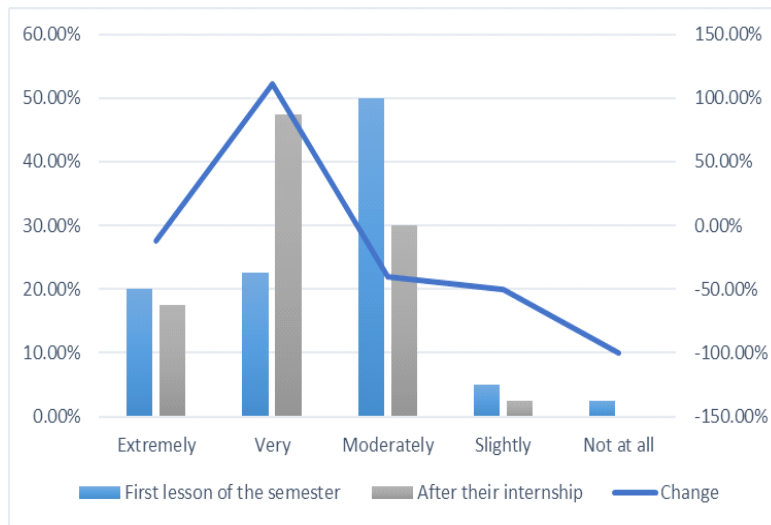


Most of the preservice teachers (N=32, 80%) answered that they would pressure “Moderately” or “Slightly” their students before the semester. Noting saying that



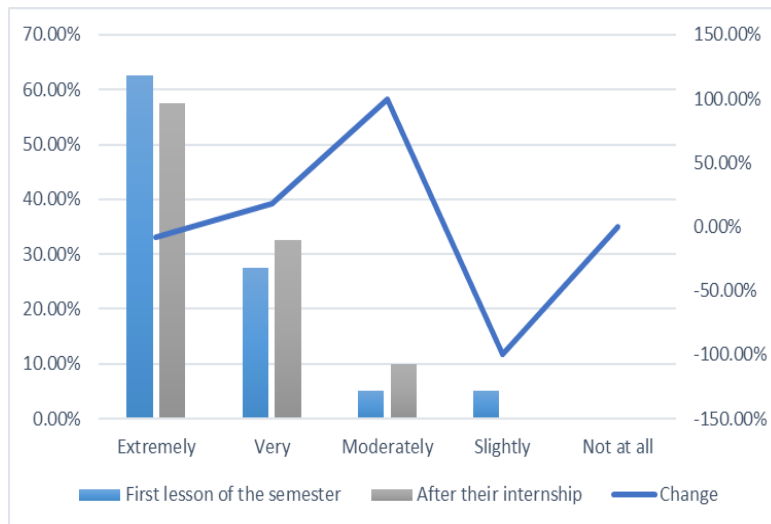
after completing the course, the number of students who stated that they will “Slightly” put pressure on their students reduced (N=7, 17,5%), while no one state that will “Not at all” pressure his or her students.

Next (fifth) question was: “Do you believe that you should regularly remind your demands and your expectations to the students?”



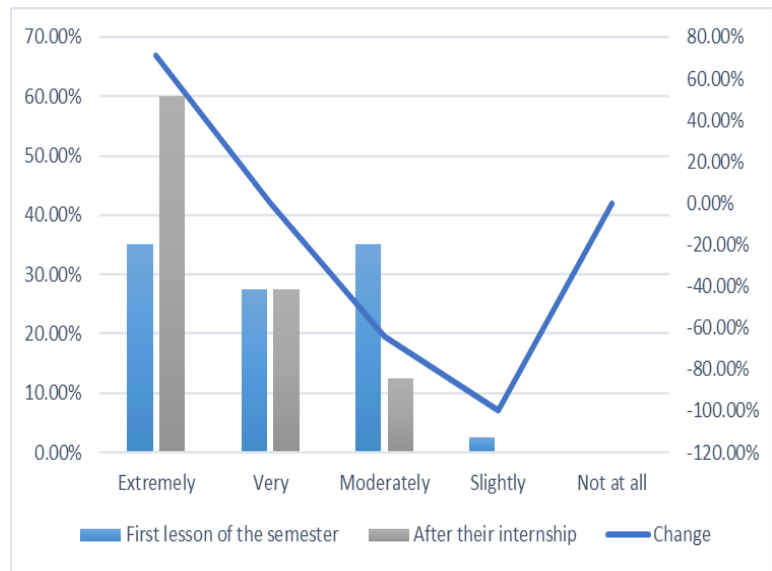
Our participants' answers show that when the second questionnaire was filled more teachers believed that they should remind constantly their demands and expectations to the students.

The sixth question was “Do you believe that you should support constantly your students in order to achieve their goals?”

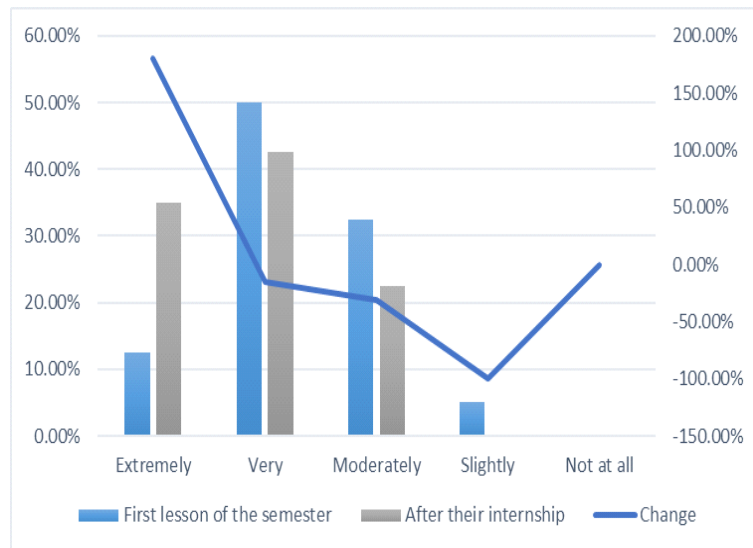


According to the answers to both the first and the second questionnaire, about 90% of our participants believe “Extremely” or “Very” much that they must support all the time their students in order for them to academically succeed.

The next two question were about behavior system and the classroom’s management system. More specifically, the seventh question was: “Do you believe that you should establish behavior rules in classroom?”

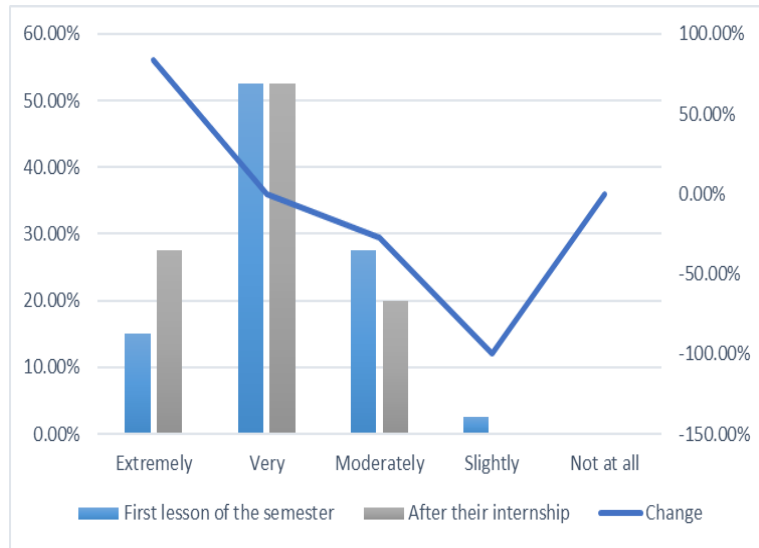


And the eight: “Do you believe that is vital to establish a management system in your classroom?”



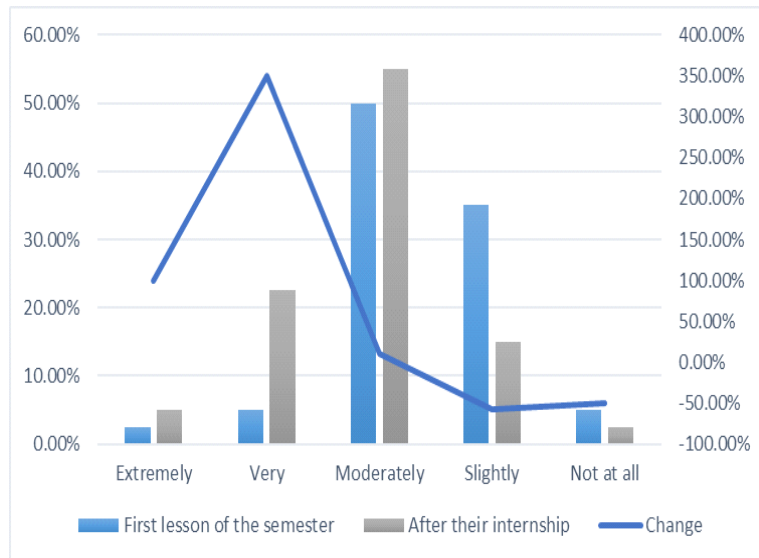
The answers to both (seventh and eighth) questions, show a major change. Before their practice, almost 40% of preservice teachers thought that a management system may not be necessary, but after that, they changed their minds. At the second questionnaire approximately 85% of our participants answered that behavior rules are “Extremely” or “Very” necessary and 75% that a classroom management system is vital.

The ninth question was: “Do you believe that you should control the non-effective behavior in classroom?”



Our participants' answers show that there has been a slight change, as, even before their introduction to module and their practicum most of them believed “Very much” that they should control the non-effective behaviors in classroom. So, only small change happened to their perceptions after the semester.

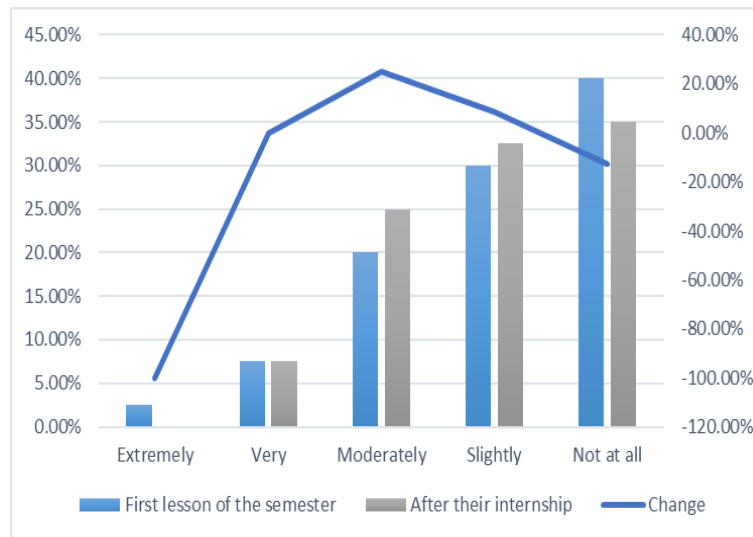
Our next (tenth) question was: “Do you believe that is important to impose sanctions to any student who breaks the rules?”



Although preservice teachers that participated in our research, even before the semester they believed that they should control non-effective behavior, it seems - from the answers at this (tenth) question- that they were not willing to apply the consequences to any student who broke the rules in order to achieve it. Noting saying

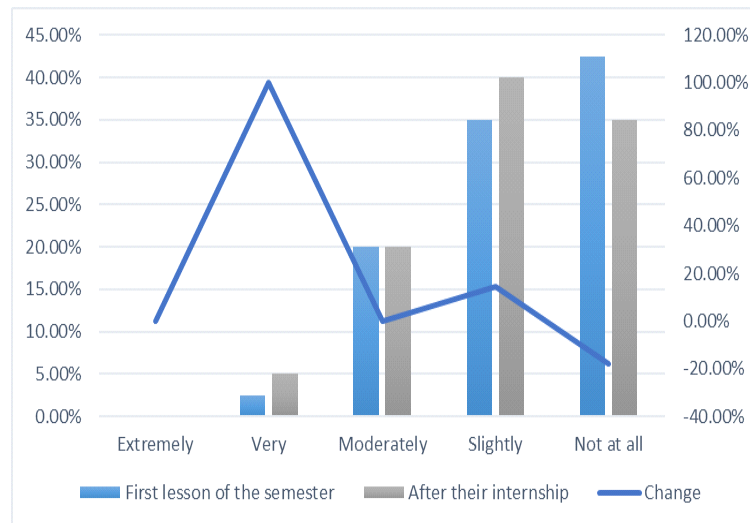
that in the first questionnaire they may seemed pretty certain as a great amount of them, around 40%, declared that they will not at all or that they slightly will impose sanctions, but after they introduced to the module and tested their approaches and beliefs in practice (practicum) the percentage of “Extremely”, “Very” and “Moderately” raised. Still, though, most of them tend to “Moderately” believe in the imposition of sanctions in order to manage their classroom.

The next (eleventh) question was”: “Do you believe that if you insist on your demands, you become authoritative and you cause fear?”



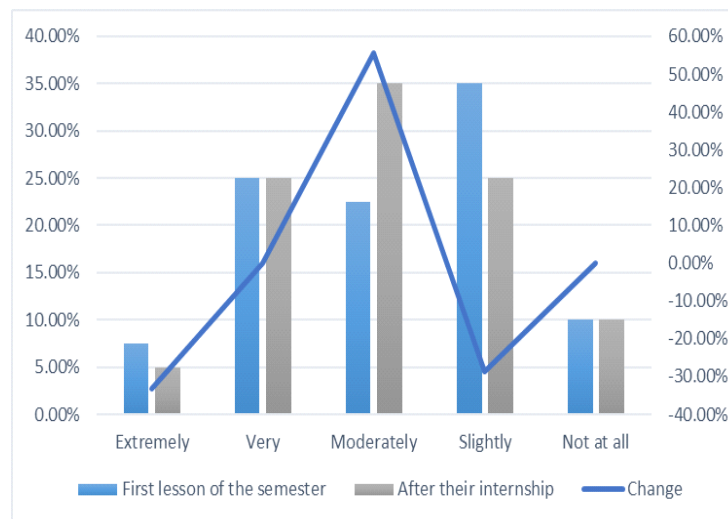
According to the answers of our participants, it seems that from the beginning of their course 80% of the preservice teachers thought that they can insist on their demands and high expectations without being authoritative or cause fear to their students.

Twelfth question was: “Do you believe that if you insist on their highest performance, then you become tough with your students?”



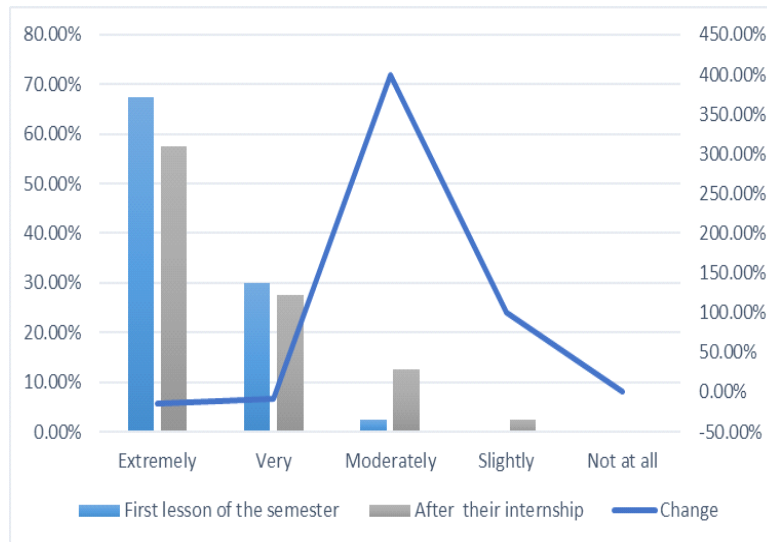
Aristotle’s University of Thessaloniki's preservice teachers answered that if they are demanding, they do “Not at all” or “Slightly” think that they are harsh with their students.

Thirteenth question was: “Do you believe that you should stop insisting on students, only when they do their best?”



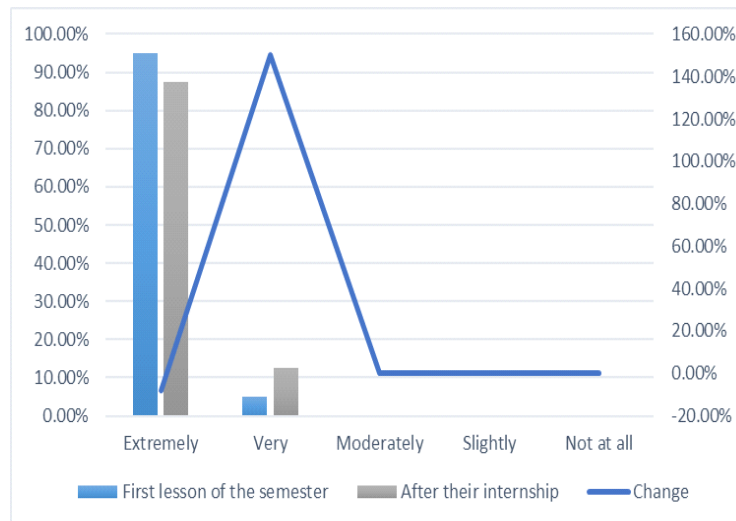
Our participants' answers show a variety of perspectives, not only to the first but also to the second questionnaire, referring to when the teacher should stop insisting. Noting saying that warm demanders teachers stop insisting only when the students meet their expectations. Nonetheless, only around 30% of our participants answered that they should insist that much. It seems that these answers contradict our students’ answers to the previous question about the issue of insistence.

Question fourteen was: “Do you believe that is necessary to give constantly more chances, when a student does not meet your expectations?”



We should underline that according to warm demander theory, if a teacher gives constantly more chances, the students will believe that he or she does not mean what he or she say. The answers of the preservice teachers at this question showed that they think they should provide more chances all the time, maybe because other way they may discourage the students or because they are not ready to say “no” or to apply the foreseen consequences.

Question number 15 was: “Do you think that you should approach all the students with positive thoughts?”

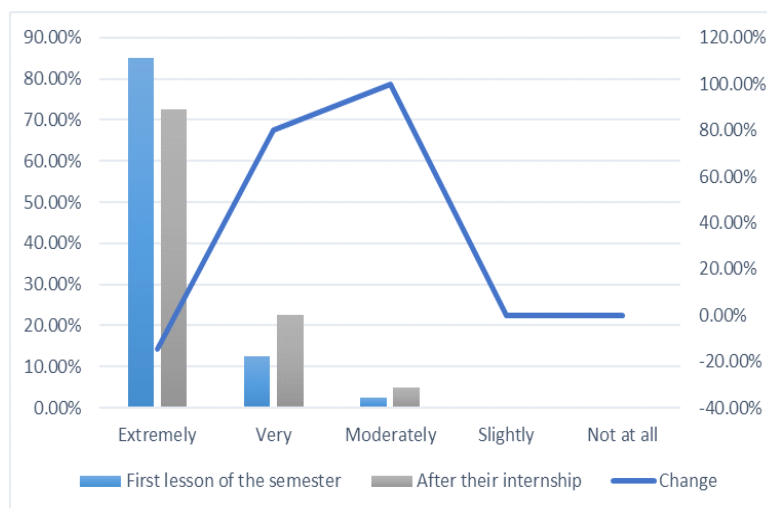


Question number 16 was: “Do you think that you should show to your students that you really care about them?”

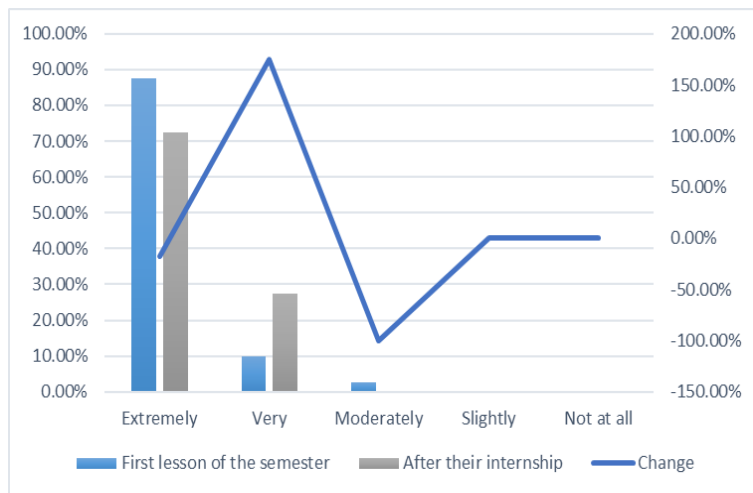


As far as the caring factor is concerned, preservice teachers are definite at both questionnaires as 100% of the sample believes that they should approach all the students positively, and that they should show with actions that they really care about them. So, is understandable that preservice teachers adopt the warm demanding’s stance about caring and its’ significance in teaching.

Question number 17 was: “Do you believe that your students should know that you have the best interests in them?”

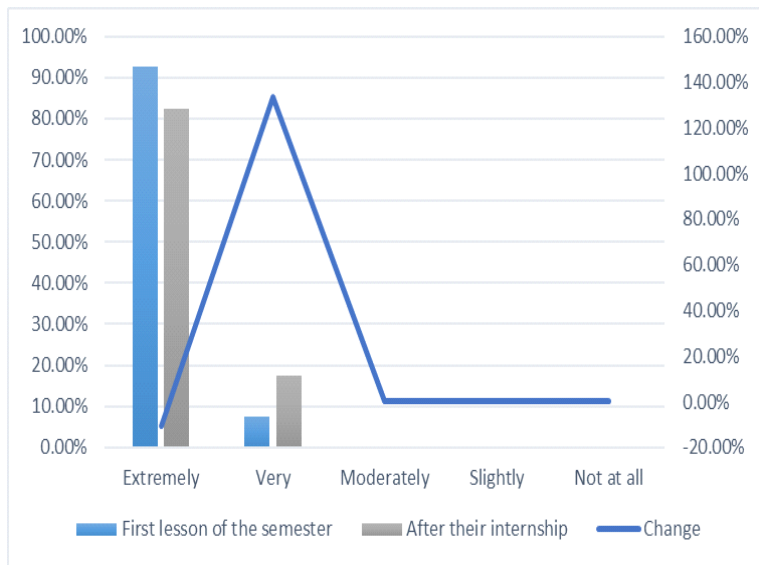


Question number 18 was: “Do you believe that is necessary to know well your students (their hobbies, their everyday life etc.)?”



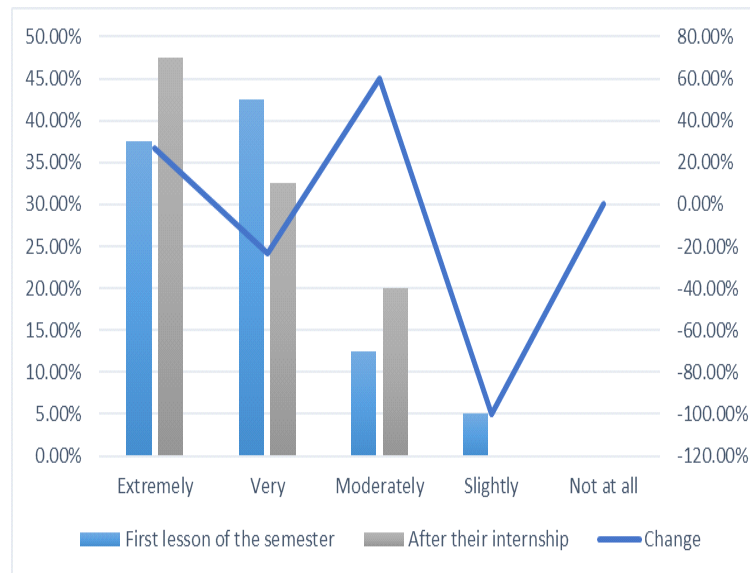
According to the answers of our participants to both above questions, it seems that they believe that they care about their students, just like warm demander pedagogy suggests. Roughly 100% of our participants declares that not only they should have the best interests and care about their students, but also the students should know it. Moreover, the same number of our participants thinks that they should know substantial information about what their students like, to know them better and maybe use this information in their teaching or to come closer to them.

Question number 19 was: “Do you believe that is vital to create a climate of mutual respect in your classroom?”



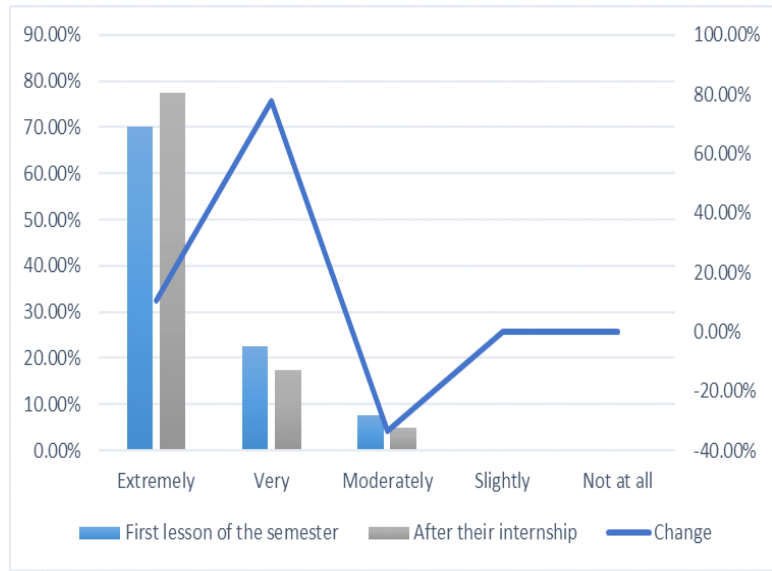
According to their answers, it seems that all of the preservice teachers who participated in our research think that mutual respect between teachers and students and between students is vital for a healthy classroom. In other words, our participants believe that not only the students should respect their teacher, but also the teacher should respect his or her students, as well as the students should respect one another.

Question number 20 was: “Do you believe that you should provide to your students different kind of exercises for the same topic?”



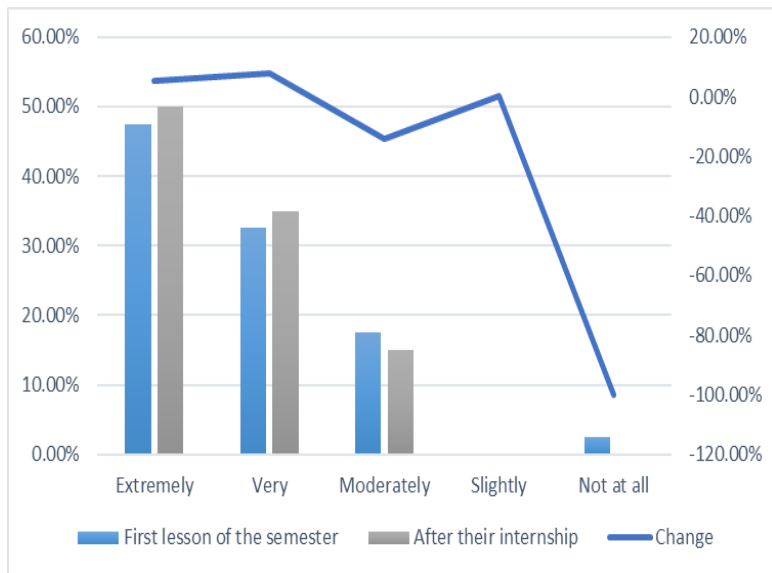
According to the answers of our participants, it seems that a small number of them believes that providing a variety of exercises is not necessary. Noting saying that after finishing the semester and their practicum this number decreased.

Question number 21 was: “Do you think that you should accept different approaches from your students to solve a problem?”



As their answers show, most of the preservice teachers that participated in our research believe, before and after the semester and their practicum, that they should accept different approaches from their students to solve a problem.

The last (twenty-two) question of the questionnaire was: “Do you think that you should continue to the next lesson only after all of your students have understood the previous one?”



The answers of our participants, in an -approximately- 90%, was that they would continue to the next topic and question, only after every student has understood the

previous one. This is way suggested by Warm Demander Pedagogical theory that no child left behind.

Noting saying that the interviews we conducted with five (5) students, gave us the same “image” for our participants perceptions concerning warm demander pedagogy. Because of their limited number, we do not further present its analysis here. We believe that this topic needs further elaboration and research, that’s why we intended to organize and conduct a wider qualitative research on warm demanding pedagogy and its basic elements.

Conclusion

From the results of our research, we conclude that as it concerns the basic characteristic of warm demander pedagogy, Care and Interest, our participants do not seem to move too far from their perceptions they hold before the semester and their practicum. Even before their practicum, preservice teachers could enact Care and Interest as warm demanders. We can assume that for the preservice teachers a strong sentimental relationship is really important to be established in their classroom.

However, concerning the second characteristic of warm demander Pedagogy, Demand and Insistence, the results are not the same at the two phases of this research. At the first phase, our participants seem to have some doubts about the way and the pressure (Demand) they should exercise to their students. They probably were not familiar with the limits between to be a demander and an authoritarian teacher. After the semester and their practicum, a quite decent number of the sample seem to have change their beliefs. They have clarified the meaning of insistence and after all they can use Demand and Insistence for their students to achieve high academic results. For us, it is alarming that more than the half of the preservice teachers who participated in our research, they still have not comprehend how to implement “Insistence” based on the “Care” for their students after they ended the semester and the practicum. We assume that it is probably out of their pedagogical knowledges and the tools that they intent to use, that their “Insistence” can bring direct positive results to students’ academic routes and behaviors.

Ending up, we believe that warm demander pedagogy is valuable for students’ academic / school success and for classroom management. In our opinion, every teacher should have in mind that combining Insistence and Care, he or she can have high results and an excellent relationship with his or her students. That’s why we

strongly believe that Warm Demander Pedagogy should be a part of university pedagogical courses, as well as to be a thematic unit in teacher retraining programs.

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