

To See the Associations Among School Climate Variables and Academic Orientation for High School Student



Medical Science

KEYWORDS : School Climate, Academic Orientation.

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ABSTRACT

Objective: *The aim of the present study is to see the associations among school climate variables and academic orientation for high school student. School climate is a term that is used often by educators, researchers, and the media but is rarely defined consistently. School climate reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. The academic orientation process carried out by these advisors imply the review of different information regarding the students in order to report which academic alternatives suits better their skills, competences and needs. In most of academic institutions the advisor deals yearly with several hundreds of students with different skills, personalities, etc .*
Methodology: *The sample size of the study is 160 high school students (males and females) in the age range of 14-16 years was randomly selected from different schools of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. the tools used for assessing the variables are School Climate Scale:-(a). School Environment/Quality Scale, (b).Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (c).Peer Support Scale & Academic Orientation.*

INTRODUCTION

In any society, schools are the means by which children are prepared to be successful adults. From the age of 5, children spend a large part of their day in school, and their experiences in school may affect them in multiple ways. The school environment has the potential either to increase children's risk or protect them from the debilitating consequences of other risks. There is increasing recognition that health and educational outcomes are inextricably linked, and that the school can be an ideal setting through which to strive for both. It is an important responsibility of our schools that they create a health promoting and child friendly environment. The extent, to which they could provide a safe, supportive and creative environment for children, will play a significant role in determining whether the next generation is educated and healthy in body, mind and spirit.

School climate is a term that is used often by educators, researchers, and the media but is rarely defined consistently. School climate reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. School climate is evident in the feelings and attitudes about a school expressed by students, teachers, staff and parents—the way students and staff “feel” about being at school each day. School climate is a significant element in discussions about improving academic performance and school reform. It is also mentioned in discussions of potential solutions to problems such as bullying, inter-student conflicts, suicide, character education, and moral education.

Defining school climate is difficult. School climate is the quality of school life that either supports or undercuts the learning, achievement and development of the students enrolled. Here are the two definitions of school climate taken from the literature:

- “The physical and psychological aspects of the school that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place” (Tableman, 2004, p. 2).

- “School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. It is based on patterns of school life experiences and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures” (National School Climate Center, Center for Social and Emotional Education, and National Center for Learning and Citizenship at

Education Commission of the States, 2008, p.5).

Research shows that school climate can affect many areas and people within schools. For example, a positive school climate has been associated with fewer behavioral and emotional problems for students (Kuperminc et al., 1997). Additionally, specific research on school climate in high-risk urban environments indicates that a positive, supportive, and culturally conscious school climate can significantly shape the degree of academic success experienced by urban students (Haynes & Comer, 1993).

Participation in academic and co-curricular activities increases bonding because students are reinforced by their own success experiences and enjoy the opportunity to affiliate with peers and teachers who share their interests (Hawkins and Weis, 1985).

Teachers not only provide institutional support for academic contents and skills, but they also serve confident and positive role models for children. They help students to develop the values and attitudes they need to persevere in their school work and to achieve high levels of academic performance. They also promote educational resiliency by encouraging students to master new experiences, believe in their efficacy, and take responsibility for their own learning (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997).

In their study of teachers influence on students engagement, Skinner and Belmont (1993) found that teachers' positive involvement with students was a major predictor of student engagement. They examined the effects of three dimensions of teacher behaviour on student engagement over the course of a school year. These dimensions were (1) **involvement** (the quality of the student-teacher relation); (2) **structure** (which the researchers defined as “the amount of information in the context about how to effectively achieve desired outcomes”); and (3) **autonomy support** (the amount of freedom a child has to determine his or her behavior). The researchers found that teacher behavior influenced both students' perception of their interactions with teachers and student engagement. Students who perceived their teacher as being highly involved with them and liking them viewed their interactions as affectionate, dependable and in tune with their needs. When this perception of the teacher combined with teacher behavior that included holding clear expectations and responding helpfully to student needs, children were happier and more enthusiastic in class, tried harder to achieve, and were more persistent in their school work. Students

saw less involved teachers as being less consistent and more coercive. Results indicated that, when teachers present students with a clear classroom structure, students feel more secure and are thereby happier. Such relationships have reduced stress in classrooms and provided positive supports to students (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997) and encouraged them to seek help when they needed it (Wigfield et al., 1998).

The researchers have also distinguished between students having close relationships with their teachers and being dependent on them. Students who are too dependent on teachers are less likely to be positively motivated. Conflicts with teachers relates negatively to both students' engagement in school and their liking of it (Wigfield et al., 1998). Similarly, teachers who are overly controlling and who do not provide an adequate amount of support undermine students' sense of autonomy, along with their intrinsic motivation and engagement.

Objective

To see the associations among school climate variables and academic orientation for high school student.

Hypothesis

There will be significant correlations among school climate variables and students' academic orientation.

Methodology

Sample:

A sample of 160 high school students (males and females) in the age range of 14-16 years was randomly selected from different schools of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Tools:

School Climate Scale:

This scale consists of three subscales- (a) School Environment/Quality Scale; (b) Student-Teacher Relationship Scale and (c) Peer Support. Items of all the subscale have 4-point rating scale ranging from Never (1) to Always (4). A brief description about these subscales is as follows:

(a). School Environment/Quality Scale:

This scale included 10 items, related to students' perceptions and feelings of qualified, caring, fair, committed and welcoming teachers and principal, who attended to all students' health academic and safety needs in the school. Items for this scale have been derived from Perceived School Climate developed by Pypser and colleagues (1987, n=15); and School climate/Quality developed by Roeser, Lord & Eccles (1994, n=8, alpha=.74).

(b). Student-Teacher Relationship Scale:

This subscale included 13 items, related to feelings of attachment with their teachers and perceptions that their teachers are fair and supportive and they like and accept them. Items for this scale have been derived from Poor Teachers Relations developed by Kerr & Stattin, (2000, n=7, alpha=.85); and from Teacher Support developed by Midgley, Feldlaufer and Eccles (1989, n=6, alpha=.73).

(c). Peer Support Scale:

This subscale included 10 items about the students' perception that their classmates are helping, caring and accepting to them and they are available whenever they need with their school work. Items of this scale have been derived from Sense of Relatedness to Classmates developed by Furrer & Skinner, 2003; and Emotional Support from Friends developed by Shaw and colleagues, 2004.

2. Academic Orientation:

This scale assesses students' active participation in academic pursuits. It consists 8 items. All items have 4-point rating scale

ranging from Never (1) to Always (4). The items have been taken from Steinberg et al. (1992).

PROCEDURE

The data of the study was collected through personal contact with the student of High School. Before administrating the questionnaire, the purpose of the study was explained and students were assured that their responses will be kept confidential and is for research purpose only. Scores thus obtained were analyzed with Statistical Package for social Sciences (spss-11.5). Descriptive statistics, Chi-Square and t-test were applied.

RESULTS

Table- Correlations among School Climate Variables and Academic Orientation Variables

SN		SQ	STR	PS	AO
1	School Quality (SQ)	1	.515**	.475**	.426**
2	Student-Teacher Relation(STR)		1	.424**	.606**
3	Peer Support (PS)			1	.208*
5	Academic Orientation				1

Significant relationships have been found among various school climate variable and academic orientation variables.

CONCLUSION

Despite some limitations, this work has important implications for the study of school climate variables and academic orientation. The findings from this study show that some school climate variables are most predicative of school performance and school orientation.

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