



SCHOOL CLIMATE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS: A GENDER STUDY

Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat

Research Scholar, Department of Continuing Education, and Extension Barkatullah University Bhopal.

Fr. Dr. Joseph P. P.*

Principal, Bhopal School of Social Sciences, Bhopal *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT The study was conducted on a sample of 240 adolescent students (120 boys and 120 girls) enrolled in government higher secondary schools was selected randomly from two districts (Anantnag and Kulgam) of Kashmir (J&K) to find out the school climate of adolescents. For data collection, School Climate Scale developed by Sajad Ahmad Mir (2018) was administered to measure the school climate of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls. Statistical methods such as mean, percentage and t- test were computed for data analysis. The results of the study revealed that school climate has been perceived as moderate type by majority of adolescent students. Further, the study reflected a significant difference in the school climate of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls.

KEYWORDS : School Climate; Adolescents; Gender

INTRODUCTION

The school is familiarized and popularized by its climate. It is very important because every school has its own field and own personality. School climate is found everywhere and when an adolescent student leaves one school and enters another one, it means that an adolescent student does not move from one school to another school but it actually means moving from one climate to another climate. School climate is an attitude for everything that happen within the building and for every individual within the building whether students, teachers, staff, parents and the entire school community. Two types of relationships positive and negative develops in the school. Positive and democratic relationship promotes academic achievement among students (MacNeil, Prater & Busch, 2009; Dagnev, 2014). Negative relationship between teachers and students develop behavioral and academic problems (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Besides these positive and negative relationships, there are also other relationships which the researchers have looked between school climate and other variables like academic achievement, class room participation, emotional intelligent, social and economic background of the students etc. It has been shown that when students are encouraged to participate in academic learning, the potential for academic achievement increases (Voelkl, 1995). Research also shows that schools are not safe physically and emotionally for the students. Let us take an example of (Astor, Zeira, Benbenishty & Vinokur, 2002) revealed that due to violence and personal victimization in schools various number of high school students are very fearful for going to school. McNeely, Nonnemaker and Blun (2002) found that the average grade points in major subjects were positively related with those students who are deeply connected with the schools. Apart from this, if there is no such connectedness with the school, number of problem type behaviors occurs among the students. This means that a school climates specific attribute (positive or negative) influences teachers and adolescent's behavior, teaching, instruction, attitude, learning style, thinking style not only in the class room but also outside the four walls of the school. School climate has been defined in many ways by scholars but the total feeling is that it strikes on person's opinion and reflection of school as a room for learning and interacting with its fellows (Nwankwo, 1979; Anderson, 1982; Freiberg, 1998; Libbey, 2004; Loukas, 2007). According to Hoy and Miskel (2001) school climate is defined as beliefs, values and attitudes of students and staff members. Howard, Howell and Brainard (1987) defined school climate as an atmosphere for learning. School climate describes the excellence of school that cultivates and conserves healthy learning atmosphere, cherishes the dreams and ambitions of students and parents, inspires teacher's vision and interest, and promotes the rank of all its members. It is about the excellence of school that guides the students, teachers, non- teachers, parents or administrators to display loving, warm and friendly feelings towards the school. (Rogers & Frieberg, 1994). It is the total personality of a school (Creemers & Reezigt, 1999). It is the core and nucleus of school (Frieberg & Stein, 1999).

Justification of the study

School climate is the excellence of school in which an excellent

interaction taking place between various participants like students, teachers, parents and the environment of different classrooms. (Pretorius & de Villiers, 2009). On one side it affects motivation of students and school satisfaction and on other side it also affects the health and lifestyles of students (Vieno, Santinello, Galbiati & Mirandola, 2004). The teachers feel disappointed with their jobs when they are exposed and assaulted by students and other higher authorities and there by rate of teachers absenteeism increases in such schools (Ishumi, 1994; Chonjo, 1994; Voelkl, 1995; & Dworkin, 1998). One of the best sign of students further and continuing education is the climate of the school (Astor, Meyer & Pinter, 2001). There are various high school students who are not able to attend the secondary schools because of violence in the schools that affects the student's mind as well as their verbal and non-verbal aspects (Holtappels & Meier, 2000; Barbarin & Ritcher, 2001). One of the important aspects of school is the safety and is considered as the heart and soul of the school climate. The students learning and thinking capacity is enhanced only when they feel safe in a school (Torney-Purta, 2002). Correlation of school climate with emotional and mental health outcomes (Way, Reddy, & Rhodes; 2007). To prevent students from dropping out, school climate is very important (Maurice, 2010).

A through look at the review literature indicates that the Perceptions/views of school climate are considered as protective factors for boys who in turn give a helpful learning environment, healthy development and preventing students from antisocial behavior (Haynes, 1998, Kupermine et al. 1997). Research also revealed that the schools having positive interpersonal relationships among its members can increase the achievement level of students and also reduces maladaptive behavior (McEvoy and Welker, 2000). Taylor and Tashakkori (1995) conducted a research on different roles of teachers and administrators, revealed that a positive school climate is related with increased job satisfaction. The interaction of numerous classroom and school climate factors can produce a fabric of sustenance that permits all members to teach and learn in the school community at best levels (Freiberg, 1998). Academic achievement of students is promoted through democratic and positive type of school climate while as negative type of school climate promotes academic failure and non democratic students (Anderson, Hamilton & Hattie, 2004; Moran, Parish & DiPaola, 2006; Brown & Medway, 2007; Chen & Weikert, 2008; MacNeil, Prater & Busch, 2009; Dagnev, 2014).

After going through trend reports and review of related research, the investigator has concluded that most of the studies have been conducted on school climate of primary and elementary schools in relation to academic success, motivation, psychosocial health, behavioral outcomes of students, and little work has been done on school climate of higher secondary school students. There is no study on school climate of higher secondary schools in relation to their gender. The investigator, thus, found an ample opportunity to explore this unbeaten area of school climate. The investigator is hoped that the present study will help to open new doors in educational practices.

Statement of the problem

The problem chosen for the study is stated as: "School Climate of Adolescent: A Gender Study"

Objectives

1. To study the school climate of higher secondary adolescent students.
2. To compare the school climate of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between higher secondary adolescent boys and girls on their school climate.

Operational definition

School Climate: In the present study school climate mean scores obtained by respondents on School Climate Scale developed by Sajad Ahmad Mir (2018).

Adolescent: Adolescents refer to the students studying in 11th and 12th classes in any higher secondary schools of Kashmir valley.

Gender: Gender refers to adolescent boys and girls studying in 11th and 12th classes.

Sample:

The investigator has employed random technique for data collection. First, the data have been divided into different classes such as boys-girls and then certain units from each class were selected randomly. A sample of 240 higher secondary adolescent boys and girls (11th and 12th classes) from two districts Anantnag and Kulgam of Kashmir valley was selected. Two secondary schools from each district and (120 boys and 120 girls) from every school were chosen as the sample of the research study. The brief summary of the sample is given below:

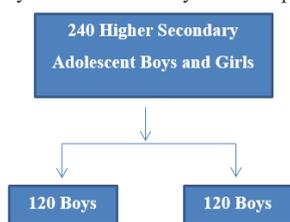


Figure 1. Sampling Frame

Tools

For the measurement of school climate, School Climate Scale developed by Dr. Sajad Ahmad Mir (2018) was administered.

Analysis of the data

In order to achieve the objectives formulated in the research study, the data collected have been analyzed by employing statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, percentage, and t-test.

Objective 1: Overall perception of School Climate of Secondary School Students

One of the objectives of the present research study was to study the school climate of higher secondary adolescent students. To achieve this objective, analysis of data was done which is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Showing School Climate of Adolescent Students

Category	N	Mean	Percentage		
			Favourable	Moderate	Unfavourable
School Climate	240	168.1	40.2	45.1	14.3

Table 1 reveals that total mean score possessed by secondary school students is 168.1. By following the test manual the above stated mean score falls on moderate category. It also shows that 40.2%, 45.1% and 14.3% adolescent students have perceived favourable, moderate and unfavourable type of school climate respectively. This indicates that students are having of the opinion that school climate should be more democratic in nature to foster teaching-learning process and it should exhibit mutual trust and relationship feelings amongst its stakeholders.

Objective 2: Comparison of the school climate of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls.

In this section attempt was being made to study the comparison between Higher Secondary Adolescent boys and girls on school

climate. The results obtained are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of the school climate of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls.

Group	N	MEAN	S.D.	SED	t-Value	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE	
Boys	120	162.7	27.39	3.99	2.68	0.01	0.05
Girls	120	173.5	34.14			S	S

(S=Significant).

A look at the table 2 depicts that the mean scores of higher secondary adolescent boys and girls on school climate are 162.7 and 173.5 respectively. The table also shows that SED is 3.99 and t-value is 2.68. The calculated t-value of 2.68 is found to be significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level (tabulated value= 2.59). So, it may be interpreted that there is a significant difference between higher secondary adolescent boys and girls on school climate. Hence, hypothesis 1 "there is no significant difference between higher secondary adolescent boys and girls on their school climate" stands rejected.

Major findings

After going through different stages of investigation, the investigator has finally arrived at following conclusions:

- The present study revealed that majority of higher secondary adolescent students has perceived moderate type of school climate.
- A significant difference was also found between adolescent boys and girls on their perception of school climate.

Educational implications

The results of the present study confirmed that there is a moderate kind of school climate. The finding is supported by the findings of Bhat and Mir (2018). It also extended that both boy and girl adolescent students differed on perceiving their school climates. The mean score favoured the adolescent boy students. Adolescent girls have perceived various factors as the major cause of their poor school climate. Such factors include old-fashioned teaching methods, poor associations, teachers work load in the schools, little motivation, inexperienced staff members, lack of infrastructural facilities, communication gap between parents and teachers, jammed classes, lack of suitable co-curricular activities, students' insecurity level and load of homework assignments on part of students. This needs speedy attention on the part of educational planners and policy makers to improve the school climate in higher secondary schools.

All the interested people who are directly or indirectly accountable for the advancement of education system in the state/UT or country can help in changing the climate of school. Their decisions like selection process, allocation of budget, communication, infrastructure, training courses etc. plays a sufficient role in boosting a positive change and this positive change is possible only when there is supportive type of staff members, especially when the principals of the different schools are showing real leadership styles in order to support the students as well as staff members. In positive school climate, the teachers and students experienced active chances, which in turn develop self-confidence, problem solvers, convergent and divergent thinkers, active participants in each platform either at national level or at international level. So, it is the need in all government or private schools having friendly and loving climate in order to facilitate teaching and learning process effectively.

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