

Effect of Classroom Environment on Academic Achievement Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This study will provide information for parents, educators and school administrator to reflect upon various aspects that help students in achieving their academic goals. In so doing, they can investigate the possibility of introducing those factors to their school, which may consequently lead to enhancing students educational outcome in school. Previous studies of Whitaker (2004), explored that main variable in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Tyler & Boelter, (2008) teacher expectations as strong and reliable predictors of performance among elementary, middle and high school students. Tyler and Boelter (2008b), positive teacher expectations were associated with high academic performance or academic gains; whereas negative teacher expectations resulted in decrease in academic performance. On basis of these views present study conducted in which Independent variable (IV) was influence of classroom environment and Dependent variable (DV) was academic achievement. Sharma academic achievement motivation test by Sharma (1984) and classroom environment scale (C.E.S) by Joshi and Vyas (1987) were use Sample of 30 students were taken, all were females and there mean age was 14.67. Finding reveals that some of the factors of classroom environment had positive correlation with academic achievement, hence the hypothesis is partially conformed.

Keywords: *Classroom Environment, Academic Achievement, Motivation*

According to Whitaker (2004), the main factor in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Great teachers have high expectations for their students, but even higher expectations for themselves (2004). These teachers recognize the importance of connecting with their students, that if they are unable to connect with them emotionally then it is impossible to effect there mind (2004). “Good teachers put snags in the river of children passing by, and over time, they redirect hundreds of lives... There is an innocence that conspires to hold humanity together ...” (Bolman & Deal, 2002.). Whitaker (2004) reported that teachers are the first most important point of contact in a student’s life. Despite the countless reforms and programs implemented to improve education, no other element can be as profound as the two human element. He urges, “It’s the

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people, not the programs” (Whitaker, 2004,). More profoundly he added, “There are really two ways to improve a school significantly: Get better teachers and improve the teachers in the school”.

Research acknowledges (Tyler & Boelter, 2008) teacher expectations as strong and reliable predictors of performance among elementary, primary and high school students. Other research (Walker Tileston, 2004; Whitaker, 2004) revealed that for many primary grade level students, the classroom environment and the teacher can effect a student’s desire to cheat academically, consider or follow through on dropping out of school, as well as demonstrate a decline in academic performance. Students are influenced by perceptions of their teachers’ impartiality, competence, caring and support as well as the nature of the teacher-student relationship that results (Stipek, 2002).

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Teachers need to capitalize on the impact that their positive attitude plays inside the classroom, “the genuine enthusiasm displayed by the instructor is always a major factor in motivation because it is contagious. It engenders a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and contributes to high motivation” (Miller & Rose, 1975,). Marzano adds, “The quality of teacher–student relationships is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management” (Marzano & Marzano, 2008,). Reinforcement theorists argue that motivation is in the environment, not in the person such as the teacher (Stipek, 2002). However, it is the teacher who plays the vital role in setting the atmosphere (Whitaker, 2004).

According to Freiberg and Stein (1999), “school climate is the heart and soul of a school”. Stewart (2008) identifies three facets of school climate: school culture, school organizational structure and the school social structure. The school’s culture effects students’ connectedness to their environment which research suggests affects academic achievement. The second element is school organizational structure, which Stewart uses to describe school and class size, both found to lead to positive behavioral and scholastic achievement. The third element Stewart explored was the schools social structure, which includes characteristics such as staff and student ethnicity, gender, socio- economic status, teacher ability and preparation (Stewart, 2008).

Classroom social environment plays an important role in development for school-aged children. Student experiences within the classroom help to develop their behavioral, social, and academic skills. The quality of the interactions that students have with their teachers predicts later academic success (Pianta, Steinberg, & Rollins,1995). Classroom characteristics, such as class composition, student and teacher characteristics, student interactions with peers and teachers,

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classroom values, and classroom beliefs all influence student academic development Pianta, LaParo, Payne, Cox, & Bradley, 2002; Koth, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2008; Perry, Donohue, & Weinstein, 2007; Because these components may influence student academic futures, it is important to understand the classroom pathways that underlie student academic achievement.

Teacher-student relationship theory Pianta's (1995) posits that teachers shape student experiences in school. Beyond the traditional method and role of teaching academic skills, teachers guide student activity level, teach communication skills, provide opportunities for students to form peer relations, provide behavioral support, and teach coming skills. Teachers have various roles and spend a large amount of time with students. This theory proposes that when 2 teachers have close and positive relationships with students, they are more motivated to spend extra time and energy promoting student success. But when teachers have do not agree and negative relationships with students, they more frequently attempt to control student behavior and thus hinder efforts to promote a positive school environment for them (Pianta et al.,1995; Hamre&Pianta,2001).Furthermore, Hamre and Pianta (2001) assumed that students react to their relationships with their teachers. When students feel that they have close and positive relations with teachers, they are more inclined to trust and like those teachers and thus are more motivated to succeed. In contrast, when students feel that they have conflictual and negative relationships with teachers, they do not like or trust the teachers, are not motivated to succeed and may be defiant towards the teachers (Pianta et al, 1995; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Many studies have reported that the quality of the relations between teachers and students was associated with student academic performance.

Impact of Classroom Environment

Classroom has great impact on academic achievement. Teacher's attitude and behaviour are vitally important, genuine involvement of student in class activities, flexibility of rules by teachers, communication, competition, staff morale also plays crucial role, use of new techniques, planning various activities - assignments- encouraging creative thinking in student, affiliation between classmates and teacher etc. are various factors which influence academic achievement of students.

Objective

1. The objective of study was to examine the effect of classroom environment on academic achievement of secondary students.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesis that there will be positive correlation between factors involvement, affiliation, teacher support, task orientation, competition, innovation of classroom environment and academic achievement and negative correlation between factors order and organization, rule clarity, teacher control of classroom environment and academic achievement.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

An attempt was made to study the influence of classroom environment on academic achievement of secondary school student in which Independent variable (IV) is influence of classroom environment and Dependent variable (DV) is academic achievement. All the subject were matched at their age range, socio-economic status and family background.

Sample

Principles of two schools were approached and they were explained about the purpose of research. Then 65 students were introduced to the research problem, finally 30 students voluntary came forward for research work.

Tool

A) Sharma academic achievement motivation test by T. R. Sharma (1984).

Reliability of Academic Achievement Motivation Test

The reliability of the achievement motivation test was determined by three methods i.e. Split-half, Rational Equivalence and Test-Retest method. The reliability of split-half method was established with the total N = 100. The score of odd items was 1355 and an even item was 1400. The reliability of split-half test was found to be 0.53 and whole test was 0.697. The reliability of rational equivalence method was found that $r = 0.75$. The reliability of test-retest method was found to be 0.795 for boys (298) and 0.80 for girls (301).

Validity of Academic Achievement Motivation Test

Three types of validities – content, criterion and construct, were established. The item of the test was selected on the basis of pooled judgment of nearly forty experts in the field of testing. This sufficed for content validity. For criterion validity, on the basis of considered judgments of class teachers, twenty students; ten low on achievement motivation and ten high on achievement motivation were administered this test under standardization. Significant differences ($t = 6.30$) were found in the mean test-scores of the two groups. For construct validity, SK Boys = -0.4315, SK Girls = -0.4189 and Ku Boys = 0.2280, Ku Girls = 0.3612 were represented normally distributed score in the test.

B) Classroom Environment scale (C.E.S) by Joshi and Vyas (1987).

Reliability of classroom environment scale Reliability index for each sub-scale of classroom environment scale represents test retest reliability i.e. Involvement: 0.803, affiliation: 0.792, teacher support : 0.831, task orientation: 0.842, competition: 0.863, order and organization: 0.801, rule clarity: 0.830, teacher control: 0.799, innovation: 0.840

Validity of classroom environment scale

The construct validity in each case of positive correlation, range between 0.347 to 0.546. This coefficient is calculated against saxena sub-scale of school environment scale (SES).

RESULT

Correlation values between academic achievement motivation and subscales of classroom environment for sample of girls and girls of co-education school

| Schools | I | A | T.S. | T.O. | C | O.O. | R.C. | T.C | Inn. |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------|--------------|
| Girls | -.05 N.S. | -.18 N.S. | -0.5 N.S. | .06 N.S. | -.42** | -.14 N.S. | -.05 N.S. | -.38** | -.02 N.S. |
| Coeducation | -.03 N.S. | -1.0 N.S. | .14 N.S. | .65** | -.11 N.S. | .26* | -.47** | .33** | .004 N.S. |

*(P<.05) ** (P<.01) N.S.= Non-significant

Where,

(I=Involvement, A=Affiliation, Ts=Teacher Support, To=Task Orientation, C=Competition, Oo=Order And Organization, Rc=Rule Clarity, Tc=Teacher Control)

DISCUSSION

The result of present study indicates negative and significant relationship on two sub-scale of classroom environment i.e. Competition ($r = -.42, p = .01$) and Teacher control ($r = -.38, p = .01$). It represent that characteristics such as spirit of giving your best , urge to excel , strict rules , authoritarian teaching are negatively associated with characteristics like high aspiration , ambitious nature , high level of motivation , excel in academics among subjects of girls school. Whereas, correlation analysis among co-educated girls group has shown significant and positive correlation on two sub-scale of classroom environment i.e. Teacher control ($r = .33, p = .01$) and Task orientation ($r = .65, p = .01$). Negative and significant on Rule clarity ($r = -.47, p = .01$) with academic achievement motivation and there is no significant relationship for rest of the sub-scale of classroom environment with academic achievement motivation.

The findings of present research are in line with Whitakar (2004) who reported that the main factor in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. He further added that Great teachers have high expectations for their students, but even higher expectations for themselves. Similarly Bolman and Deal,(2002) evaluated that good teacher as well as good teaching positively influences academic performance of student. Students are influenced by perceptions of their teachers’ evenhandedness, competence, caring and support as well as the nature of the teacher-student relationship that outcome in (Stipek, 2002), this conclusion is supported by present findings.

Tyler and Boelter (2008), positive teacher expectations were associated with high academic performance or academic gains; whereas negative teacher expectations resulted in decrease in academic performance, is also in collaboration with present analysis of the findings.

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Present findings are also in support of Ames et al. (1998). Students who perceived an emphasis on mastery goals in the classroom reported using more effective strategies, preferred challenging tasks, had a more positive attitude toward the class, and had a stronger belief that success follows from one's effort. Students who perceived performance goals as salient tended to focus on their ability, evaluating their ability negatively and attributing failure to lack of ability. Koth et al. (2008). Researchers have examined the influence of various classroom characteristics on student academic performance. Teacher beliefs, teacher instructional practices, and classroom interactions between teachers and students have been positively associated with student academic performance, is also in support with the present study. Present hypothesis are partially confirmed hence it is concluded that some of the classroom factors played a significant role in achievement motivation.

Acknowledgments

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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