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Classroom Environment: An Analytical Review of the Related Literature

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ABSTRACT: This research paper is an analytical review on the literature related to the variable Classroom Environment. The researcher has selected the present variable Classroom –Environment for analytical study from her own research work titled as “Perception of students towards their Classroom environment, Educational Aspiration and Educational Achievement at higher secondary level” being pursued for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Though there are three variables in the research study but the researcher has decided to present a critical, analytical and in-depth analysis of the variable “Classroom –Environment” so that the ways and means about studying the variable can be unfolded. Further, it will be explored that how a student perceives his classroom environment. Important factors contributing to a healthy classroom environment which should be taken into account for pursuing the research work will also become clear from this analysis. The researcher also aims at defining the Classroom –Environment operationally by covering the necessary points which have been left uncovered in the previous studies.

KEYWORDS: Internal environment of Classroom, Classroom Discipline and Classroom management.

I. INTRODUCTION

School life and its environment is an integral part of the student's life. It is not just a visiting place for a child but it is a place where the child spends most of his precious time. Therefore, it is important that a place where an individual spends his childhood and approximately reaches his adolescence should be charged with creativeness. In the process of once schooling he or she undergoes different types of physical, mental, emotional and educational changes hence it becomes essential that the entire school environment and the various small or big factors related to it should be designed in such a way that the learner gets influenced. Further, Classroom can be defined or taken as a small psychological laboratory where learner of any level can be taken as sample and observed. However, the most important reason of phrasing Classroom environment as a psychological laboratory is that teachers gets enough opportunity to study, observe and draw direct experiences of the different aspects of students development such as (physical, mental, psychological and educational). Classroom environment inside the class is not only a creative place for the students – cum – learners but also for the educators who teach them. Thus, transforming the class environment into positive and healthy one is beneficial and fruitful both for the teachers & students. Thus, it can be said that classroom environment and its various aspects plays a vital role in making school one of the major agent of social change. This review paper comprises of [vii] sections in total which are as follows [I] INTRODUCTION [II] DEFINITIONS OF CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT [III] MAIN DIMENSIONS OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT [IV] REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE [V] KEY POINTS [VI] KNOWLEDGE GAP [VII] CONCLUSION.

II. DEFINITIONS OF CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

According to Wikipedia:

Classroom climate is the classroom environment, social climate, the emotional and the physical aspects of the classroom. It's the idea that the teacher influences the student's growth and behaviour. The student's behaviour affects the peer interaction – the responsibility of influencing these behaviours is placed with the Instructor. The way the instructor organizes the classroom should lead to a positive environment rather than a destructive and/ or an

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environment that is not conducive to learning. Dr Karen L. Bierman: The Director of the Penn State Child Study Center and Professor of Psychology, believed that a teacher needs to be “invisible loud” in the classroom.

According to Wikipedia:

“School Climate refers to the quality and character of the school life. It has been described as the heart and soul of the school (...) that essence of that leads a child, a teacher and an administrator to love the school and to look forward to being there each school day.

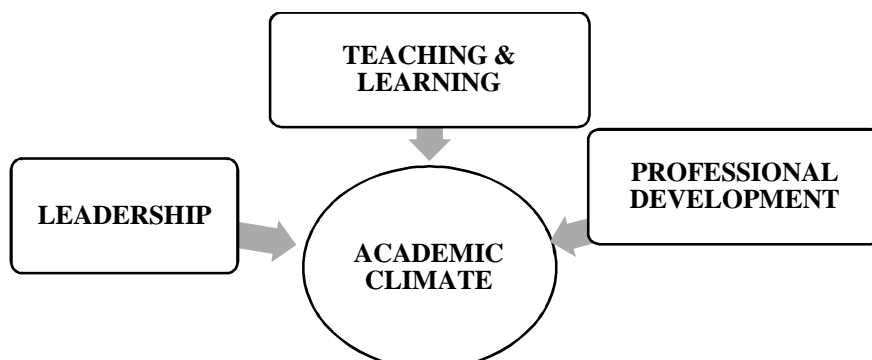
According to National School Climate Council: A sustainable, positive school climate promotes students academic and social development.

III. MAIN DIMENSIONS OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE (EFFECTING CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT) ARE:

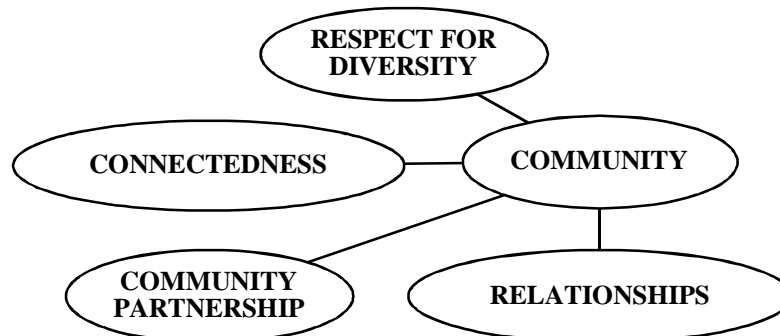
a) SAFETY



b) ACADEMIC CLIMATE



c) COMMUNITY



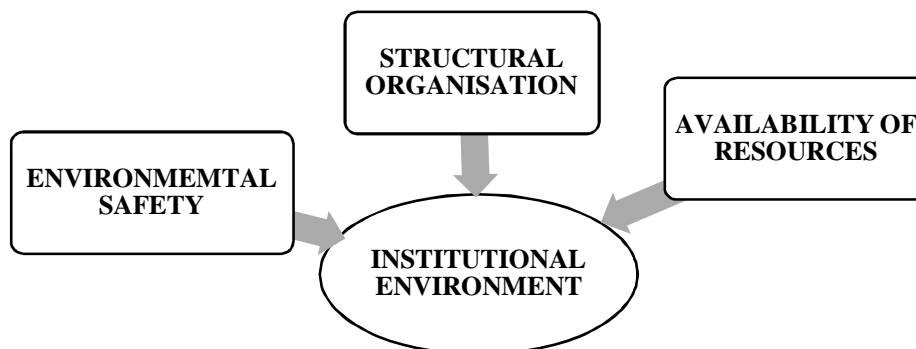
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d) INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT



IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Peng et al (2013): stated that Students tended to perform better academically, demonstrated greater levels of effort and persistence in classrooms, and exhibited superior fluency, flexibility, and creativity in classrooms where teachers were perceived to emphasize learning and improving.

Suleman and Hussain (2014): reported that studies on the classroom environment revealed that physical environment plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process. It can affect the performance of both teachers and students. The classroom environment includes many different facets. The environment can include the placement of tables and chairs, lighting and temperature, classroom management, discipline techniques, and engaging lesson plans.

Stewart (2014): Research on classroom socio-emotional context indicates that when students believe that their teachers create a sense of community, respond to students' needs, and foster meaningful relationships in the classroom, positive student academic and behavioural adjustment ensues.

Swati H. Kekare (2015): in her study titled as "Classroom Environment and Academic Motivation" explored the relationship between classroom environment and academic achievement of the subjects. The subjects were 11th class students. The sample of 80 students was selected from various colleges of Aurangabad city. Simple random sampling method was used for selecting subjects. The study was experimental "pre-test post-test equivalent group design" was used for this study. Statistical data was collected from pre-test post-test. Mean, standard deviation and t test were used for statistical procedure. In this study results are significant at 0.05 levels. The study showed that there is significant difference between classroom physical environment and academic achievement of subjects.

Nihareeka Rankai (2016): in her study titled as "Effect of Classroom Environment on Achievement Motivation" provided information for parents, educators and school administrator to reflect upon various aspects that help students in achieving their academic goals. In doing so, 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 (D V) was academic achievement. Sharma academic achievement motivation test by Sharma (1984) and classroom environment scale (C.E.S) by Joshi and Vyas (1987) were used. 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.

Keri Stewart (2016): in the study titled as "Examining Student and Teacher Perceptions of the Classroom Social Environmental cross School Context: Effects of Individual Factors" stated that although teachers and students are the primary actors in the classroom environment, they often have different perceptions of the instructional and relational aspects of the classroom. Despite these differences, research indicates perceptions of the quality of the classroom social

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environment have implications for both student and teacher outcomes. Additionally, research has indicated the differences in perceptions occur not only between students and teachers, but also among individual students within classrooms. The extent and the manner in which these perceptions converge may vary across different class and school contexts. School and class context, as well as individual characteristics and beliefs have shown to influence student and teacher perceptions of their environment. Thus, to further understand the relationship between perceptions and outcomes, it is important to understand the factors that influence perception. Therefore, the current study examined (1) the extent to which elementary school students' and teachers' perceptions of the classroom social environment differ from middle school students' and teachers' perceptions, (2) the extent to which teachers and students in elementary and middle school agree about the classroom social environment, (3) if the degree of convergence between teachers and students differs based on high or low levels of motivational and socio-emotional components of the classroom environment, (4) the extent to which school, classroom, and individual teacher factors help to explain teacher perceptions of their classroom environment, (5) and the extent to which school, classroom, and individual student factors help to explain student perceptions of their classroom environment. The sample comprised of fifth- and sixth-grade students and teachers from ethnically diverse elementary and middle schools. Exploratory factor (viii) analyses revealed differences in how teachers and students conceptualize the classroom environment. Results from multiple regression and design-model multi-level modeling indicated that school socio-economic status, classroom gender and ethnic composition, as well as teacher and student demographics and beliefs, influence both teacher and student perceptions of the Classroom Social Environment. Findings from the current study may guide researchers in developing effective instructional practices for specific teacher and student populations and may provide unique contributions to the literature regarding factors that may enhance early adolescences' and teachers' experiences in the classroom.

V. KEY POINTS EXTRACTED FROM EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF LITERATURE BOTH AT (INTERNATIONAL & NATIONAL) LEVELS FOR THE VARIABLE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT)

- Ideal or acceptable teacher learner relationship recognizes learners as partners in education process.
- Positive classroom environment results in harmonious relationship among students and teachers.
- Positive and healthy classroom environment results in motivation, further it helps in school adjustment.
- Better learning environments create better academic and social abilities.
- Teacher's friendliness, kindness, approachability and caring about student learning and concern for students as individuals were the main approaches or practices towards which students got influenced.
- Classroom management and discipline is an integral part of classroom environment.
- Lack of planning and classroom mis-management results in hazardous classroom environment.
- Characterisation of classroom by affiliation, cohesion, fairness, mutual respect and support from both teachers and students carries immense importance.
- Where teachers lay emphasis on learning and improvement there students show superior fluency, flexibility, creativity, better persistence levels, and better academic performance.
- Student positive academic and behavioural adjustment occurs when teachers create a sense of community, give response to students needs. In this reference meaningful relationship starts budding between the teacher and the taught.
- Individual students have individual perceptions about their classroom environment even if they study within the same class.
- School Socio-economic status, classroom gender, class composition, teacher- student demographics & beliefs influence both teacher and students perceptions. This further helps in framing effective instructional practices, population of both teachers and students can be together profited, contribution can be given for the adolescent students and classroom experience of teachers too.
- Studies conducted on the literature review has revealed the fact that perception of students about what they think in case of their interior environment of their respective schools influences their learning, satisfaction for their classroom and also their course being pursued.

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- Classroom environment whether negative and positive definitely effects the education achievement and educational aspiration of children.

VI. KNOWLEDGE GAP OBTAINED AFTER ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO THE VARIABLE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT:

The researcher after going through several research papers, dissertations & thesis, analytically was able to trace the knowledge gap up to a certain extent. It was found that various dimensions such as internal environment of school or class, classroom discipline, medium of instruction of students, geographical distinctions such as (rural & urban) which are less covered in other research studies can be taken into account for further study. Moreover, the research is being carried in Institute of Education, Bundelkhand University Jhansi, where the aforesaid factors related to the classroom environment has not been studied by taking internal factors of classroom in mind which have a considerable effect on learners. Thus, it became crystal clear for the researcher that the Classroom environment as a variable can be studied through different angles.

VII. CONCLUSION

A thorough study of the related review of literature from various sources has yielded meaningful information about the variable classroom environment taken in the present study. With the help of the key points extracted from the critical & analytical study of related literature the researcher has framed the clear picture of the intricacies that how the perception of the students about their classroom variable can be measured through various dimensions. Researcher firmly believes that the review has significantly contributed in gaining more coverage about the variable and thus will pursue to discover more facts about the classroom environment which may result in a different kind of contribution in the field of education.

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