

Teachers Prospective About School Climate at Secondary School Level: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to check the Teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level: A Comparative Study. The objectives of the study were to find out the teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level and to compare the gender base teachers prospective about school climate at secondary level. The quantitative and descriptive research design was used. The population of this study was 110 secondary school teachers in district Kotli. In sample of the study 86 male and female teachers were selected by simple random sampling technique. The data was collected through survey technique with the help of self-developed questionnaire based on four dimensions. This study examined four dimensions each with ten statements (Physical Environment, Social Environment, Learning Environment, and intellectual Environment. The collected data was analyzed by mean and T-test for results. It was concluded that while teachers view the overall school climate positively, they highlight the need for greater focus on improving physical conditions and social relationships to match the strength of the learning environment. The findings show that male and female teachers have different opinions about the overall school climate at the secondary level. Furthermore, male and female teachers perceive the school climate differently, with male teachers having a more favorable view, highlighting the need to address gender-specific concerns to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all. It is recommended that school leaders ensure equal involvement of male and female teachers in decision-making and access to resources to promote a more inclusive and supportive school climate.

Keywords: Intellectual Environment, Learning Environment, Social Environment

INTRODUCTION

School climate plays a pivotal role in shaping the overall educational experience for both students and teachers. It encompasses the quality and character of school life, including relationships among students, teachers, and administrators, the physical environment, safety, teaching practices, and the school's organizational structure. Among these stakeholders, teachers are central to the functioning of any school, and their perceptions of the school climate can significantly influence their motivation, teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, and ultimately student outcomes.

At the secondary school level, where academic demands and developmental challenges for students intensify, the role of a positive school climate becomes even more crucial. Teachers operating in such

environments are not only educators but also mentors, disciplinarians, and emotional supports. Their perspectives on aspects such as leadership support, student behavior, staff collaboration, and school policies can either foster or hinder a healthy, productive educational atmosphere.

Filippsen and Marin (2021) explored how both teachers and students perceive the educational setting in technical secondary schools. Their study highlights differences in views related to teacher-student relationships, student participation, and experiences of bullying, ultimately indicating a generally positive learning environment. The concept of school climate has been extensively studied over the years, with numerous researchers demonstrating its impact on both student and teacher performance (Pas et al., 2012). Although definitions vary, school climate is often described as the overall emotional tone and attitudes influenced by the school setting. It is widely recognized as a key element in fostering a supportive and productive educational atmosphere.

In the education literature, students', school personnel's, and parents' experiences of school life socially, emotionally, civically, ethically, and academically represent the school climate (Thapa et al., 2013). Similarly, Grazia et al., (2021) describe the moral, relational, and institutional aspects of school life as school climate dimensions. Therefore, school climate represents a broadly scoped quality and character of school life. It stands as a group phenomenon that includes norms, values, and expectations that support people (S. Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2009).

The commonality of perceptions (Van Vianen et al., 2011) and the teacher–principal relationship (Veletić et al., 2023) represent an important attribute of organizational climate. Moreover, a positive school climate is determined by the presence of trustworthy relationships between school stakeholders which is often cultivated by the principal (Kutsyuruba et al., 2016). Thus, by establishing and maintaining positive school climate and healthy working environment, the school leadership shapes teacher and student outcomes (Özdemir et al., 2024). As such, positive climate also represents an indicator of leadership effectiveness.

A good school climate has multiple benefits, influencing students' affective and cognitive outcomes, such as learning and well-being (Veletić et al., 2023) and also teachers' outcomes, such as beliefs, commitment, and engagement. Furthermore, school climate enhances students' self-concept (Coelho et al., 2020) cognitive engagement, and life satisfaction (Suldo et al., 2022). It is also an inevitable factor for successful learning (Jain et al., 2015).

Statement of Problem

Secondary schools frequently struggle with discipline, cooperation, and teacher–student relationships, all of which directly shape the overall school climate. While teachers are central to creating and experiencing this climate, their voices often remain underexplored in research. Moreover, limited attention has been given to comparing teachers' perspectives across different school contexts. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining and comparing secondary school teachers' views on school climate, aiming to generate insights that can contribute to fostering a healthier and more effective learning environment.

Objectives

- 1: To find out the teachers' prospective about school climate at secondary school level.
- 2: To compare the gender base teachers prospective about school climate at secondary level.

Null Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference of gender base teachers' prospects about school climate at secondary level.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The climate of school is essential characteristic of every school. It is unique to every school. The different research is being conducted on school climate throughout the world due to its importance. The researcher explored the studies on school climate by reviewing the related literature.

Defining School Climate

Defining school climate involves understanding its multifaceted nature, which encompasses the perceptions and experiences of all stakeholders within the educational environment. School climate is characterized by the norms, values, and expectations that foster a sense of safety and support among students, staff, and families (O'Brennan et al., 2015). It is a complex construct that reflects the quality of school life and is influenced by interpersonal relationships, institutional practices, and the physical environment.

Creemers and Kyriakides (2009) explored that school climate is the distinctiveness of communal association budding from members in a school and stuck between the institute and people linking with it, which were professed together unswervingly and ultimately by personnel working in that school. This distinctiveness was the critical pressure to the performance of personnel in working.

Components of School Climate

Researchers have identified four key aspects of organizational climate: ecology, milieu, social system, and culture (J. Cohen et al., 2009). Ecology focuses on the physical environment, including the school building, the surrounding neighborhood, and the general population of the area. Milieu looks at how different groups connected to the school, such as teachers, students, administrators, and parents, perceive their environment. Social system examines the relationships, communication, and interactions between the various people involved in the school.

Culture studies the values and beliefs shared by the individuals and groups in the school community (Anderson et al., 2020). Anderson explained that researchers approach school climate in three main ways. Organizational climate research looks at internal factors, like how teacher behaviors make one school different from another. Effective schools research focuses on what makes some schools more successful than others. School culture research examines the values, attitudes, and beliefs of students, teachers, and principals towards their school. Researchers are still trying to find a clear definition of school climate. According to Crow et al., (2008) school climate includes things like a shared focus on student success, teamwork among staff, open communication between teachers and principals, and a school structure that brings teachers together in their daily work. Bayrak, (2019) described school climate in terms of office referrals, academic performance, teacher morale, and peer interactions.

(Schulte et al., 2003), said school climate is about the sense of community created by the relationships between students and teachers. Holt and Keyes (2004) looked at factors like attitudes toward bullying, levels of hostility, views on diversity, and how rules are set. Furlong et al., (2005) defined school climate as how students feel about their school, especially regarding safety, respect, support, and relationships. A common theme in all these definitions is the importance of social interactions. Specifically, the quality,

frequency, and consistency of relationships between people at school are key to understanding school climate (Furlong, 2005)

Physical Environment

The physical environment of a school includes classrooms, playgrounds, halls, facilities, the library, laboratory, courtyard, and safety measures. Good facilities, well-decorated classrooms, and proper safety measures help improve student learning and achievement ((Pashiardis, 2008b). - *Google Scholar*, n.d.). A safe and attractive environment contributes to a positive school climate, which is also created and maintained by paying attention to the daily activities and routines in the school ((Pashiardis, 2008b). - *Google Scholar*, n.d.). Schools should feel welcome, with posters on the walls, displays of student work, and clean, organized spaces that give a sense of order. The sense of security in the school environment is also strengthened when teachers interact with students throughout the day, whether in the hallways, lunchrooms, or on the playground.

Social Environment

The school environment is shaped by various factors, including the mutual relationships among students, their interactions with teachers, the relationships between teachers, the involvement of parents in the school, and the connection between teachers and the head teacher. The creation and enforcement of rules, the head teacher's interactions with teachers, and the organization of various school activities contribute to the social environment. Additionally, the role of rules, mutual relationships, and reciprocal interactions plays a key role in the social environment ((Pashiardis, 2008b)). Effective relationships between schools and the community are essential for a school's success (Furer & Mitchell Williams, 2003)

Schools that maintain strong connections with parents and their communities are better equipped to access and utilize the valuable resources that the community offers (Furer & Mitchell Williams, 2003). A sense of community within a school is crucial for helping students achieve academic success. Parental involvement, or the involvement of other significant adults, significantly impacts student achievement (Reeves, 2004). Although the positive influence of parental involvement on student success is well recognized by teachers, school leaders, educational policymakers, and parents, educational accountability systems often fail to properly acknowledge this fact (Reeves, 2004).

What keeps the school community united and creates a feeling that everyone involved is part of a family is the shared commitment to achieving the same goals (Sagor, 2009). Effective leadership that makes a real difference in a school fosters a community-centered approach, where staff feel appreciated, and the school encourages collective learning. This type of leadership is both transformational and distributive (Sivaramakrishnan et al., 2021). A community focus means that teachers see the school as having strong, positive relationships with the community, that school leaders are aware of the community's needs, and that the values of the community are reflected in the school.

Learning Environment

The learning environment is shaped by various factors, such as the school's objectives, curriculum, evaluation methods, individual and group work, teachers' behavior in the classroom, homework, and raising awareness among students. The learning environment can be divided into three main components: the curriculum, grouping methods, and teaching behavior (Ali & Siddiqui, 2016).

In schools with a positive learning environment, there is a strong and supportive relationship between students, teachers, and administrators. The school administrators create a positive, friendly, and encouraging atmosphere for both students and staff. Teachers work in a pleasant environment with their colleagues, enjoying their jobs and interacting positively with students. They motivate students to achieve academically and believe that students can perform well and achieve high scores (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002)

Intellectual Environment

The intellectual environment in educational settings refers to the overall atmosphere that promotes intellectual engagement, creativity, critical thinking, and academic development for both students and educators. This environment is influenced by the interactions among individuals, the resources available, and the policies that guide the institution. As stated by Chiang et al., (2015) a strong intellectual environment nurtures a culture of inquiry and collaboration, motivating both students and teachers to explore ideas, address challenges, and innovate. Robbins, (2012) further emphasizes that this environment is crucial in developing students' cognitive and analytical abilities, which are vital for academic achievement and personal growth. Key aspects of the intellectual environment include access to knowledge, opportunities for intellectual exchange, and support for creative practices. Schools that focus on intellectual engagement often incorporate collaborative learning, encourage open communication, and offer avenues for creative expression (Ali & Siddiqui, 2016).

Authoritative school climate theory

Authoritative school climate theory provides a conceptual framework for school climate that can help to identify key features of school climate and their association with positive student outcomes. This developing theory is derived from work by (Smetana et al., (2005) on authoritative parenting that stimulated a large body of child development research (Larzelere et al., 2013). Parenting research has found that authoritative parents provide a combination of high expectations also called demandingness and emotional support also called "responsiveness for their children. High expectations are often measured as strict discipline but can refer to high expectations in other domains such as school achievement. Parents are less effective when they have high expectations but are not supportive (authoritarian), emotionally supportive but lacking high expectations (permissive), or lacking in both expectations and support (disengaged or neglectful). Although there is no expectation that an authoritative school climate is conceptually concordant with authoritative parenting in all respects, there are some parallels that help to organize research on school climate

The authoritative school climate theory posits a model for school climate that centers around two key domains¹ of school climate that promote a safe and supportive environment conducive to learning (Cornell et al., 2016). The first domain concerns high disciplinary and academic expectations for students, which has been referred to as the demandingness or *structure* of the school climate. Do teachers and other school staff members enforce discipline in a strict but fair manner, and do they have high academic expectations for all students to learn and achieve? The second domain concerns the responsiveness or *supportiveness* of teacher-student relationships. Do teachers and other school staff members interact with students in a respectful, caring, and helpful manner? Although these two domains do not encompass all aspects of school climate, there is considerable evidence that they deserve a central role in research on school climate and can provide an assessment of school conditions that is related to student engagement, academic achievement, and positive behavior.

Many studies support the idea that school structure and support deserve a central role in research on school climate. For example, (Johnson, (2009) of 25 studies concluded that “schools with less violence tend to have students who are aware of school rules and believe they are fair” and “have positive relationships with their teachers” (p. 451). Several school climate surveys measure these two domains in some capacity Yang et al (2013), but authoritative school climate theory gives them special prominence. Pellerin (2005) found that high schools using authoritative practices had less truancy and fewer dropouts than schools using an authoritarian approach. An analysis of NELS data found that authoritative schools, characterized as both demanding and responsive, had higher levels of student engagement (Gill et al., 2004a). Larzelere et al (2013) found that an authoritative school climate was associated with higher student engagement and reading achievement.

Other studies have used different conceptual frameworks that nevertheless reflect the role of authoritative characteristics. For example, Wang & Eccles, (2013) investigated how school climate characteristics were associated with different types of student engagement in a sample of 1,157 middle school students. Most notably, “school structure support” (defined as the clarity and consistency of teacher expectations) and “teacher emotional support” (defined as level of care and support from teachers) were associated with behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Prior to the current project, our research group at the University of Virginia began work to develop scales to measure authoritative school climate. This effort was undertaken in a statewide survey of 7,318 ninth grade students and 2,922 teachers in 290 Virginia high schools conducted in the spring of 2007. Confirmatory factor analyses identified two factors consistent with the authoritative model (Gregory et al., 2010). Student survey measures of disciplinary structure and student support were associated with less peer victimization Gill et al., (2004) lower levels of student aggression toward teachers (Gregory et al., 2010) and lower suspension rates (Gregory et al. 2011). These studies demonstrated positive associations between school climate and student outcomes across a large and diverse group of schools, controlling school demographics of enrollment size, ethnic and racial composition, and percentage of students receiving a free or reduced-price meal (a commonly used proxy for school-level socioeconomic status).

Related study

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of this investigation was to Teachers prospective about school climate within the context of secondary education in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). The methodology utilized a survey approach for the purpose of data acquisition. This inquiry concentrated on a singular variable, with data collected through a meticulously designed survey instrument. Descriptive statistical techniques, encompassing the computation of the mean, alongside inferential analysis via T-test, were employed to assess Teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level: A comparative study.

Population of the study

The population of the study comprised of males and females secondary school teacher of District Kotli. There were 110 secondary school teachers.

Sample of the study

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) sample of 15-50% is an accurate research study from the population. The sample size was 86 from the whole population.

Analysis and Results

Table 1: Mean of school Climate

Statements	Mean
Physical Environment	3.5988
Learning Environment	4.0930
Intellectual Environment	3.8500
Social Environmental	3.5651

The results in the table show that teachers view the overall school climate at the secondary level as positive, but with differences across its aspects. The learning environment received the highest mean score (4.09), indicating that teachers strongly agree it is supportive and effective for students' learning. The intellectual environment also scored fairly high (3.85), suggesting that schools provide good opportunities for critical thinking and creativity. The physical environment (3.59) was rated moderately,

showing that while facilities and infrastructure are acceptable, they need further improvement. The social environment received the lowest mean score (3.56), highlighting that relationships, cooperation, and respect among students and staff require more attention. Overall, the results show that while the learning environment is a strength of schools, more effort is needed to improve the physical and social aspects of the school climate.

Table 2: T test for Physical Environment of school climate

Gender	N	Mean	DF	T	Sig
Male	40	3.8925	84	.853	.396
Female	46	3.8130			

The table compares male and female teachers' perspectives on the physical environment of school climate. Male teachers had a slightly higher mean score (3.89) compared to female teachers (3.81). However, the t-test value (.853) and the significance level (.396) show that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. This means that both male and female teachers generally share the same opinion about the physical environment of schools, and gender does not make a meaningful difference in their views.

Table 3: T test for Learning Environment of school Climate

Gender	N	Mean	DF	T	Sig
Male	40	4.2275	84	3.074	.003
Female	46	3.8978			

The table compares male and female teachers' perspectives on the learning environment of school climate. Male teachers reported a higher mean score (4.23) compared to female teachers (3.89). The t-test value (3.074) with a significance level of .003 indicates that this difference is statistically significant. This means male and female teachers do not share the same opinion about the learning environment; male teachers perceive it more positively than female teachers.

Table 4: T test for Intellectual Environment of school Climate

Gender	N	Mean	DF	T	Sig
Male	40	3.8925	84	.853	.396
Female	46	3.8130			

The table presents the comparison of male and female teachers' views on the intellectual environment of school climate. Male teachers had a slightly higher mean score (3.89) compared to female teachers (3.81). However, the t-test value (.853) with a significance level of .396 shows that the difference is not statistically significant. This means both male and female teachers have nearly the same opinion about the intellectual environment, and gender does not influence their perspective in this area.

Table 5: T test for Social Environment of school Climate

Gender	N	Mean	DF	T	Sig
Male	40	4.1675	84	2.503	.014
Female	46	3.7630			

The table compares male and female teachers' perspectives on the social environment of school climate. Male teachers reported a higher mean score (4.16) than female teachers (3.76). The t-test value (2.503) with a significance level of .014 indicates that this difference is statistically significant. This means gender does influence teachers' views on the social environment, with male teachers perceiving it more positively than female teachers.

Table 6: T test of school Climate

Gender	N	Mean	DF	T	Sig
Male	40	1.6180	84	2.471	.015
Female	46	1.5287			

Table 6 shows the overall comparison of male and female teachers' views about the school climate at the secondary level. The results indicate that male teachers (Mean = 1.61) rated the overall school climate slightly higher than female teachers (Mean = 1.52). The t-test value (2.471) and the significance level (.015) show that this difference is statistically significant. This means that male and female teachers do not have the same opinion about the overall school climate. Male teachers see the school climate more positively than female teachers. The null hypothesis is rejected, because the difference between male and female teachers' opinions is statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir analysis of school Climate at secondary school level. This research was conducted to find out the Teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level. The 1st objective of the research is "To find out the teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level. After applying this it was concluded that, Teachers believe that the overall school climate at the secondary level is good, but not equally strong in all areas. They see the learning environment as the strongest part because it supports students' education and improves their learning. However, the physical facilities and social relationships among teachers and students are seen as weaker and in need of more attention. According to Gunbayi (2007) As a result of the analyzes, all the teachers reported (Wong et al., 2021) open climate in relation to the factors of team commitment, organizational clarity and standards, intimacy and support , autonomy, member conflict, medium climate in relation to the factors of risk and in reward.

2nd objective of the research was "To compare the gender base teachers prospective about school climate at secondary level. After applying this, it was concluded that, male and female teachers have different views about the school climate. Male teachers see it more positively, while female teachers have a less positive view. This difference may be because male teachers feel more supported, while female teachers

face challenges like less participation or fewer resources. Overall, the results show that school climate is not the same for both genders, and female teachers' concerns need more attention. According to Wong et al (2021) School climate, and particularly an authoritative school environment, is strongly associated with better social-emotional health among adolescents. Relationships with teachers and their disciplinary style may be a focus for future interventions to improve the social-emotional health of children.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the result researcher has drawn the conclusion from the analyzed the data from the below of the study "Teachers prospective about school climate at secondary school level."

1. The findings show that teachers think the overall school climate at the secondary level is generally good, but not equally strong in all areas. They believe that the learning environment is the strongest part because it supports students' education and helps them achieve better results. However, they feel that the physical conditions of schools and the social relationships among students and teachers are weaker and need more attention. This difference may be because schools focus more on teaching and academic activities, while issues like improving school facilities and building healthy relationships are often given less importance.
2. The findings show that male and female teachers have different opinions about the overall school climate at the secondary level. Male teachers generally view the school climate more positively, while female teachers have a less positive view. This means that gender influences how teachers feel about the environment in which they work. The null hypothesis, which stated that there is no difference between male and female teachers' perspectives, is rejected because a clear difference was found. One possible reason for this difference is that male and female teachers may face different experiences in schools. Male teachers might feel more comfortable and supported in areas such as decision-making, use of facilities, or social interactions, which could make them view the school climate more favorably. Female teachers, on the other hand, may face challenges such as unequal participation in decision-making, limited access to resources, or social and cultural expectations, which might make them more critical of the school climate. Another reason could be differences in sensitivity; female teachers may be more observant of problems in the social and physical environment, while male teachers may focus more on positive aspects. Overall, these results highlight that the school climate is not experienced equally by male and female teachers, and steps may be needed to address the concerns of female teachers so that the environment feels supportive and positive for everyone.

RECOMMENDATION

1. It was recommended that school leaders may be involved both male and female teachers equally in planning and decision-making so that female teachers feel valued and their voices are heard.
2. It was recommended that schools might make sure that teaching materials, facilities, and support services are equally available to male and female teachers, reducing feelings of inequality.
3. It was recommended that Administrators may be encouraging teamwork, respect, and collaboration among staff to improve relationships, especially addressing the concerns of female teachers about the school climate.

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