School Climate: dimensions and influences

Leticia Peressinoto (IC) and Telma Pileggi Vinha (Advisor - PQ), UNICAMP/FE

Abstract

The IC research is an exploratory and detailed study, aiming to disclose the perception of students, teachers and Elementary School II school managers on the climate of public institutions, investigating if there are differences among schools, and identifying which dimensions in a school environment are positive, negative or neutral. With that in mind, surveys have been established and published to evaluate the school climate among teachers and students in 7th and 9th grade in 4 School Districts.

Key words: School Climate, School Life, School Community Perceptions.

Introduction

The school climate is understood as the set of perceptions of the educational institution that usually unveil the factors related to the organization – educational and administrative structures – in addition to human relationships that occur at school. It influences the quality of life and productivity of teachers and students and allows us to know aspects of morality that permeate relationships in school. Despite being widely studied in other countries for decades, research on school climate is still recent in Brazil. Many teachers and administrators are unaware of the dimensions that comprise the climate and its influence on the school.

Results and Discussion

The results indicate that the sample mood is predominantly positive and neutral. Overall, perceptions about the climate showed that schools perceive as positive dimensions involving the management and relationships with work, as well as the teaching and learning process and social relations and conflicts. Areas that refer to relationships with family and the school, the infrastructure and the physical network of the institution were perceived as more negative.

There were discrepancies in perceptions between schools that are part of the same school system. This is because despite the structure and curriculum being similar and both being located in suburbs, each school has its own and unique climate. This “collective personality” of each center reflects the influence of the underlying institutionalized values and belief systems, norms, ideologies and traditions that make up the school culture.

The finding results confirm the importance of investigating the school climate: very important information was identified allowing to analyze what is going well and not so well. It is possible to know what can and should be improved, facilitating the choice of areas in which the school wants to guide actions. It also shows that everyone’s opinion is important; encouraging them to express it. This meets the recommendations of several studies to insert such discussions in the training of our teachers and that schools be oriented on how they can make inquiries about its climate, analyze the data and build collective intervention proposals.

Conclusions

To promote a more positive school climate, it is necessary to investigate the current environment which allows for the planning and implementation of such. For this to happen, it is necessary to have management, school actors, family and the community all together participate by exercising dialogue and collective work.

Acknowledgement

I’m grateful to my parents and siblings; to my teacher advisor Telma Pileggi Vinha; to the GEPEM classmates and PIBIC / CNPq.


This study includes the research: “Searching ways to promote respectful coexistence in the classrooms every day: understanding the school climate”, by Dr. Telma Vinha, with support from FAPESP and Fundação Lemann, looking to build and validate the right way to better evaluate the School Environment which occurs in schools in Brazil.