SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT AFFECTIVE NEEDS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF FOUR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

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Research has demonstrated that school climate has a significant impact on several student outcomes. Positive school climate is associated with the development of positive self-concept in students, increased feelings of attachment and commitment to the school, and overall satisfaction with the school experience. This study described the school climate of four urban junior high schools, with specific attention to climate factors related to the affective development of students. The sample consisted of 506 Grade 9 students. Students' perceptions of their school's climate were measured with a standard climate questionnaire, the Effective School Battery. In addition, the principals of each school were interviewed in order to provide additional insight into the school's philosophy of education, school policies, and other aspects related to affective school climate. The data collected was used to determine if junior high schools exhibited school climates which addressed the affective needs of their students.

The student responses indicated generally positive feelings about their schools. The four schools rated high to average in the areas of Safety, Planning and Action, Clarity of Rules, Extra-curricular Program, and Student Influence. Areas in which the majority of schools rated

below average or low included Respect for Students, and School Rewards. Interviews with principals revealed that affective development was considered to be an important component of junior high education. In addition, principals tended to suppot the findings from the student surveys.

The findings illustrate that these schools have generally positive school climates as perceived by the students. Students feel comfortable and secure in the school environment, are aware of the rules guiding their behavior and tend to be involved in a variety of school activities. The areas which schools need to improve include increasing positive reinforcement and rewards for students, and ensuring that students feel they are treated with respect and dignity in their interactions with school personnel.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A recurring theme in literature on school effectiveness is the concept of school climate. Although difficult to define and complex in structure, this aspect of organizations is, none the less, essential to one's understanding of the effects of schooling on children. Wilson and McGrail (1987) stated, "There is evidence from both the research and school communities that conditions of climate are associated with important outcomes of schooling" (p. 11). School climate studies enable researchers to adopt a more holistic focus when examining schools, and to probe more deeply into the internal life of schools (Anderson, 1982). In addition, there is increasing evidence that aspects of climate are related to student outcomes of an affective nature, such as self-concept, and satisfaction with school life. Fraser, Williamson, and Tobin (1987) stressed the importance of incorporating climate variables into school evaluations because of their effects on psychosocial aspects of schools. It is imperative that educational researchers examine closely the area of school climate, in order to determine those components of climate which contribute to the development of students not only intellectually, but socially and emotionally as well.

Anderson (1982) suggested that the concept of school climate tends to be defined more intuitively than

empirically. It is often described in terms of "feeling" or "atmosphere" of a school. However, school climate is a recognizable component of schools, it can be both described and analyzed, and it does have significant effects on many student outcomes, including cognitive and affective behavior (Anderson, 1980).

Education today involves more than just providing a child with appropriate intellectual stimulation. The concept of teaching the "whole child" brings with it the additional responsibility of providing for the affective needs of students. Research demonstrates a consistent relationship between the satisfaction of student affective needs and other important outcomes of schooling (Reasoner, 1983). For example, the enhancement of students' self-concept is associated with scholastic achievement (Shavelson, 1982), and improvements in student behavior and attitudes (Dorman, 1985).

The provision of positive school climate is one method by which the goal of affective development of the child can be achieved. Bachman and O'Malley (1986) stated that student affective needs are affected by the overall school environment or school climate. In addition, Poole (1984) reported that students themselves are aware of and respond to school climate, and are able to express their desires for climates that meet their affective needs. Serow and Jackson (1985) stated:

> Schools that provide tangible indications of student worth, and schools that encourage emotional, physical, social, as well as academic growth are... more effective than schools that simply receive students, process them, and send them on their way (p. 22).

It is through description and analysis of school climates that educational researchers can provide insights into how schools may address the affective needs of students. The influence of environment on various aspects of individuals has long been accepted by organizational climate researchers. The description of school climate variables which influence student development is an important and necessary field as educators continue to search for methods to provide effective education to all students and in all areas of the developing child.

Research Questions

It was the purpose of this study to examine school climate in terms of meeting the affective needs of students. This research was primarily descriptive, using student perceptions of school climate as measured by a standard climate measurement instrument. Additional information on components related to school climate was obtained through semi-structured interviews with school principals. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are Grade 9 students' perceptions of their school's climate?
2. Do schools have climates designed to meet the affective needs of students?

Elements of the Study

School climate components related to affective development in students were determined from an extensive review of research literature, as described in Chapter 2 of this report. The school climate components to be measured were:

1. Extra-curricular program
2. Student involvement in decision-making
3. Student-teacher relationships
4. Discipline, reward and punishment systems
5. Physical Environment

Significance of the Study

The description of school climate is one method by which schools can analyze the extent to which they are addressing the affective needs of students. This research illustrated one approach to the study of school climate and provided insight into four schools and their respective climates. Another essential component in the study of school climate and student affective needs concerns the variables to be considered for analysis. This research provided a list of climate dimensions related to the

affective needs of junior high students. In addition, this study focused on student perceptions of school climate, thereby providing another dimension to the description of school climate.

Affective needs of students have not been sufficiently addressed in school climate research. Anderson (1982) in her review of the research included a summary of forty major school climate studies. Of these, twenty-three measured the effect of school climate on cognitive characteristics, such as academic performance. Student satisfaction was a variable in two studies; student self-concept appeared as a variable in one study. It would appear that the relationship between school climate and student affective needs is in need of further attention.

Manor (1987) stated, "Because the school is a very powerful agent in the process of socialization and development of the future citizen in society, the importance of both school environment and the school's congruence with their students' needs are very important issues for further research" (p. 188). In addition, Fenn and Iwanicki (1986) in their study of the relationship between student affective characteristics and student achievement concluded, "If, however, administrative and instructional variables are indeed mediated by student affective characteristics, then it is imperative that educators examine affective factors further" (p. 17).

This study involved gathering data on perceptions of school climate from students. Gersser and Wolf Jr. (1983) referred to the need to question adolescents about their views on school and teachers. They further concluded, "...no study on school life could be considered complete without the information that can be supplied directly from one of the best data sources available, the recipients of the educational process" (p. 216). The importance of considering student perceptions of school was also expressed by Genn (1984), and Deer, Maxwell and Relich (1986). Student perceptions are essential to a complete understanding of a school's effectiveness.

This study addressed aspects of school climate which are still in need of additional investigation. Student perceptions of schools can provide interesting insights into school climate as perceived by adolescents. Since students are, ultimately, the focus of the educational process, this research provided additional insight into both their needs and their perceptions of the institutions in which education is meant to take place.

Definition of Terms

Affective Needs - Those aspects of early adolescent development having to do with emotions, feelings, values and attitudes. In this study, special emphasis was placed on adolescent needs to feel a part of something, to have some power over their environment,

to be respected by those around them, to feel safe and secure, and to express their individuality.

School Climate - The total environmental quality within a school building, including physical aspects, social relationships, methods of operation, rules and belief systems.

Delimitations and Limitations

The following delimitations apply to this research:

1. This study was carried out in one urban centre and concentrated on urban junior high school students.
2. The sample for this research was limited to Grade 9 students. Perceptions of other age groups may differ.
3. This study used a standard measurement instrument as the primary means of data collection. Other methods of data collection including observation, biographical reports or interviews may not yield identical results.
4. This study focused on certain specific affective needs. Other affective components of student perceptions of school climate are outside the scope of this research.
5. This study focused on selected aspects of school climate. It is possible that other aspects, such as, classroom climate, may affect student perceptions of the overall school climate.
6. This study focused on the description of school climates. No attempt was made to determine correlations between school climate and other student variables.

The following limitations apply to this research:

1. The classes involved in this study were volunteered by teachers from each school. Responses from volunteered classes may not be representative of the entire school population.

2. The questionnaire was distributed to students in classroom groups. Therefore, the sample was not completely random.
3. The instrument for this study was designed and tested in the United States of America. The norm group on which analysis of data is based consists of urban American schools.

Summary

This research describes school climate as it relates to student affective needs. Educators must consider the satisfaction of student affective needs as one educational goal. Student affective needs can be significantly addressed through the school's climate. This study focused on student perceptions of their school's climate as measured by a standard climate survey questionnaire. The significance of this study rests on its concentration on student perceptions and on student affective needs, two area of school effectiveness research that are in need of further analysis.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

It is the purpose of this literature review to focus first on the concept of affective needs of adolescents, and the importance of addressing these needs in an educational environment. Next, the field of school climate research will be examined, including the question of how best to measure school climate. Finally, the relationship between student affective needs and school climate will be examined.

The Affective Needs of Young Adolescents

The importance of addressing more than the child's intellectual development becomes particularly significant during the turbulent years of early adolescence. Adolescence, that period of time between childhood and adulthood, is one of the least understood periods of development. The study of early adolescents tends to be somewhat neglected by researchers (Lipsitz, 1977), perhaps due to the uncertain nature of the adolescent. Dramatic changes in the physical, emotional, social and intellectual realm make this period of development both challenging and unpredictable. In addition, children reach puberty at different ages and develop at different rates, making generalizations about this group even more difficult. From the onset of puberty until the age of fourteen or fifteen,

young people experience particularly dramatic changes. The diversity within this group, as well as their individual differences is reflected in the inability of researchers to agree on a common descriptor by which to identify children at this stage. The literature uses a variety of terms, including "early adolescents", "young adolescents", and "pre-adolescents" (Teopfer, 1986). Eichorn (1976) developed the term "transescence" to describe, "...the stage of development which begins prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescence" (p. 3). For the purpose of this study, the term "early adolescent" will be used to describe children between the ages of ten and fourteen, who are enrolled in grades 7 through 9. It is during this stage of development that the student experiences rapid physical, social, emotional and cognitive changes.

Each of the changes which a child undergoes during the years of early adolescence brings with it accompanying challenges and difficulties. Physical development, one of the first to occur, causes children to become preoccupied with their physical self. Anxieties about growing "too fast" or "too slow", or about looking different, and general feelings of awkwardness create tensions for the early

adolescent.

The development of the child's social self closely parallels physical change. The peer group achieves more distinction in the child's life, as the early adolescent discovers that those who share common physical size and social-emotional development have similiar interests and concerns. Desire for new independence conflicts with the need for guidance and structure in their lives. The early adolescent requires an environment with the appropriate combination of authority and freedom, of challenge and security, in order to facilitate social and emotional growth.

Emotional development, often characterized by mood swings, is another component of the developing adolescent. McEwin and Thomason (1982) referred to the emergence of general fears; about being unliked, being ridiculed, or being a failure. Early adolescents become idealistic and, therefore, critical of both themselves and others. Often, the adolescent is at a loss to explain or cope with these emotions and, once again, requires the guidance and support of a caring and supportive environment.

Closely related to the child's social and emotional development is the formation of a positive self-concept.

"The significance of self-esteem for mental and physical health, academic achievement, job satisfaction and success in life is becoming increasingly evident. Many parents and teachers consider self-esteem to be more important than the acquisition of basic scholastic skills" (Reasoner, 1983, p. 52). As early as 1971, Zinkl stated that "...the schools have a fundamental responsibility to enhance the self-concepts of their students" (p. 211). Maslow (1979) stated, "...schools should make provision for the attainment of self concept" (p. 268). Finally, the recently revised Alberta Junior High School Health Curriculum (1986) includes self-concept development, as well as dealing with emotional and social development as part of the on-going Health program for schools. Clearly, the affective growth of early adolescents is valued as an educational outcome.

The Importance of Meeting Students' Affective Needs

The term "affect" refers to those aspects of human nature and conduct having to do with emotions, feelings, values, attitudes, predispositions, and morals (Beane, 1987,p. 26). The importance of recognizing and providing for the affective development of students, both as an end in itself and as a means to other ends has been suggested by a variety of authors, including Beane (1986), Glasser (1987),

Tierno (1983), Houlihan (1983) and Sarokan (1986). Wallich (1980) stated, "In a society with a technological complex and a passion for information and facts, we have neglected the most important variables for the determination of our own future...the affective area which relates to humane development of humans" (p.5).

Research has also demonstrated a relationship between student self-concept and academic achievement (Shavelson and Bolus, 1982; Brookover, 1965; Purkey, 1970). Reasoner, (1983) reported that self-esteem is related to creative behavior and leadership activity in students. In addition, the relationship between student attitudes toward school and achievement is also becoming apparent. Dorman et al (1985) reported on the use of the Middle Grades Assessment Program in a San Francisco middle school. The program is designed to assess how well a school is working, and provide guidelines for improvement. Following extensive interviews with parents, teachers, administration, and students, and observation of the school's environment, the research team presented the administration with a list of priorities for improvement. These included improving structure and limits for students, and enhancing student participation in the school organization. The researchers reported substantial

improvements in student behavior and attitude following the implementation of programs designed to address these special needs. The researchers concluded,"Perhaps the most important lasting effect of the Middle Grades Assessment Program process...is the intention of building a school that considers both academic effectiveness and developmental responsiveness" (p.49).

Students who are more satisfied with their schools are also more likely to remain in schools and to exhibit fewer behavior difficulties. School programs that stress interpersonal communication and empathy between students and teachers result in fewer disciplinary problems and an increase in overall academic achievement, as discussed in a report of 130 middle schools in the United States (George and Oldaker, 1985). In addition, Yamoto (1969) and Morse (1964) concluded that feelings of alienation and failure in the school setting can lead to a loss of motivation, dependency on drugs and alcohol and a desire to drop out of school. Pawlowich (1985) reported on the relationship between school climate and school dropouts and reported that schools which placed a higher emphasis on controlled behavior were rated more negatively than schools with a more student-centered approach. It appears that if schools

recognize the importance of developing students' feelings of security, acceptance, personal identity and positive self-concepts, the affective aspects of a students' development, then they are more likely to fulfill the goal of educating not only for the present, but for the future. "What needs to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the nature and quality of learning experiences" (Barth, 1986, p. 296).

One study that demonstrated the long term impact of a student-centered school environment was conducted at the Bancroft School in California using a model to build motivation and self-esteem developed by Coopersmith (1983). The staff of the school worked at creating an environment that was intended to be conducive to both academic excellence and the development of self-esteem. Data collected over a period of two years demonstrated that students became more self-confident, happy, and purposeful as the program within the school continued. In addition, when these students moved on to high school, they continued to demonstrate leadership roles, have fewer discipline problems and were judged by their teachers to be better adjusted psychologically than their peers from other schools. A change in the school climate, therefore, had

significant effect on the subsequent development of these students.

Student self-concepts are heavily influenced by their environments (Bachman and O'Malley, 1986). Since the school is an important social context for the developing adolescent, one may expect that school climate will be an important determinant in the development of the early adolescents' affective qualities. Gilmore, (1974) stated, "There is every reason to believe that the characteristics which underlie productivity can be acquired by any child, in any environment, given the basic conditions conducive to the development of self-esteem" (p. 236).

Therefore, it is important for schools to examine their school climates in order to determine if they are, indeed, addressing the affective needs of young adolescents. In their survey of middle schools, George and Oldaker (1985) stated, "There is evidence from both research and school communities that conditions of climate are associated with important outcomes of schooling" (p. 11).

The Importance of School Climate

The concept of school climate, suggested Wallich (1980), is a relatively intangible, yet none the less, recognizable aspect of schools. "As any teacher or school

executive moves from one school to another, he/she is inexorably struck by the difference he/she encounters in organizational climate" (Wallich, 1980, p. 3). Hoy and Miskal (1982) defined school climate as, "The set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behavior of people in it" (p. 185).

One particularly comprehensive description of school climate was discussed by Anderson (1982) in her review of school climate research. This definition of climate utilizes the taxonomy of climate-related terms developed by Tagiuri (1968). Tagiuri included the following dimensions of an environment: Ecology (the physical and material aspects); Milieu (the social dimension concerned with the presence of persons or groups); Social System (concerned with patterned relationships) and Culture (belief systems, values and cognitive structures) (p. 369). These categories provide a comprehensive assessment of school climate and also demonstrate the interactive process of school climate on student outcomes. This model of school climate "...reflects the growing consensus of many climate researchers that school climate includes the total environmental quality within a school building" (Anderson, 1982, p.3).

Although specific definitions of school climate may differ, the importance of this component on student affective development has been outlined in research by Edmonds (1982), Lieberman (1984), and Sapone (1983). In one investigation of school climate, Diebert and Hoy (1984) outlined two types of schools: humanistic and custodial. The custodial school is characterized by a concern for order, achievement procedures, student stereotyping, punitive sanctions, and impersonalness. In contrast, the humanistic school represents democratic procedures, student participation in decision making, personalness, respect, self-discipline, interactions and flexibility. Generally, schools with a humanistic orientation tend to assist students more effectively in achieving a sense of self-esteem. This conclusion is supported by Bloomer (1986) who also stated that more effective middle schools are ones in which students feel wanted, needed and worthy.

Students themselves respond to school climate and are able to express their interests and desires for more effective schools. In 1986, Phi Delta Kappa and the Centre for Survey Research at Indiana University surveyed 1,712 high school seniors in 421 high schools across the country. The majority of students reported that they do not get enough opportunity to discuss school problems, and are not given enough responsibility for judging the behavior of fellow students. In addition, students felt their abilities

to help in problem-solving were not being tapped by the school. Clearly, these students were expressing a lack of fulfillment of their needs for both independence, and participation in the school environment.

In another study by Poole (1984) of 1,596 students from 32 Australian schools, students responded in essay form to the topic "The School That I Would Like". Students expressed a desire to have more say in decision-making processes in the school, particularly on issues that directly affected them, such as, rules and discipline. In addition, they expressed a desire for improved interpersonal communication between students and staff and wanted the physical environment to be modern, comfortable, bright and functional. The author concluded, "The data suggest that adolescents are keen to hasten the process of transition from adolescence to adulthood in areas such as independence and autonomy, participation in decision making, being accorded more adult status...and making judgements concerning the relevance of curricula to their perceived future vocational roles" (p. 457-458).

It is possible to define climate factors which influence a child's affective development. Brookover (1978) suggested six factors affecting self-esteem: challenge, freedom to make choices, respect, warmth, control and success. Coopersmith (1967) also noted the importance of security, acceptance and respect in developing self-concept.

In terms of climate, the following characteristics have been suggested as conducive to affective development: positive interaction and personal concern (Beane, 1986; Glickman, 1987; Glasser, 1987), opportunity to participate in decision making (McEwin and Thomason, 1982), and a comprehensive extra-curricular program (Curran, 1983; Brannon, Parrish and Brannon, 1983).

Measuring School Climate

School climate study is a fairly complex field, burdened by a vast array of definitions and approaches. School climate research draws on information from both organizational climate research and school effects research. Instruments, theory, and methods of research from both areas are often related to school climate study. However, despite this relationship, school climate research can be distinguished as a separate area of study (Anderson, 1982).

Although the study of school climate is desireable for the insights it can provide into effective education, the difficulties facing researchers are noteable. Anderson (1980) stated, "The difficulties of measurement, variable selection and control and statistical analysis are so overwhelming that some researchers have given up the search for school climate as a holistic entity" (p. 371). On the other hand, Wilson (1980) and Rutten (1980) suggested that difficulties in school climate research relate to the variables chosen for study. School climate research may

still be in the developmental stages, but the potential usefulness of the accumulated findings encourages further study in this area.

Deer (1980) outlined four methods of studying school climate: field observation, perceptions of individuals, application of objective indices, and experimental manipulation of environments. The second of these is the method most commonly used in studies of school climate.

> Such measurements give a different type of detail from that obtained by an outside observer, who, however skilled, can have only limited contact. The individual member of the organization has perceptions based on experience over a much longer time period than that of the outside observer. This approach is obviously more convenient than the use of field studies (p.29).

A variety of standardized survey instruments are available for school climate study. These include the classic Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) (Halpin and Croft, 1963), The School Survey (SS) (Coughlan, 1970), the Quality of School Life (QSL) (Epstein and McPartland, 1976), and the Effective School Battery (EFB) (Gottfredson, 1984). The last two instruments, in particular, can be applied to measurement of those

components of school climate associated with the affective development of students.

Climate Variables Related to Affective Devlopment

Based on extensive review of the school effectiveness research literature, the following characteristics of school climate related to the affective development of students were the focus of this research:

(1) Participatory methods of operation and decision making
(2) Positive interpersonal relationships within the school
(3) Humanistic orientation to discipline and rewards
(4) Strong extra-curricular program
(5) Attractive and safe physical environment

Participation in decision making.

One of the first requirements of an effective school must be to provide an environment in which students feel wanted, needed and worthy (Bloomer, 1986). Students in the middle years are painfully aware that their attendance at school is not a matter of personal choice. As new desires for independence emerge, it is not surprising that these adolescents feel constrained and restricted in the school environment, and may react with frustration and rebellion. To concentrate, therefore, on maintaining rigid standards of conduct, or to respond to students with authoritarianism only frustrates their growing independence. However, it is one of the paradoxes of adolescence that, at a time when students are testing their boundaries and searching for

identity, they are also in need of visible standards and well-defined limits (Reasoner, 1986). The ideal junior high school climate, therefore, is one which satisfies this need for security, with clear rules of conduct, but also allows for some input on the part of students.

Humanistic schools place a premium on supportive relationships and participatory methods of operation. Young adolescents require some participation in decision making in order to develop feelings of identification and personal worth in the school environment. Wallich (1980) stated, "Every person cherishes the opportunity to contribute his/her ideas and know they have been considered" (p.33). Many schools recognize this need through the creation of a student's council, in which students use democratic principles to plan and conduct student activities. In addition, students are taught to take ownership of any problems or conflicts which may arise as a result of decisions. This group involvement in decision making is another method of meeting student's affective needs (Sarokan, 1986). In addition, allowing students opportunities to participate in decisions concerning the school aids in developing students' internal locus of control. Rather then feeling that they are controlled by outside forces, students can feel they have some control over what happens to them. This feeling of committment and power in the school environment is one essential aspect in

the affective development of students.

Interpersonal relationships.

The importance of interpersonal relationships in middle schools cannot be over-emphasized. At a time of intense emotional changes, often characterized by conflicts with parents and peers, it is often to the school that the student turns for support and security in relationships. Humanistic schools place a premium on respect for individual dignity, constructive interactions and acceptance of each person as worthy and unique. Particularly important for young adolescents, whose self-concepts are easily shattered, the school must be characterized as a place where students need not fear humiliation or censure as they experiment with new roles and self-concepts. Studies have illustrated that students in schools which place a premium on "supportive environments" achieve higher self-concept and self-esteem (Beane, 1986; Reasoner, 1986). Glasser (1987) also speaks of the necessity of satisfying the young adolescent's need for love before one can concentrate on academic success. The most viable, productive schools are those where interactions among participants are based on trust and respect (Houlihan, 1983).

Humanistic orientation to discipline and rewards

It is part of the reality of life that actions are followed by consequences, both positive and negative. As students develop independence, they are more likely to

become involved in activities that may skirt and sometimes defy school rules. Therefore, an important component of an effective school is in the response to student behavior.

Effective junior high school teachers like and understand adolescents, and are prepared to be flexible and receptive when confronted with young adolescents' personality quirks and emotional crises. These teachers are interested in students personally, and, although they encourage hard effort, are also aware of the other stresses which students experience at this age level (Beane, 1986). Adolescents are particularly sensitive to embarrassment in front of peers, and have a highly developed sense of injustice. Therefore, an effective disciplinary action must take into account the fragile ego of the students involved. Students must feel that, although they are being reprimanded or punished, they are still being treated fairly and honestly. Beane (1986) described the necessary approach as "flexible and forgiving". McEwin and Thomason (1982) also stated, "If there is ever an example of moment-to-moment decision making, thinking on one's feet, it must be in teaching grades four to nine" (p..6).

Strong extra-curricular program

As previously mentioned, one characteristic of young adolescents is their diversity. Effective schools, therefore, must meet the varied needs and interests of students at differing degrees of maturity. In addition, a

school climate based on participation and interaction with both teachers and peers enhances the affective development of children. A strong extra-curricular program is, therefore, an important component in a junior high school (Curran, 1983; Brannon, Parrish & Brannon, 1983).

A variety of activities should be offered to students in order to fulfill young adolescents' needs to explore their talents and discover their full potential. Activities ideally include sporting teams and creative and academic clubs. These activities allow students to experiment and explore without the threat of academic failure. Furthermore, participation should not be contingent on performance in the classroon. It is important to allow students to be successful in some area of school, even if they are not successful on their report cards. For some students, the drama stage or the basketball court may be their only self-concept building opportunity.

In addition, extra-curricular activities allow students and teachers to interact cooperatively in informal situations. Deller (1984) suggested that in order to promote an effective school climate, both teachers and students should enjoy their time in school. He suggested that opportunities for cooperative effort, such as, fund-raising projects, sporting events or shared leisure activities can promote positive feelings about the school. Allowing students to interact with teachers outside the regular

classroom tasks is conducive to increased mutual understanding and respect.

Safe and attractive environment.

Finally, a positive climate is also established and maintained through careful attention to the daily workings of the school. Schools should be pleasant places to be in; posters on the walls, displays of student work, and clean, neat environments that project a feeling of orderliness. The security aspect of the environment is reinforced by having teachers interact with students throughout the day, in hallways, lunchrooms and on the field. According to Reasoner (1986) students need to feel physically secure in the school environment. Edmonds (1983) stated, "In an efective school, teachers take responsibility for all students, all the time, everywhere in the school" (p. 14).

In a recent article on school reform Barth (1986) suggested that schools have succumbed to the "list logic" conception of educational improvement, where one prepares a list of criteria for effectiveness and then attempts to make schools match the list. Instead, he suggested, it is time to look at schools as communities of learners, a place where all participants work together, cooperatively, to discover and rediscover the joys of learning. This approach suggests an awareness of the place of affective qualities in education. School climates that promote positive relationships between adults and students, and that

recognize the importance of affective learning are essential to the improvement of educational institutions.

Summary

Educators and educational researchers are constantly in search of information on how to enable schools to meet the needs of students and the goals of education. This search has recently led researchers to investigate the importance of affective education, in addition to the traditional concern with academic achievement in schools. Affective needs are those qualities of an individual having to do with feelings, emotions, values and attitudes. Research has demonstrated a relationship between the satisfaction of student affective needs and other variables, such as, academic success, positive self-concept, and behavior. One method of addressing the affective needs of students is through a school climate which is humanistic and responsive to these special needs of adolescents. It is possible to measure school climate through the use of standard climate instruments designed to measure aspects of school climate related to the affective development of students. School climate and the affective needs of students are, therefore, two dimensions of educational research which are interrelated. The investigation of school climates conducive to affective development of students is an essential component of educational research in this era.

CHAPTER 3

Method

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate student perceptions of school climates, with specific attention to climate components related to the satisfaction of students' affective needs. This study focused on the description of school climates. The primary method of data collection was through the use of a standard climate measurement instrument. Additional data was collected through interviews with school administrators.

A similar study has been conducted by Deer (1980) in Australia. Deer investigated both pupil and teacher perceptions of school climate using four measurement instruments. Student perceptions were collected from 1,457 students in Year 9 of their schooling. Statistical analysis was used to indicate differences in school climates among the ten schools in the study. In addition, a hierarchical grouping technique was used to group the schools according to similarities in climate. Deer (1980) concluded that pupil and teacher perceptions of school climate can be adequately measured and that schools do differ in the way the social and emotional needs of students are met.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the specific procedures involved in this research. The following format

will be used in this chapter:

(1) description of the sample

(2) outline of basic procedures,

(3) description of instrument and interview format

(4) reliability and validity information

(5) treatment of the survey instrument data

(6) treatment of the interview data

Sample

The sample population consisted of 209 Grade 9 students, enrolled in 3 public and 1 Catholic separate junior high school in an urban centre of 60,000 inhabitants. Two Grade nine classes from each of four junior high schools completed the climate survey instrument. Principals in each school asked teachers to volunteer classes to participate in the study. Grade 9 students were chosen for the sample as they were most likely to have spent at least two years in the school and, therefore, were most likely to be familiar with the school climate. Student questionnaires were anonymous, thereby protecting the identity of students.

Procedures

The first step in this study was to acquire permission from the school boards and school principals to carry out this research in their schools. Letters were sent to the school superintendents to request this permission, (see Appendix A) and principals were contacted by telephone. At the request of the school boards involved, some questions

were deleted from the survey instrument. Therefore, no data was collected on parental education level of students, or on student self-concepts. It was felt that these questions constituted an invasion of privacy of students or forced students to label themselves in negative ways.

Once permission was acquired, arrangements were made with the school principals to administer the survey instrument. Both principals and teachers were asked to complete a Consent form prior to taking part in the study (see Appendix B). All the students completed the instrument during one week early in January of 1989. At this point in the school year students have had opportunity to become adjusted to and familiar with the school environment.

Teachers within each school administered the tests during regular class periods, in order to alleviate extensive disruption of the school day. Teachers were briefed by the researcher prior to the administration of the survey. The briefing included instructions on the time allotted for the survey, clarification of questions in the survey, instructions concerning the correct filling out of answer sheets and procedures for collection of answer sheets and return of the surveys to the researcher. Detailed instructions were provided for teachers in a survey administrator's instruction pamphlet. Student response surveys were collected by the researcher to be mailed to Psychological Assessment Resources for data analysis.

During the two weeks following the administration of the instrument, follow-up interviews were conducted with the school principals. The purpose of this interview was to obtain information on aspects related to the climate questionnaire. For example, principals were questionned on the school's philosophy of education, discipline policies and procedures and the extra-curricular program. Another interview was conducted with principals when the data was compiled and analyzed. This interview provided opportunities for the principals to examine the data on their schools and to suggest reasons and implications for the results. Details on these interviews will be discussed in the section on Interviews with Principals later in this chapter.

Instrumentation

The primary instrument used in this research was the Effective School Battery (ESB) Student Survey (see Appendix C). This instrument was developed by Gary Gottfredson (1984) at the John Hopkins University as an outcome of five years of research on school climate. This instrument was specifically formulated to assess the climates of secondary schools. The ESB consists of both a teacher and a student survey questionnaire. Since the purpose of this study was to focus on student perceptions of school climate, only the student questionnaires were utilized.

The ESB student survey questions concentrate on two

aspects of a school: student population characteristics and student perceptions of school climate. The latter aspect is the primary focus of this research; however, the student characteristics provided useful background data to aid in analysis of the results. In order to understand differences in school climate it is sometimes necessary to assess individual characteristics as well. This is explained further in the ESB User's Manual:

> These measures were also chosen to enable a demographic description of schools, and to measure standard characteristics that research has shown to be related to important educational and social outcomes...All measures are intended only for characterizing groups of students in educational evaluation and for describing the population of students in schools (p. 21).

The ESB can be administered by a classroom teacher and is designed to be completed within a fifty minute time period. The reading level of the survey is about fifth grade (Gottfredson, p.14). There are some questions and references in the student questionnaire which relate to American education systems, (e.g. varsity teams). These terms were explained to students by the administering teacher prior to beginning the survey, and the appropriate Canadian equivalent substituted.

The ESB was particularly useful for this research as it measured the school climate variables determined to be significant in this analysis of school climate. Table 1 demonstrates how questions from the ESB Student Survey match the previously determined criteria for examination.

Reliability and Validity

The Effective School Battery-Student Survey scales were developed using students from over sixty secondary schools in the urban United States. These schools constitute the norm group; scores on the ESB are interpreted relative to this group of schools.

The ESB includes two measures of schools: a set of psychosocial climate measures, which relates to the reports of students about the school environment, and student population measures, which provide information on the demographic characteristics of the student population. The reliability and validity of each of these two scales will be discussed separately.

The reliability coefficients reported for the ESB are of two kinds: a "homogeneity" coefficient measures how well the scales measure whatever they measure at a given point in time. This coefficient is based on the analysis of items administered on a single occasion. The second reliability coefficient reported is based on the stability of scores over time. It is estimated by correlating scores obtained over a period of three years. This reliability estimate is

Table 1

Correlation of ESB with Climate Components

School Climate Components	Questions from ESB
Student involvement in decision-making	43-49. 54
Student/Teacher Relationships	64-66, 39, 73-75
Discipline/Rewards	40-42, 50-53
Extra-curricular activities	14-22, 25
Security and safety of the environment	77-90

labelled as a "retest" reliability.

Validity of the ESB scales is measured in a variety of ways. These include examination of the item content of each scale, on the basis of related research, as well as measurement of correlations with other scales.

Psychosocial Climate Scales: Reliability and Validity

The psychosocial climate scales were designed to measure student reports of those aspects of school environment related to school orderliness. Inclusion of items in these scales is based on previous research by Gottfredson (1984) as well as item analysis of the scale. The internal consistency estimates for these scales range from moderate to very high (.70 to .90 in the 1983 estimate).

The psychosocial climate scales also show stablility over time, suggesting that relatively stable characteristics of school environment are being measured. This does not suggest that these environmental conditions can never be changed, but that these conditions remain relatively stable over time unless conscious actions are taken to change the climate.

Evidence for the validity of the psychosocial climate scales comes from judgements concerning the content of the items, evidence from previous research, evidence of changes in school climate resulting from programmatic efforts to bring about climate changes, and evidence about the

correlates of the climate scales (Gottfredson, 1984). Evidence for construct validity is achieved by showing how these measures correlate with other information about schools. These includes reports of correlations among the student psychosocial scales for schools assessed in 1982 and 1983, as well as correlations between this scale and the teacher psychosocial scales, the ESB student population scale, and other school variables.

In summary, the ESB psychosocial climate scales appear to demonstrate stability over time, and measures correlate both with each other and with other scales and related variables. Additional evidence for both reliability and validity of the instrument is reported in the ESB User's Manual(Gottfredson, 1984).

School Population Measures: Reliability and Validity

The school population measures were chosen to establish a demographic description of schools and to measure student characteristics associated with important educational outcomes (Gottfredson, 1984). Scales were subjected to internal consistency item analysis in 1981, revised, and tested again in 1982. The authors report that this revision did result in an improvement in the scale. Reliability coefficients generally support the usefulness of each scale with both sexes and all ethnic groups.

Retest reliabilities were carried out one year later. Student characteristics are moderately stable over time, but

the retest reliabilities are not so high as to suggest that these scales measure immutable characteristics of students (Gottfredson, 1984). This is to be expected since some characteristics, such as self-concept or peer associations can be expected to change over time.

Validity of the student population measures is reported by the author in three ways: through examination of the item content of each measure, through examinations of previous research using closely related measures, and through direct examination of the measures at work (p. 26). The correlations reported are lower than the reliabilities of the measures, indicating that the scale does measure relatively independent personal characteristics.
The authors also report correlations with external criteria and with academic achievement. The results for the latter indicate that the ESB measures "...something other than academic achievement" (p. 31). Since the purpose of this research is to concentrate on affective, not academic needs, this is worthwhile information to consider.

In summary, analysis of the data presented by Gottfredson in the ESB User's Manual supports the reliability and validity of both the psychsocial climate scale and the student population measures. Both scales, concludes Gottfredson, "...show considerable evidence of stability over time" (p. 57), and correlation measures indicate "...that the properties of these scales support the

intended use" (p. 35).

Treatment of the Data

Following collection of the student surveys, the answer sheets were sent to a central scoring service for scanning and the preparation of school profiles. This service provides results in three formats: verbal interpretive summaries based on ESB norms, graphs that show a profile of percentile scores, and raw data and technical information.

Results from the student survey were divided into two areas: Student Psychosocial Climate and Student Population Characteristics. These two aspects of the school are displayed in separate graphs in the interpretive report provided by the scoring service. The Student Psychosocial Climate scale consists of six dimensions: Safety, Respect for Students, Planning and Action, Fairness of Rules, Clarity of Rules and Student Influence. The Student Population scale consists of twelve scores: Positive Peer Association, Educational Expectations, Social Integration, Attachment to School, Belief in Rules, Interpersonal Competency, Involvement, School Effort, Avoidance of Punishment, School Rewards, Parental Education, and Positive Self-Concept. The last two components of this scale were not included in this study, as the questions corresponding to these scales were deleted from the study at the request of the participating school boards. A description of the specific ESB questions corresponding to each of these scales

is provided in Appendix D .

Data from both scales was used in this research to describe school climate, with some reorganization of the scales in order to coincide with the climate variables considered in this research. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4 of this report.

The charts of results also include an Invalidity scale on the Student Population profile. This scale measures careless or unusual responses to questions and provides a means of assessing the accuracy of responses. Gottfredson suggests that an invalidity measure above 90 indicates potential difficulties with the survey results and suggests caution in interpreting the profile.

The ESB profiles use percentile ranks for schools to present results. It is important to realize that these scores are expressed relative to other scores in the norm group of schools.

Guidelines for assessing the likely margin of error in any given score are also provided for by the ESB. Table 2 shows estimated standard errors of measurement for the psychosocial climate scales, and estimated standard errors of differences for these scales over one and two year intervals.

Confidence intervals can also be constructed around these scores. By multiplying 1.64 times the values of the standard errors of measurement shown in Table 2, and adding

Table 2

Standard Deviations, Standard Errors of Measurement, and Standard Errors of Difference Scores for Psychosocial Climate Scales Administered One and Two Years Apart

Climate Scale	SD	SEM	SED_1	SED_2
Student Reports				
Safety	.08	.023	.056	.046
Respect for Students	.16	.068	.160	.160
Planning and Action	.10	.041	.082	.073
Fairness of Rules	.09	.044	.080	.078
Clarity of Rules	.06	.034	.056	.051
Student Influence	.10	.055	.100	.100

from The Effective School Battery User's Manual, 1984, Psychological Assessment Resources Inc.

and subtracting the product from a climate score, one can estimate the interval within which one can be 90% confident that the actual score lies.

Margins of error for the population measures can be calculated from the raw scores on the population profiles. These raw scores may be multiplied by 1.96 and the product added to and subtracted from the raw score, to obtain an estimate of the range within which one can be 95% confident the mean actually lies.

Interviews with Principals

The interviews with principals conducted by this researcher were one additional method of collecting information about the school and interpreting tne profiles of the ESB surveys. This was a semi-structured interview consisting of questions designed to provide additonal insight into those climate components measured by the ESB. The interviews commenced with structured questions, as outlined in Appendix E. As the principals responded, a series of open-ended questions were asked in order to probe more deeply into responses and to allow for additional insights into the school climates. This format, as discussed by Borg and Gall (1983), "provides a desirable combination of objectivity and depth" and is appropriate for interview studies in education (p. 442). The interviews were audio-taped to ensure a complete record of responses.

The interview began with questions concerning the

general philosophy of the school, and the principals' description of the primary goals of the school. Subsequent questions dealt with other aspects of the school, including the extra-curricular program, discipline policies, methods of distributing student rewards, and the amount of participation students were given in making decisions concerning school operations. At the conclusion of the interview, principals were asked to summarize their general feeling about the atmosphere of the school.

Results from the interviews were reported in summarized form. Only those comments of the principals which were directly applicable to the climate conditions under analysis were reported in the final results. In addition, in order to maintain anonymity of the individual schools, verbatim transcription was avoided. Instead, similar responses were generalized amongst the four schools, and comments significant to a particular school were reworded by this researcher.

Summary

This research was designed to investigate student perceptions of school climate, and the relation of this climate to the satisfaction of students' affective needs. The sample for this study consisted of 209 grade nine students from public and separate school systems in an urban centre with a population of 60,000. Data was collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods. The primary method of data collection was through a standard climate measurement instrument, The Effective School Battery. Reliability and validity information support the use of this instrument for this particular study. The surveys were sent to a central scoring service for the preparation of school profiles, as well as the calculation of raw scores, standard deviations and standard errors of measurement. Data collected in this study allows for a comprehensive assessment of each school's climate. In addition, analysis of this data indicates the strengths and weaknesses of schools' climates in terms of meeting the affective needs of students.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

This chapter begins with a report on the data collected from the completed student surveys of the Effective School Battery (ESB). Findings related to the five climate dimensions under study will be reported first. Results concerning personal characteristics of students will be presented next. These results aid in interpretation of the school climate results and in providing an integrated picture of school climate. Finally, the results of interviews with junior high school principals will be reported.

Responses were collected from 209 Grade 9 students in four urban schools. The Invalidity scale for all schools was below 10, indicating that the surveys were answered seriously by students and the responses may be considered valid. Results are reported as percentiles according to the following scale:

Percentile	Interpretation
94th and above	Very High
85th to 93rd	High
70th to 84th	Moderately High
31st to 69th	Average
16th to 30th	Moderately Low
7th to 15th	Low

Results for School Climate Measures

Percentile scores for each school are presented in Table 3 and Table 4. Means and standard deviations for the Student Population Measures scale are reported in Table 5.

Extra-curricular Activities

Extra-curricular acitivites, as defined by the instrument include athletic teams, clubs, fine arts, student government and helping out in the library or office. Percentiles range from 62 to 99, with schools A and D rated as Very High and schools B and C as average. Mean scores indicate that the average student is involved in two to three extra-curricular activities in each school.

Safety

This measure indicates the extent to which students feel physically secure and safe from harrassment while in the school environment. All four schools rated Moderately High to Very High with percentile ranges from 93-97.

Student Involvement in Decision-Making

This component included two sets of results. Student Influence measured students' perceptions of their influence on matters such as school rules or classroom procedures. Percentiles ranged from 67-93 with schools A and C as moderately high, school B as high and School D as average.

The second scale, Planning and Action, described

Table 3

School Climate Component Percentiles

Climate Scale	Schools A	B	C	D
Extra-curricular	98	65	62	99
Decision making				
a. Student Influence	83	93	71	67
b.Planning and Action	83	88	96	90
Student/Teacher Relationships				
a.Attachment	23	49	69	67
b.Respect for Students	2	75	10	2
Discipline/Rewards				
a.Fairness of Rules	45	38	63	89
b.Clarity of Rules	95	95	99	96
c.School Rewards	24	26	67	6
d.Avoidance of Punishment	11	62	81	42
Safety of Environment	97	97	97	93

students' perceptions of whether the school administration makes plans to implement changes in the school. Percentiles ranged from 83-96, moderately high to very high.

Student/Teacher Relationships

Two sets of scores were involved in the results for this component. Attachment to School is a measure of the average student's feelings of like or dislike for the school and school personnel. Percentiles ranged from 23-67 with schools B, C, and D as average and school A as moderately low.

The second score, Respect for Students, measured students' perceptions of whether they are treated with respect by their teachers. Percentiles ranged from 2 - 75 with schools A, C, and D rated as very low to low and school B as moderately high.

Discipline and Rewards

Four scores were used to examine this component: Fairness of Rules, Clarity of Rules, Avoidance of Punishment and Student Rewards. In the Fairness of Rules category, percentiles ranged from 38-89 with school C measuring high and the three others as average.

In the Clarity of Rules category pecentiles ranged from 95-99 with all four schools rated as very high.

Avoidance of Punishment measured the extent to which an individual student is punished for actions. Low scores indicate students report being punished fairly frequently.

Percentiles ranged from 11 - 81 with school C rated high, schools B and D average and school A as low.

School Rewards indicated the extent to which individual students are rewarded for behavior. Percentiles ranged from 6 - 67 with school C rated average, schools A and B, moderately low and school D as very low.

Student Population Characteristics

These measures indicated personal aspects of students which affect school climate, but are not direct indicators of organizational climate. These include, Positive Peer Associations, Educational Expectations, Belief in Rules, Interpersonal Competency, School Effort, and Social Integration.

Positive Peer Associations

This score indicated the type of peer relations for the average student. A high score indicates that the student associates with peers who value schooling and avoid potentially delinquent behavior. Percentiles ranged from 27 - 43 with the schools rating from moderately low to average.

Educational Expectation

This score indicated the level of formal schooling the average student expects to complete. Percentiles ranged from 72 to 95, moderately high to very high. The mean score indicated that most students plan to finish up to two years of college after high school.

Table 4

Student Population Characteristics - Percentiles

Student Characteristics	Schools A	B	C	D
Positive Peer Associations	27	33	39	43
Educational Expectations	95	93	72	89
Belief in Rules	19	88	98	84
Interpersonal Competency	47	67	67	64
School Effort	22	72	90	73
Social Integration	99	95	99	95

Belief in Rules

The extent to which students believe in the validity of common social rules was measured with this score. The percentiles for three schools ranged from 84 to 98, moderately high to very high. School A rated low with a percentile of 19.

Interpersonal Competency

This score indicated the average student's competency in social relations, communicating and interacting with others. Percentiles ranged from 47 to 67; all schools are rated as average. Three schools recorded percentiles of between 64 to 67 and School A measured at 47.

School Effort

This score indicated how much care or work the average student believes is important in school. Three schools had percentiles ranging from 72 to 90, moderately high to high. School A recorded a percentile of 22 in the moderately low category.

Social Integration

This score indicated whether the average student feels a part of or integrated with the social order of the school. Percentiles ranged from 95 to 99 with all four schools rated as very high.

Table 5

Student Population Characteristics - Mean and Standard Deviation

Student Characteristics	Schools A	B	C	D
Positive Peer Associations				
M	.726	.739	.750	.755
SD	.199	.178	.194	.231
Educational Expectations				
M	4.118	4.000	3.528	3.868
SD	1.437	1.498	1.648	1.468
Belief in Rules				
M	.631	.730	.774	.721
SD	.305	.215	.229	.261
Interpersonal Competency				
M	.773	.800	.800	.795
SD	.231	.198	.188	.224
School Effort				
M	.556	.640	.684	.642
SD	.331	.316	.305	.308
Social Integration				
M	.771	.727	.767	.722
SD	.275	.243	.222	.247

Results from Interviews with Principals

Introductory Remarks

Principals were initially asked to describe their school's educational philosophy. All four schools have written philosophies which are printed in student handbooks and available to both teachers and students. The four principals made reference to the importance of providing for all aspects of the students' development, including emotional and social needs. Principals also indicated an awareness that the junior high school years are extremely difficult times for young adolescents, and that one goal of junior high schooling is simply to help the students through these turbulent years. Positive encouragement and the awareness that every child is special were mentioned by two principals. In addition, two principals mentioned that academic achievement was also a top priority in the schools' philosophy.

Extra-curricular Activities

In all four schools, principals expressed the feeling that extra-curricular activities are a necessary component of a student's education. In two schools, the program is referred to as co-curricular, in order to emphasize the significance of this type of educational experience. All four schools have extensive programs including athletic teams, fine arts, a variety of school clubs, and student government.

Participation in Decision-Making

Student governments exist in all four schools. Principals generally acknowledged that, although these students make decisions concerning extra-curricular activities for students, their role in decision making concerning the schools' operation is limited. In addition, the principals commented that students are encouraged to make decisions, but are fairly carefully moderated by the supervising staff members. Students may make attempts to change rules if they judge them to be unfair. Principals cited some incidents where rules were changed due to student pressure, and other incidents where the rule remained in spite of abundant student protest.

Discipline and Rewards

All four schools have discipline policies which are outlined in the schools' handbooks. Students are informed of both expected behavior and possible sanctions for misbehavior. All four principals indicated that the attempt is made to increase self-responsibility in students. Two principals indicated that they are viewed as the final authority figure in the school. One principal commented on the importance of providing guidelines and restrictions for students at this age level. Three of the four principals commented on the importance of discipline being consistent and fair for all students.

All four schools have traditional means of distributing

student rewards for academic and extra-curricular achievement. These include end of the year awards assemblies and honor rolls. One school has an extensive and ongoing reward system, in which students receive recognition for a variety of activities throughout the school year. One school has a variety of special awards, nominated by teachers and distributed monthly. One principal mentioned that the school places emphasis on positive reinforcement and praise as a reward system.

Student/Teacher Relationships

In all four schools, teachers are encouraged to meet with students both formally, in classroom situations, and informally, in outside activities.

Physical Environment

All four of the schools have generally pleasant facilties, relatively free from vandalism or graffiti. Student work and posters are displayed in the halls, and the schools have the appearance of being well cared for. Three principals expressed concern over some lack of facilities; in particular, over crowding and lack of proper facilities was mentioned.

Summary Statements

All four principals expressed generally positive feelings about their schools and the climate of their school. The principals felt that, in general, both teachers and students were happy to be at their schools. Principals

used terms such as enthusiastic, positive, and good spirit when describing their schools.

Summary

The results from this study include quantitative data from the student survey instrument, and qualitative data from the interviews with principals. The Invalidity scales for the survey instrument indicate that the responses on the instrument may be considered valid. In general, schools rated above average to high in the climate areas of Extra-curricular, Safety, Student Influence, Planning and Action and Clarity of Rules. Schools rated average in the areas of Attachment, Fairness of Rules, and Avoidance of Punishment. Low ratings were recorded in the areas of Respect for Students and School Rewards. Considerable variations in scores amongst schools occurred in the areas of Attachment, Respect for Students, Fairness of Rules and Avoidance of Punishment. The interviews with principals revealed that all four schools have written philosophies, and have some concern for the social and emotional development of students. Academic achievement is also considered an important goal in the schools. Extra-curricular activities were generally supported by the principals. Student participation in decision-making varied amongst schools, although all four schools have some form of student government. School reward policies were similar amongst three schools, with one school reporting a fairly

extensive reward system. Three of the four principals reported some problems with the school facilities due to over-crowding or the age of the building. In general, principals reported generally positive feelings about their schools and their schools' climate.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The two research questions in this study were as follows:

1. How do Grade 9 students perceive their school's climate?
2. Do schools have climates designed to meet the affective needs of students?

Results related to the first question will be discussed initially. Next, the specific question of school climate will be discussed. The findings on Student Population Characteristics will be used to aid in the interpretation of the results as they relate to a description of school climate. Principals were also asked to comment on the results for their school, and this information will be used to aid in the discussion of the results. In order to maintain anonymity of schools, the discussion will center on general aspects; comparisons between schools will be avoided whenever possible. The purpose of this discussion is to arrive at an integrated picture of junior high school climates in general.

Student Perceptions

Introduction

Students in the four schools perceived their schools in generally positive ways. Of the five major components under study, all four schools rated above average in three areas: safety and security of the environment, participation in

decision-making, and extra-curricular program. In addition, student characteristics in the area of social integration were all very high, suggesting that the majority of students felt a part of the school and did not associate feelings of alientation with their school environments. Some discrepancy amongst the schools existed in the areas of student/teacher relationships and discipline and rewards policies, with both high and low scores appearing. Results from the student population characteristics can provide some insight into possible reasons for these variations.

Safety and Security of the Environment

Fundamental to the establishment of a positive school climate is the perception by students that their school is a safe and secure place. Students must perceive that while they are in school they need not be afraid of being hurt or bothered by other students or by any school personnel. If children fear for their physical safety, they cannot feel free to express their individuality, or to develop social relationships.

Students in this study perceived their schools as being very safe places where they can go with little fear of being hurt or bothered by others. These results may be due to a number of factors. The schools were all located close to residential areas, and were generally free of vandalism or crime-related problems. In addition, parental contact with

the school was encouraged, and the schools attempted to establish contact with members of the community in order to maintain an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual support. Students, therefore, may view the school, not as an isolated institution, but as an extension of the home and their neighbourhood, and a place where their safety was a priority.

A secure school environment was also made possible through the interaction of teachers and other school personnel with students on a continuous basis. In these schools, teachers actively supervised all areas of the school, and were visible to students outside the classroom and before and after the regular school day. This visible presence may increase students' perceptions that an authority figure is continually present to provide security.

Finally, it is also of importance that this research involved Grade 9 students, the oldest group in each school. These students were the recognized leaders of the school and, since these are junior high schools, are physically larger than most of the younger students. It would be interesting to determine if students in the lower grades perceived the environment equally safe. Although some intimidation from older students may take place, in schools with adequate supervision and appropriate policies to prevent students being victimized by other students, one would expect that the general climate is one of security for

all students.

Principals expressed pleasure that the security aspect of their schools rated high, as they generally believed that such a perception was a necessary base on which to build a positive school climate. However, many of the principals expressed some displeasure with other aspects of the school environment, particularly a lack of proper lunch room and recreational facilities, as well as general problems with over crowding or lack of appropriate learning facilities.

In spite of difficulties with the school facilities, all of the schools in this study had managed to develop pleasant and comfortable atmospheres through the use of student displays, effective use of bulletin boards and banners, and the addition of seating areas in hallways and foyers where students could relax informally. In addition, the schools were well maintained by the custodial staffs, and presented a clean, and attractive appearance. However, the ability of school personnel to compensate for deficiences with the facility must not hide the fact that student affective development may be negatively affected by a poor physical environment. Adolescents tend to place emphasis on physical attractiveness, both of the person and the environment. If students perceive that their educational institutions are visibly run-down or inadequate, they may have difficulty developing feelings of pride for their school and belief in the importance of education.

The provision of school environments which are not only safe and secure, but attractive, comfortable and modern is one essential component in the affective development of children.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The many changes which adolescents experience during their junior high years make it essential for schools to develop programs which allow for the expression of individuality and success in a variety of activities. A comprehensive extra-curricular program is one method by which schools can make allowances for the diverse nature of early adolescents. Dorman (1985) spoke of the early adolescent's need for success, active participation, self-exploration, social interaction and physical activity. Schools in which students are involved in a variety of activites beyond class work are, therefore, more likely to have climates conducive to the affective development of students.

Students in all four schools reported generally good involvement in extra-curricular activities, suggesting that the schools were providing enough variety of activities to interest the majority of the schools' populations. All schools had programs which included both athletics and fine arts, as well as a variety of special interest clubs which operate according to the interest of the student population of that year.

Schools in which the principal took an active role in participating and encouraging extra-curricular activities tended to score particularly high, a sign that active leadership plays a role in the promotion of these activities. In addition, the schools also had intramural programs which operated during the lunch hour. Schools with a higher porportion of students who remain for lunch scored higher in this area, since these students tended to become involved in the lunch hour activities.

These results may also be a function of the classes participating in the research. It is not unusual to find some classes particularly high in extra-curricular involvement, since students tend to respond to encouragement from their peers to "get involved".

The development and continuation of a comprehensive extra-curricular program does not occur by accident. One of the primary necessities is the commitment of teachers to the program, since they must devote personal time to coaching, advising and operating the programs in addition to regular teaching duties. Schools with strong extra-curricular programs, therefore, are also more likely to be schools in which teachers are genuinely concerned about providing for more than the academic needs of their students. The strong rating in the Social Integration category for all students may be related to the involvement of teachers with students through the extra-curricular

program. Students may recognize that when adults are willing to spend time with them, then they genuinely like and care for them. Finally, a successful extra-curricular program can only exist in schools where the personnel believe that programs to assist in the social and emotional development of children are as crucial to the educational process as classroom instruction.

Participation in Decision-Making

Students perceived that the teachers and administration of their schools were actively involved in planning and implementation of needed changes for the school. However, the amount of student involvement in decision-making in the school was less consistent. Although all four schools had some form of student government, the variation in percentiles, from 67 to 93, suggests that not all students perceived themselves as having signficant roles in making decisions in the school environment. Differences in the findings may be related to the amount of freedom granted to the student government. Since all the schools surveyed had some form of student input, the differences in student perceptions may depend on the role that teacher advisors play in each school, and the extent to which these advisors encourage student participation.

In addition, the questions for this category asked whether students have ever had a rule changed in the school. Schools in which students can remember having input into

changing a rule would receive higher scores. In the two schools with the highest scores, principals reported specific incidents in which students had input into changing school rules or policies.

Although scores in the student influence category differed amongst the four schools, they are all rated as average or high, suggesting that, in general, students did perceive they have some power in determining the way some aspects of the school operate. It is also important to note that the norms for this instrument are based on secondary schools, which includes some high schools. Students in the higher grades are more likely to have involvement in decision making than students at the junior high level.

Allowing students to feel they have some voice in the operation of the school, and some power to change aspects with which they are unhappy is essential to the emotional and social development of the adolescent. Tierno (1983) stressed the importance of a secure, responsive and participatory environment in order to meet the developmental needs of early adolescents. Students must be given opportunities to make choices, and to live with the consequences, if they are to be expected to develop decision making skills essential for adult life. Beane (1983) and Sarokan (1986) reported that student participation in decision making was related to the development of student self-esteem.

It is not always easy to find opportunities for early adolescents to participate in the decision making process in schools. One method which was used by the schools in this study is to allow students to become responsible for student related activities such as dances and intramurals. In addition, it is sometimes necessary to encourage students to become involved in school wide decision making. Early adolescents tend to focus their attentions on personal concerns, and need to be guided to recognize opportunities to get involved in the functions of the larger environment.

Discipline and Rewards

The institution of the school is entrusted with the responsibility of helping early adolescents to formulate values and belief systems, and to assist in the emotional, social and moral development of the child. As a result, the methods teachers and administrators use to respond to student behavior have a direct and important effect on the child's affective development. Considerable concern is expressed by both parents and educators over the methods schools should use to correct inappropriate behaviors, but equal emphasis should be placed on the extent to which schools provide positive reinforcement to their students. The purpose of education is not only to discourage negative behaviors, but to encourage students to develop positive social skills. In addition, the kind and amount of reinforcement a student receives may have substantial effect

on the student's overall feelings for education, and on the students' developing self-concept.

The first requirement in a successful discipline policy is that students be well aware of the expectations for their behavior. The rebellious nature of junior high school students makes it essential that guidelines be clearly specified and consequences for behavior noted. If students feel they have been adequately informed of their parametres, they are more likely to accept responsibility for their actions when they challenge these restrictions.

All four schools in this study had discipline policies which were outlined in the students' handbooks. In addition to stating the expectations for behavior and possible sanctions, these policies served to indicate the reasons behind the rules. Students at this level need to perceive that the rules are designed to protect them and to assist them in their development, not merely to restrict their freedom.

The findings for all four schools in this study revealed that students are well-informed of the rules and the consequences for misbehavior. However, in spite of being well informed about the rules, students in the schools were less consistent in their perceptions on the fairness with which these rules were enforced. Low scores in some schools suggest that students do not perceive that all students are treated equally when they misbehave. One

reason for these results may be the different disciplinary philosophies in each school. Some schools maintain a fairly flexible policy, in the belief that individual circumstances must be considered when dealing with early adolescents.

Although such flexibility is important when dealing with young people, this perception is likely to create some difficulties for the development of a positive school climate. Early adolescents tend to be extremely critical of authority, and are extremely sensitive to perceived injustice. It becomes a difficult, but an important task for the school administration to reconcile students' demands for fairness with the reality of special considerations for some students. It may be advantageous for the schools to allow time for teachers to discuss the discipline policies with students and to encourage feedback. Students may then understand when rules are adapted in some cases or when disciplinary action is modified for some students.

In terms of individual student behavior, the results in the Avoidance of Punishment category were also varied. Students were asked to report whether they had been sent out of class, kept after school or given additional work as punishment. All of these punishments are common sanctions for minor school infractions, such as lateness or missed assignments.

The discrepency amongst schools was high, with differences of between 20 to 30 percentiles. These

differences may be the result of a number of factors. One explanation for the differences may be to examine the characteristics of the students in the schools. For example, in School A, which had a percentile of 11, students also scored low on Belief in Rules, and Positive Peer Associations. This suggests that the students who responded from this school do not have a firm commitment to following rules, and tend to associate with friends who encourage misbehavior. School C, which had the highest score in the area of Avoidance of Punishment also rated high in Belief in Rules and School Effort. Findings such as these may provide interesting information to schools concerning the individual characteristics of the student population. Schools that must deal with students who already exhibit a tendency to ignore or to challenge rules may need to develop policies and strategies to help students develop an awareness of the purpose behind rules and restrictions. In addition, these schools may need to work closely with parents in developing students' sense of right and wrong.

A second possible reason for the difference in scores may be related to the extent to which the school enforces punishments. In some schools, verbal warnings may be given more often, with other sanctions used only for more serious infractions. In these schools, students would report being punished fewer times.

It is important to consider that students who perceive

being punished unfairly often may have more negative feelings about their school. School A also had a low score in the Attachment category, and School C the highest, suggesting that students who experienced more punishment also had a tendency to dislike school. The affective development of students requires that they have some feelings of commitment and identification with the school environment. Discipline policies that create strongly negative feelings toward the school, or that result in students feeling humiliated or victimized cannot provide for the development of positive self-concepts in early adolescents.

The extent and kinds of positive responses to students is another important component of school climate. The questions in the category of School Rewards asked students if they had received a reward or award, including verbal praise, recently. It is noteable that three of the four schools rated low, suggesting that students generally perceived that they were rarely rewarded for their actions in school. All the schools surveyed did have some form of formal rewards, but these were most often administered at the end of the year. Therefore, students would not report being rewarded for activities during the course of the year. In addition, the questions in this category did not include academic results as a type of reward. Although teachers may be providing positive reinforcement to students in their

academic work, these students may not perceive themselves as being rewarded outside of the classroom.

Schools that rate higher in the School Rewards category tended to have some method of dispensing rewards on an ongoing basis and to a large number of students. Such an ongoing policy could be expected to increase students' self-esteem and their feelings of satisfaction and commitment to the school. It is noteable that School C, which scored highest in Rewards, is also high in Avoidance of Punishment, suggesting that in schools where students perceived they were often rewarded, they were also more likely to perceive punishments as being fewer.

Student/Teacher Relationships

The affective development of students depends to a large extent on the ability of students to develop positive interpersonal relationships. Schools in which teachers are supportive, understanding and genuinely interested in students are more likely to be successful in developing positive self-concepts and emotional stability in students. In addition, teachers may act as role-models for students. If they display a humanistic attitude toward others, and are respectful of the feelings of their students, this attitude may be developed in the students with whom they are in contact.

In this research, the category of Attachment was one measure of student/teacher relationships. Students were

asked to express feelings of like or dislike for school personnel and the school in general. Generally, the schools rated Average, with the highest score a 69. These results suggested that Grade 9 students tended not to be overly enthusiastic about their schools, and were more likely to adopt an attitude of acceptance of the inevitable. Expressions of strong affection are difficult for the developing adolescent, and, although they may be quite happy and satisfied with their school they are not likely to report strong feelings of attachment. Similar results were reported by Deer, Maxwell and Relich (1986) in a school climate study. They concluded that Grade 9 students tended to have more unfavorable perceptions of their schools than high school students.

Attachment scores are positively correlated with other climate variables, particularly respect for students, planning and action, and fairness of rules (Gottfredson, 1984). Therefore, although the Attachment score is more a measure of individual student characteristics than of school climate, scores in this category do give a general picture of a student's overall perception of his/her school.

School A rated in the 23rd percentile for Attachment. This result may be related to the particular group of students from this school that were involved in the research. Analysis of the student population results indicated that, in this school, students also rated low in

Positive Peer Associations, Interpersonal Competency, and School Effort. It is possible that the students involved in this survey tended to have negative attitudes toward school in general. Whether these attitudes are a product of the home or the school environment was difficult to determine from the data available. However, whatever the reason for low attachment to school, this information is valuable to school personnel. Knowing that these feelings exist in students allows administrators and teachers to take specific steps to increase student satisfaction and attachment to the school.

One category which showed consistently low percentiles in three of the four schools was the category of Respect for Students. It appears that students do not perceive their schools as places where they are treated with respect by their teachers. These results may be due to a number of factors.

The age level of the students may have an effect on their feelings in this area. Early adolescents are extremely sensitive to criticism or discipline, partly because they themselves are insecure about their self-worth. Gottfredson (1986) indicated that Respect for Students tends to be higher in schools with older students and higher grade levels. These findings suggested that teachers at the junior high level must be extremely sensitive to the insecurities of their students. If students perceive a lack of respect

from their teachers, they are likely to become either openly rebellious or silently negative. Either of these responses negates the possibility of students developing trusting relationships with their teachers, and may interfere with successful affective development. Houlihan (1983) remarked that the most viable, productive schools are those in which interactions among participants are based on mutual trust and respect.

It is also important to note that the students responding to this survey would have direct contact with only a small number of teachers in the school. Therefore, the results may be more a reflection of students' perceptions of a small number of teachers, than a description of the total teacher population.

Finally, one must remember that these results measured students' perceptions. The fragile ego of the early adolescent may cause students to feel that adults in general do not treat them with respect. In addition, at the junior high level teachers are often required to act more as disciplinarians than at the senior high level. Since the norms are based on high school as well as junior high school students, the lower results may be related to the age of the students in the study. The low scores do not appear to be related to any other school characteristics, since schools that rated high or average in other areas still rated low in this component. However, the findings do suggest that

teachers must remain cognizant of the need to help early adolescents to maintain self-esteem.

The high score of School B is also difficult to explain. It may be related to the overall philosophy of the school, which stressed the essential worth of every individual. In addition, the discipline policy for this school reinforced the importance of disciplining a child while allowing the child's dignity to remain intact. Respect for Students, therefore, may be maintained more effectively when teachers and administrators have a firm philosophical foundation from which to work.

Conclusions

Do schools have climates designed to meet the affective needs of students? In general the schools in this study had climates that provided for affective student needs in a number of important areas. Table 6 summarizes the average percentile results from amongst the four schools.

Students perceived their schools as safe and secure places. This feeling is a necessary prelude to the further social and emotional development of the student. Students also appeared to have some opportunities to express their unique talents, and to experience opportunities for success and esteem building through the schools' extra-curricular programs. Student opportunities for decision-making were provided for through the student government, and students had some sense of power in changing rules of the

Table 6

Average Percentiles of School Climate Measures

Climate Measures	Average Percentile
Extra-Curricular	81
Decision-Making	
a. Student Influence	78.5
b, Planning and Action	89
Student/Teacher Relationship	
a. Attachment	52
b. Respect for Students	22
Discipline/Rewards	
a. Fairness of Rules	59
b. Clarity of Rules	96
c. School Rewards	31
d. Avoidance of Punishment	49
Safety and Security	96

institution. This participation helps to fulfill students' needs to feel a part of the school environment. High scores in the students' Social Integration categories support the suggestion that the majority of students who responded to the survey felt some attachment to the school. In addition, the average scores on Interpersonal Competency and Attachment were indications that students felt reasonably capable of dealing with social interactions, and had some positive feelings about their schools.

In two specific areas, however, student perceptions indicate that affective needs were not sufficiently addressed through the school climate. Students reported that they were more often punished than rewarded for behaviors. This negative orientation may have detrimental effects on the development of student self-esteem. In addition, students reported that they did not feel they were treated with respect by teachers. These findings suggested that students may still feel intimidated in schools, and may have some negative feelings about their relationships with teachers. Further, the low scores in these two areas may be one reason for the average, rather than a high score, in the category of Attachment.

Another category in which low scores were common to all four schools was the area of Positive Peer Associations. The results in this area suggest that junior high school students tend to associate with peers who do not express

high interest in getting good grades, or in performing well at school. However, in interpreting these results one must remain aware that at the junior high level, students are less likely to articulate positive feelings toward education. Early adolescents tend to express negative attitudes toward any form of authority or control, as a result of their growing need for independence and autonomy.

The interviews with principals supported the conclusion that these junior high schools did consider affective development as an important component of education and as a goal of schooling. Although some principals stressed academic achievement as a primary goal, in further discussions they acknowledged that social and emotional needs of student must be considered in the effective education of early adolescents.

The results suggested that schools are fulfilling the needs of students to have some commitment to the school, to develop their unique capabilities, and to experience the power of decision-making. However, some attention must be directed to the area of positive personal relationships in the school. Students' self-esteem and personal dignity must be respected and reinforced in their interactions with adults. Providing for more methods of positive reinforcement and discussion with students about their feelings concerning mutual respect may be two methods by which schools may increase their effectiveness in meeting

student affective needs.

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to describe school climates as they currently exist and as they are perceived by students. The findings have implications in two areas: school climate research, particularly in terms of the variables studied and the method of data collection, and school effectiveness.

One of the major difficulties in analyzing school climates is determining the variables to be considered. As suggested by Anderson (1982) it is important to consider ecological variables, such as the physical environment, social dimensions, including the pattern of relationships in the school, and the underlying belief system of the environment. This research examined variables from each of these aspects of climate, and provided a list of school climate components related to affective education. In addition, this study included information of individual student characteristics, allowing for consideration of the impact of personal variables on the school climate measures. Although it is not possible to examine all variables in a description of school climate, the inclusion of a variety of dimensions allowed for a more comprehensive picture of school climate.

Another important aspect of school climate research is the inclusion of student perceptions as ome method of

gathering data. This research demonstrated that it is possible to obtain specific information from students as to their perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of their schools. The inclusion of interviews with the school principals added another dimension to the study. When examining an organization as complex as the school, it becomes necessary to obtain information from different sources and through a variety of methods. Although the standardized instrument is an efficient method of data collection, allowing members of the school population to respond in a semi-structured interview provided insights and possible explanations for responses on the more structured instrument.

The ultimate purpose behind many school climate studies is the attempt to define aspects of schools which increase the school's effectiveness in meeting the goals of education. This study focused on affective needs of students, a component of education which is often neglected in formal evaluations of schools. Asking students for perceptions on matters such as respect, safety and likes and dislikes about their school helps to provide information on how successful schools are in developing not only the mind, but all aspects of the individual. Effective education must include an affective component, for schools are not only imparting knowledge to students, but developing the personalities and belief systems of those who will one day

be the leaders of society. This research demonstrated that the affective component can be analyzed in schools through the study of school climate.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations are made for further research in the area of school climate and student affective needs:

(1) This study should be replicated using a larger sample and including other grade levels in order to determine the validity of the results.

(2) This study suggests areas of improvement for the schools involved. Follow-up studies following the implementation of programs to improve those aspects of the schools' climates would provide useful information.

(3) Further research should examine the relationship between student perceptions and teacher perceptions, particularly in the area of student/teacher relationships.

(4) Additional studies using the Effective School Battery in a Canadian context are necessary to examine the validity of the instrument.

(5) Research should continue to search for those components of school climate related to the affective needs of students.

(6) Research should continue to analyze student perceptions as one means to understanding school effectiveness.

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Appendix A
Letters of Permission

The University of Lethbridge

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GRADUATE STUDIES
IN EDUCATION

Superintendent of Schools
Lethbridge Separate School District #9
Lethbridge, AB

Dear Mr. Himsl:

Once again, I am approaching you for assistance in the completion of my Master of Education degree at the University of Lethbridge. As you are already aware, I am currently developing a thesis on the topic of "Student Perceptions of School Climate and its Relation to their Affective Needs." As part of my research for this topic, I require contact with Grade 9 students and with junior high schools. I am approaching the Lethbridge Public system for permission to include their junior high schools in this study. In addition, I hope you will grant me permission to approach Gene Eisler, principal of St. Francis Junior High School, for inclusion of this school in my study.

The assistance of the school would consist of three components. Firstly, I require some background documentation on the junior high school itself. Specifically, I will need some demographic information, such as, student population, years of operation, and the urban area from which the school draws its students. I will also need information on the school's particular philosophy or approach to education. School handbooks and policies could provide this information, supplemented by an interview with the principal.

Secondly, I would like to administer a standard survey instrument to the Grade 9 students. (See attached copy). This survey would be administered by regular classroom teachers and would require a maximum of fifty minutes to complete on one day. I would brief the teachers as to proper procedures for administering the test, provide materials, and collect the answer sheets at the conclusion of the survey. My hope is to keep disruption of the normal school schedule to a minimum, for both students and teachers. A brief meeting with the teachers involved prior to the administration of the survey, plus the fifty minutes required for the survey should be adequate. It is my plan to begin the survey near the end of November of this year.

Finally, within one week following the administration of the survey, I would like to interview six Grade 9 students from the school. These students would be chosen randomly from the students completing the survey. The interview would take place within the school building, and should require no more than thirty minutes. The purpose of the interview is to enhance the data collected earlier.

school. These students would be chosen randomly from the students completing the survey. The interview would take place within the school building, and should require no more than thirty minutes. The purpose of the interview is to enhance the data collected earlier.

Confidentiality of students will be maintained at all times. The students' names do not appear on the survey answer sheet, not would the students in the interviews be identified by their real names in the final report. In addition, the final report will not refer to schools or school personnel by name. The results of this research will be made available to the administration of each school, as well as to yourself and the school trustees.

It is my hope that this research will provide additional knowledge to the field of school climate research, and will enable all educators to meet the needs of their students more effectively. I am, therefore, anxious to secure your cooperation and support in this study.

If you require further information, I may be contacted at Catholic Central High School, 327-4596, where I am currently employed as a teacher. I may also be contacted at home, 381-2860. In addition, my faculty advisor at the University of Lethbridge, Dr. Cathy Campbell, (329-2448) or Dr. Myrna Greene of the Human Subjects Research Committee (329-2424) may also be contacted for further information.

I look forward to your response in the near future. Thank-you for your time and your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol Koran

The University of Lethbridge

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GRADUATE STUDIES
IN EDUCATION

Superintendent of Schools
Lethbridge School District #51
433-15 Street South
Lethbridge, AB

Dear Dr. Plaxton:

I am a graduate student in the Master of Education program at the University of Lethbridge, and would like to request your assistance and the cooperation of your school district in the completion of my degree.

I am currently developing a thesis on the topic of "Student Perceptions of School Climate and its Relation to their Affective Needs". As part of my research for this topic, I require contact with Grade 9 students and with junior high schools. I am approaching the Lethbridge Separate system for permission to include St. Francis Junior High in this study. I am hoping that you will extend permission to me to approach the principals of Hamilton, Sir Winston Churchill, and Gilbert Paterson Junior High schools to take part in my research study. The assistance of the schools would consist of three components.

Firstly, I require some background documentation on the junior high schools in the public school system. Specifically, I will need some demographic information, such as student populations, years of operation and the urban area from which the school draws its students. I will also need information on each school's particular philosophy or approach to education. School handbooks and policies could provide this information. In addition, I would like to interview the principals of the schools for additional insights into the structure and philosophy of the schools.

Secondly, I would like to administer a standard survey instrument to the Grade 9 students in each school. (See attached copy.) This survey would be administered by regular classroom teachers and would require a maximum of fifty minutes to complete on one day. I would brief the teachers as to proper procedures for administering the test, provide materials and collect the answer sheets at the conclusion of the survey. My hope is to keep disruption of the normal school schedule to a minimum, for both students and teachers. A brief meeting with the teachers involved prior to the administration of the survey, plus the fifty minutes required for the survey should be adequate. I hope to administer the survey during the last week of November of this year.

Finally, within one week following the administration of the survey I would like to interview six Grade 9 students from each

school. These students would be chosen randomly from the students completing the survey. The interview would take place within the school building, and should require no more than thirty minutes. The purpose of the interview is to enhance the data collected earlier.

Confidentiality of students will be maintained at all times. The students' names do not appear on the survey answer sheet, not would the students in the interviews be identified by their real names in the final report. In addition, the final report will not refer to schools or school personnel by name. The results of this research will be made available to the administration of each school, as well as to yourself and the school trustees.

It is my hope that this research will provide additional knowledge to the field of school climate research, and will enable all educators to meet the needs of their students more effectively. I am, therefore, anxious to secure your cooperation and support in this study.

If you require further information, I may be contacted at Catholic Central High School, 327-4596, where I am currently employed as a teacher. I may also be contacted at home, 381-2860. In addition, my faculty advisor at the University of Lethbridge, Dr. Cathy Campbell, (329-2448) or Dr. Myrna Greene of the Human Subjects Research Committee (329-2424) may also be contacted for further information.

I look forward to your response in the near future. Thank-you for your time and your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol Koran

Appendix B
Consent Forms

The University of Lethbridge

4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
T1K 3M4
403-329-2252

GRADUATE STUDIES
IN EDUCATION

Principal's Consent Form

Your school has been selected to participate in a study of school climate and its relationship to the affective needs of students. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which schools address the non-academic needs of their students. The focus of the study is on the school as a whole; individual teacher behaviors or classroom climates are not considered in this research.

Data for this study will be collected in three ways: through collection of background information on the school, through the administration of a standard climate measurement instrument to Grade 9 students, and through follow-up interviews with six Grade 9 students, randomly selected from the respondents to the survey instrument.

Names of individuals will not appear in the final research report. In addition, schools will be referred to only with code letters. Data will only be discissed in summary form and no information allowing the identification of individual schools will be included. Students are not required to reveal their names on either the survey instrument or during the interviews.

Should you wish to withdraw from this study at any time, your request will be respected.

The final report of this study will be made available to the school districts, superintendents, trustees, and school principals participating in the research.

Should you have any further questions, please contact either Carol Koran (327-4596) or Cathy Campbell (329-2448).
You may also contact Dr. Myrna Greene of the Faculty of Education, Human Subjects Research Committee for information (329-2424).

The University of Lethbridge

4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
T1K 3M4
403-329-2252

GRADUATE STUDIES
IN EDUCATION

My signature below signifies that I am willing to participate in the study as described above. I understand that the participation of myself and my school in this research is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time. I understand the purpose of the study, the methodology to be used, and that the privacy of individual respondents will be respected.

_____
Principal's Signature

_____
Date

_____
Lethbridge Phone Number

The University of Lethbridge

4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
T1K 3M4
403-329-2252

GRADUATE STUDIES
IN EDUCATION

Teacher's Consent Form

Your class has been selected to participate in a study on school climate. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which schools address the non-academic needs of students. The focus of this study is on the school as a whole; individual teacher behaviors or classroom climates are not considered in this research.

Data for this study will be collected through the administration of a standard climate measurement instrument to Grade 9 students, and through follow-up interviews with six Grade 9 students, randomly selected from the respondents to the survey instrument.

Names of individuals will not appear in the final research report. In addition, schools will be referred to only with code letters. Data will be discussed in summary form and no information allowing the identification of individual schools will be included. Students are not required to reveal their names either on the survey instrument or during the interview. Names of teachers participating in the research will remain confidential.

Should you have any further questions, please contact either Carol Koran (381-2860), or Cathy Campbell (329-2448). You may also contact Dr. Myrna Greene of the Faculty of Education Human Subjects Research Committee for information (329-2424).

My signature below signifies that I am willing to participate in the study as described above. I give permission for my class to complete the student survey instrument. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from this study at any time. I understand the purpose of the study, and that the privacy of participants will be respected.

_____
Teacher's Signature

_____
Date

Appendix C
The Effective School Battery-Student Survey*

The Effective School Battery™

Gary D. Gottfredson, Ph.D.

STUDENT SURVEY

This survey asks about you and your school. We want to know how you feel about your school, yourself, and your activities.

We need your honest answers to the questions in this booklet. We want to find out what it is like to go to your school. We also want to find out what students in your school think and do. There are no right and wrong answers. This is not a test.

Your help with this survey is up to you. You have the right not to answer any or all the questions in this booklet. But we want you to know that the answers are important, and we really want your help.

We do not want your name on your answer sheet. Your answers are confidential. The answers of many students will be averaged to describe your school.

One more important thing — please do not talk or compare answers.

Turn the page and read the instructions. If you have any questions at any time, raise your hand.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT RESOURCES, INC.
P.O. Box 998, Odessa, Florida 33556

9 8 7 6 5 4 3

Printed in U.S.A.

Instructions

There are two kinds of questions in this booklet.

THE FIRST KIND is a multiple choice question. After the question it will say MARK ONE ANSWER. This means to mark the letter on your answer sheet that fits best, like this:

FIRST EXAMPLE

1. **What should you use to answer the questions?** (Mark only one answer)
   A. A ballpoint pen
   B. A soft lead pencil
   C. A felt-tipped marker

Look at the first example on your answer sheet. Circle B has been darkened. To answer the questions you must darken the circle on your answer sheet that goes with the answer that fits best.

THE SECOND KIND asks a set of questions with answers next to each one. Each answer is labeled as in the example below.

SECOND EXAMPLE

Are the following statements true or false? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
2. **It is O.K. to use a pen**	T	F
3. **I should erase mistakes completely**	T	F
4. **If I have a question, I should raise my hand**	T	F

Look at the second example on your answer sheet. The circle labeled F (for false) has been darkened for example question 2. The circle labeled T (for true) has been darkened for example questions 3 and 4.

When you understand how to answer these two kinds of questions you are ready to begin. Be sure to use only a pencil, not a pen. If you change an answer, erase it completely. If you have any questions at any time, raise your hand.

MARK ALL YOUR ANSWERS ON THE ANSWER SHEET. Please make no marks in your survey booklet itself.

First we want to ask some questions about you.

1. **Are you:** (Mark one answer)
   A. Female
   B. Male

2. **How old were you on your last birthday?** (Mark one answer)
   A. 11 years or younger
   B. 12 years
   C. 13 years
   D. 14 years
   E. 15 years
   F. 16 years
   G. 17 years or older

3. **How do you describe yourself?** (Mark one answer)
   A. American Indian or Alaskan Native
   B. Asian-American or Pacific Islander
   C. Spanish-American
   D. Black
   E. White
   F. Other

4. **How satisfied are you with the way you are doing in school?** (Mark one answer)
   A. Very satisfied
   B. Somewhat satisfied
   C. Somewhat dissatisfied
   D. Very dissatisfied

5. **Compared to other students, how hard do you work in school?** (Mark one answer)
   A. Much harder
   B. Harder
   C. Less hard
   D. Much less hard

How do most other students in your school see you? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Very	Somewhat	Not at all
6. **A good student?**	A	B	C
7. **A trouble maker?**	A	B	C
8. **Successful?**	A	B	C
9. **A loser?**	A	B	C

10. **What grade are you in?** (Mark one answer)
    A. 6th
    B. 7th
    C. 8th
    D. 9th (freshman)
    E. 10th (sophomore)
    F. 11th (junior)
    G. 12th (senior)

11. **As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?** (Mark one answer)
    A. Less than high school graduation
    B. High school graduation
    C. Vocational, trade, or business school after high school
    D. Less than two years of college
    E. Finish a two-year college degree
    F. Finish a four- or five-year college degree or more

12. **How far did your father (or guardian) go in school?** (Mark one answer)
    A. 8th grade or less
    B. Some high school
    C. Finished high school
    D. Some college or other schooling after high school
    E. Finished college
    F. Don't know

13. **How far did your mother (or guardian) go in school?** (Mark one answer)
    A. 8th grade or less
    B. Some high school
    C. Finished high school
    D. Some college or other schooling after high school
    E. Finished college
    F. Don't know

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?

Now we want to ask some questions about the way you spend your time in and out of school.

Which of the following things have you spent time on *this school term?* (Mark one answer for each line)

	Yes	No
School		
14. ~~Varsity or junior varsity~~ athletic teams	Y	N
15. Other athletic teams ~~—in or out of school~~	Y	N
16. Cheer leaders, pep club, majorettes	Y	N
17. Debating or drama	Y	N
18. Band or orchestra	Y	N
19. Chorus or dance	Y	N
20. School clubs	Y	N
21. School newspaper, magazine, yearbook, annual	Y	N
22. Student council, student government, political club	Y	N
23. Youth organizations in the community, such as scouts, Y, etc.	Y	N
24. Church activities, including youth groups	Y	N
25. Helping out at school as a library assistant, office helper, etc.	Y	N

How true about you are the following statements? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Nearly always true	Sometimes	Nearly always false
26. I turn my homework in on time	A	B	C
27. My schoolwork is messy	A	B	C
28. I don't bother with homework or class assignments	A	B	C
29. If a teacher gives a lot of homework, I try to finish all of it	A	B	C

Now we want to know about your friends. Please answer the following questions about your friends.

Are the following questions mostly true or mostly false about your friends? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
30. Most of my friends think getting good grades is important	T	F
31. Most of my friends think school is a pain	T	F
32. My friends often try to get me to do things the teacher doesn't like	T	F

Please think of your best friend in this school. As far as you know, are the following statements true or false about him or her? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
33. Is interested in school	T	F
34. Attends classes regularly	T	F
35. Plans to go to college	T	F
36. Belongs to a gang	T	F
37. Gets in trouble with the police	T	F

38. **How many of your friends have been picked up by the police?** (Mark one answer)

A. Don't know
B. None
C. One
D. Some
E. Most
F. All

Now we want to ask about your school. Please answer the following questions to tell us what your school is like.

How often is your school like this? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
39. Students are treated like children here	A	B	C
40. Everyone knows what the school rules are	A	B	C
41. The school rules are fair	A	B	C
42. The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are	A	B	C
43. Students can get an unfair school rule changed	A	B	C

Do you mostly agree or disagree with the following statements about your school? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Agree	Disagree
44. The student government makes important decisions	A	D
45. Students have little say in how this school is run	A	D
46. Teachers sometimes change their lesson plans because of student suggestions	A	D

47. The teachers and principal in this school make plans to solve problems	A	D
48. This school hardly ever tries anything new	A	D
49. Students are seldom asked to help solve a problem the school is having	A	D
50. The principal is fair	A	D
51. The principal runs the school with a firm hand	A	D

Are the following statements mostly true or mostly false about your school? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
52. The teachers let the students know what they expect of them	T	F
53. The principal lets the students know what he or she expects of them	T	F
54. Students have helped to make the school rules	T	F
55. It is hard to change the way things are done in this school	T	F

How often does the following happen to you in your school?

56. Teachers say nice things about my classwork. (Mark one answer)

A. Often
B. Sometimes
C. Hardly ever

In the last month have any of these things happened to you in school? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Yes	No
57. Did you get to do something special as a reward?	Y	N
58. Were you sent out of class for punishment?	Y	N
59. Did you have to stay after school as a punishment?	Y	N
60. Did you get an extra assignment as a punishment?	Y	N
61. Did you win an award or a prize because of your work in school?	Y	N
62. Was your grade lowered on an assignment as a punishment?	Y	N
63. Did you help win an award or a prize for your group or class because of your work in school?	Y	N

How much of the time is your school like this? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Almost always	Sometimes	Almost never
64. Teachers treat students with respect	A	B	C
65. Teachers do things that make students feel "put down"	A	B	C

How important is each of the following to you? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Very important	Fairly important	Not important
66. What teachers think about you	A	B	C
67. The grade you get at school	A	B	C

Next, we are asking some questions about how you feel about your school. How do you feel about the following? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Don't like	Like
68. This school	A	B
69. The principal	A	B
70. The classes you are taking	A	B
71. The teachers	A	B
72. The counselors	A	B

Do you mostly agree or mostly disagree with the following statements? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Agree	Disagree
73. I have lots of respect for my teachers	A	D
74. Teachers here care about the students	A	D
75. I feel like I belong in this school	A	D
76. This school makes me like to learn	A	D

Do you usually *stay away* from any of the following places because someone might hurt or bother you there? (Mark one answer for each line)

	Yes	No
77. The shortest way to school	Y	N
78. Any entrances into the school	Y	N
79. Any hallways or stairs in the school	Y	N
80. Parts of the school cafeteria	Y	N
81. Any school restrooms	Y	N
82. Other places inside school building	Y	N
83. Other places on the school grounds	Y	N

In *this term* in school, have you: (Mark one answer for each line)

	Yes	No
84. Had to fight to protect yourself?	Y	N
85. Seen a teacher threatened by a student?	Y	N
86. Seen a teacher hit or attacked by a student?	Y	N
87. Been suspended from this school?	Y	N

The following questions ask about how often you feel safe in school and on the way to school. (Mark one answer for each line)

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
88. How often do you feel safe while in your school building?	A	B	C
89. How often are you afraid that someone will hurt or bother you at school?	A	B	C
90. How often are you afraid that someone will hurt or bother you *on the way* to or from school?	A	B	C

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Now we want to ask your opinions about some things. Some people think one way about these things, and some people think another way. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. We want to know what you think.

Do you think these statements are mostly true or mostly false? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
91. I am the kind of person who will always be able to make it if I try	T	F
92. I do not have much to lose by causing trouble in school	T	F
93. My teachers think that I am a slow learner	T	F
94. I do not mind stealing from someone — that is just the kind of person I am	T	F

What do *you* think about the following statements? Are they mostly true or mostly false? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
95. I am not the kind of person you would expect to get in trouble with the law	T	F
96. Life in this town is pretty confusing	T	F
97. It is all right to get around the law if you can	T	F
98. I have never disliked anyone	T	F
99. People who leave things around deserve it if their things get taken	T	F
100. I feel no one really cares much about what happens to me	T	F
101. I have a clear picture of what I am like as a person	T	F
102. It is easy to get along with nasty people	T	F
103. I often feel awkward and out of place	T	F
104. I read several whole books every day	T	F
105. I sometimes get angry	T	F
106. I know how to get along with teachers	T	F
107. Sometimes I think I am no good at all	T	F
108. If I want to, I can explain things well	T	F
109. I like to have fun	T	F

Here are some more things people think different ways about. Do *you* think they are mostly true or mostly false? (Mark one answer for each line)

	True	False
110. I find it easy to talk with all kinds of people	T	F
111. My friends regard me as a person with good sense	T	F
112. Taking things from stores doesn't hurt anyone	T	F
113. I feel I do not have much to be proud of	T	F
114. It is O.K. to take advantage of a chump or a sucker	T	F
115. In classes I am learning the things I need to know	T	F
116. These days I get the feeling that I'm just not a part of things	T	F
117. I like myself	T	F
118. Teachers who get hassled by students usually had it coming	T	F

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

Please check your answer sheet to make sure you answered every question, and that all your answers are clear and dark.

Additional copies can be obtained from

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT RESOURCES, INC.
P.O. Box 998 / Odessa, Florida 33556
Telephone 1-800-331-TEST (In Florida, 1-813-968-3003)

Appendix D
Item Content of the Psychosocial Climate Scales*

J.46-2

Appendix 3
Item Content of the Psychosocial Climate Scales

Student Reports

Safety

Do you usually *stay away* from any of the following places because someone might hurt or bother you there?

	Yes	No
77. The shortest way to school	0	1
78. Any entrances into the school	0	1
79. Any hallways or stairs in the school	0	1
80. Parts of the school cafeteria	0	1
81. Any school restrooms	0	1
82. Other places inside school building	0	1
83. Other places on the school grounds	0	1

In *this term* in school, have you:

	Yes	No
84. Had to fight to protect yourself?	0	1
85. Seen a teacher threatened by a student?	0	1
86. Seen a teacher hit or attacked by a student?	0	1

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
88. How often do you feel safe while in your school building?	1	.5	0
89. How often are your afraid that someone will hurt or bother you at school?	0	.5	1
90. How often are you afraid that someone will hurt you *on the way* to or from school?	0	.5	1

Respect for Students

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
39. Students are treated like children here	0	1	2
64. Teachers treat students with respect	2	1	0
65. Teachers do things that make students feel "put down"	0	1	2

Planning and Action

	Agree	Disagree
47. The teachers and principal in this school make plans to solve problems	1	0
48. This school hardly ever tries anything new	0	1

55. It is hard to change the way things are done in this school.
True = 0 False = 1

Fairness of Rules

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
41. The school rules are fair	1	.5	0
42. The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are	1	.5	0

50. The principal is fair.
Agree = 1 Disagree = 0

Clarity of Rules

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
40. Everyone knows what the school rules are	1	.5	0

51. The principal runs the school with a firm hand.
Agree = 1 Disagree = 0

	True	False
52. The teachers let the students know what they expect of them	1	0
53. The principal lets the students know what he or she expects of them	1	0

Student Influence

	Almost always	Some-times	Almost never
43. Students can get an unfair school rule changed	1	.5	0

	Agree	Disagree
44. The student government makes important decisions	1	0
45. Students have little say in how this school is run	0	1
46. Teachers sometimes change their lesson plans because of student suggestions	1	0

54. Students have helped to make the school rules.
True = 1 False = 0

Appendix E
Principal's Interview Questions

Principal's Interview Questions

Note: This will be a semi-structured interview format.

(1) Does your school have a written or unwritten philosophy of learning or education? Could you explain it to me?

(2) What do you believe is the role of the school in dealing with a child's affective development? By "affective" I mean a child's social and emotional growth.

(3) Does the school have a philosophy of discipline? How does your school handle the discipline of students?

(4) Does the school have any system of reward or recognition of student achievement?

(5) What kind of extra-curricular program does your school offer? What do you believe is the place or role of an extra-curricular program in a school?

(6) Do students take part in any decisions that are made concerning the operation of the school? If so, how? What kinds of decisions have students made? Have students ever caused a rule to be changed in the school?

(7) Could you describe the type of relationship that the school encourages between the students and teachers? Are teachers primarily disciplinarians, classroom instructors, authority figures, cousellors, etc.?

(8) What is your feeling about the physical environment of your school? Do you like the appearance of the building? Do you think students feel safe and secure in this environment?

(9) How would you categorize or summarize the overall atmosphere of your school?