

A Comparison of School Climate of Urban and Rural Schools

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Abstract

The study is aimed to compare the school climate as perceived by students of urban and rural locality schools of districts of Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. Insights into the similarities and differences among rural and urban schools in context of school climate is tried to be expressed. A descriptive survey study was adopted. The data was collected from 497 senior secondary school students of government inter colleges. The tool administered was a School Climate Scale developed by Dr. Shivendra Pratap Singh and Dr. Ali Imam (2012). The data was analyzed using descriptive as well as inferential analysis where t-test was employed to see the existing differences. Mean score in School climate of rural locality schools is found to be slightly more than their urban counterparts. However, no significant difference is noticed among them.

Keywords: School Climate, Rural, Urban, Senior- secondary.

Introduction

The process of socialization of a child starts from the school: a mini society. It is the primary place where children learn to interact, learn new things, gain knowledge, make friends and have an outlook of social norms outside the family. The coexistence of students with varied faiths, backgrounds, and communities learn to live and work together embracing tolerance and a sense of belongingness. It cuts off barriers of class, religion, color, creed and economy giving a better prospectus to child and they learn to co-exist. Friberg and Stein (1999) refer school climate as the core of the school: the value of school that brings about a wholesome learning place, where pupils' and parents' dreams and ambitions are tended, and teachers motivated to function at their best, where everybody is respected and feel attached to the school. Also, it plays an eminent role in development of academic abilities. Schools have distinctive identities, which distinguish them from one another: standard of pupil's behavior and academic attainment differ between schools regardless of comparable intakes and areas in which the schools are situated. American philosopher and education reformer John Dewey believed schools should be a microcosm where children learn democratic living, social skills, and cooperation through experience preparing them for life in a larger community. In his book 'The school and Society (1899)' he stated school as a miniature society. Further he added, the development of attitudes and dispositions needed for the continuous and progressive life of a society cannot take place by direct conveyance of beliefs, emotions and knowledge instead it takes place through the intermediary of the environment (*Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the philosophy of Education* by John Dewey, 1916). Schools remain, of course, the typical instance of environments framed with express reference to influencing the mental and moral disposition of their

members. It tries to build a purified medium of action. School climate by definition reflects students, school personnel and parents' social emotional as well as academic experience of school life. Moreover, along

with the pathways for academic development, positive school climate has potential to develop young ones as a contributing member of strong and healthy democratic society.

The organizational climate as a concept originated in late 1950s as social scientists studied variations in work environments. Andrew, Haplin and Don' Croft were the pioneering researchers of school climate. Determining pupil's perception of life and how they respond to daily challenges. Pasi, 2001 added – A school's climate can have a positive effect on pupils or it can be a barrier to learning.

A moderate positive correlation between school climate and academic achievement was reported by Johan, Hasanah and Jain (2025). Ali (2024) in his work unpacked the strong association between school climate and academic achievement. The students were found to possess an average level of school climate. significant main and interactional effect of school climate and management type on enrolment of students was also noticed by Ranjan (2024). Also, a main and interactional effect of school climate and management type on academic achievement was noted. Erdem and Kaya (2024) analyzed relationship between school and classroom climate and academic achievement. The school climate and classroom climate were found to be significant correlates of academic achievement and a greater magnitude of relationship in favor of school climate was revealed. The research suggests to invest efforts in promoting sound school climate. Das (2023) attributed the fact that well equipped school environment is prevalent in urban schools as compared to rural ones.

Rationale of the study

It is believed that a stimulating work environment is crucial in a complex social organization like school. The attitudes, norms, beliefs, values and expectations that support school life and influence how safe members of the school community feel is what a 'school climate' is referred to. A school environment that boosts students' confidence in their abilities is considered a quality one. Dewey (1938) said, learning is dependent on experience. The characteristics of the learner's environment determine the nature and quality of educational experience gained. Most of the hours are spent in the school premises, consequently emphasizing to create a more conducive school climate for effective learning and participation of students in the learning process. Embracing plenty of opportunities for students to contribute and give their own thoughts, thereby making space for acceptance of the value of each students' contribution and relevance of student's experience. To foster students learning and achievement, giving emphases to build a hostile school climate could be an important form of national investment. The current study is a stepping effort to know the difference in school climate of schools situated in different terrains.

Objectives of the study

- To study the social climate of schools located in rural and urban areas.
- To analyze difference in school climate as perceived by students of rural and urban locality of school.

Hypotheses of the study

The theory developed by the available literature, the investigator speculated the research problem as under:
Ho 1 There exists no significant difference in school climate of rural and urban locality of schools.

Delimitation

1. The study has been confined to 497 schools' students of government inter- colleges.
2. The present study is conducted only in Nainital, Almora and Udham Singh Nagar of Uttarakhand.

Methodology

Research method- A descriptive survey study was adopted by the researcher to investigate for the school climate existing in the rural and urban locality of schools as perceived by the students.

Sample- A sample was drawn by using random sampling technique from three districts of Kumaon region of State Uttarakhand. The sample of the study comprises of 497 senior- secondary classes of government inter colleges.

Tool for data collection

School Climate Scale developed by Dr. Shivendra Pratap Singh and Dr. Ali Imam (2015) was used for collection of data from selected sample.

Statistical Techniques

Descriptive statistics was used to know the level of school climate among students of rural and urban school locality. To know the significant difference between rural and urban school climate, inferential statistical technique t-test was used.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The detailed analysis and interpretation of data findings are reported as under:

The table (Table 1) depicts the level of school climate in both rural and urban area schools. More percentage of rural school students perceive their school climate as favorable, whereas the urban school students find it average favorable. Though the unfavorable attitude is seen less in urban as compared to that of rural locality of school among students.

Table 1: Showing the level of school climate of rural and urban locality of schools

Level of School Climate	Urban schools		Rural schools	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Favorable	92	39.83	119	44.74
Average Favorable	136	58.87	136	51.13
Unfavorable	3	1.30	11	4.13
Total	231	100	266	100

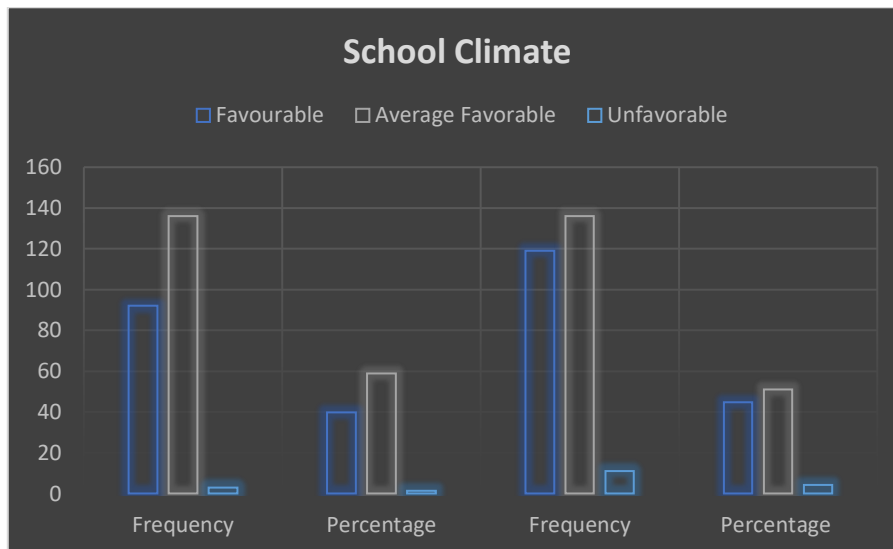


Figure 1: Showing the graphical representation on the school climate of rural and urban schools

The table (Table 2) shows the calculated t-value for difference between mean scores of Rural and urban school students on school climate is 1.20 which is less than tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance. As the result is not statistically significant, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. However, the mean score of rural school students came out higher (69.92) on school climate than that of urban school which is slightly less (68.76) somewhat indicating students studying in rural schools have good school climate.

Table 2: t-value showing the significance difference in mean scores of school climate of rural and urban locality of schools

Variable	N	Mean	SE	SD	t- value
Rural	266	69.92	1.08	11.41	1.20
Urban	231	68.76	1.67	10.24	

Discussion of the results

The findings above show that the geographical has nothing may not be the primary driver of a student’s perception of their school climate. The study was conducted in government schools only where common curricula and standardized teaching protocols ensure a level of consistency in how schools are run, regardless of location. Among the participant of study half of them find school climate as average favorable. The settings must be balanced so as more of them found it conducive. Also, those reflecting it unfavorable must be channeled. Intervention programs can be implemented to create positive climates. The policy makers should focus more o internal school factors.

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