IDENTIFYING THE DIMENSIONS OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Bisera Jevtić*, Danijela Milošević

University of Niš, Faculty of Philosophy, Niš, Serbia

Abstract

The school climate is a significant factor in the development of students' cognitive, emotional and social competencies. Starting from the fact that the quality of educational work largely depends on the school climate, the aim of this research was to identify the factors influencing the development of a positive school climate, and to determine the differences in the perception of its dimensions in relation to gender and student success. The sample for this research consisted of 216 primary school students in the Republic of Serbia. An instrument composed of 43 items was used in the research. Factor analysis identified 6 factors that affect the school climate: support and consistency in the work of teachers, student autonomy, the academic support of teachers, negative peer relationships, disciplinary rigor and collaborative peer learning. The students' perception of the dimensions of the school climate was influenced by school success and the gender of the students. This research offers a comprehensive theoretical perspective for all researchers for whom the field of school climate is at the center of interest, as well as potential solutions in terms of improvement in educational practice.

Key words: academic support, discipline, interpersonal relationships, school climate, students' perception

ИДЕНТИФИКОВАЊЕ ДИМЕНЗИЈА ШКОЛСКЕ КЛИМЕ ИЗ УГЛА УЧЕНИКА ОСНОВНИХ ШКОЛА

Апстракт

Школска клима представља значајан фактор у развијању когнитивних, емоционалних и социјалних компетенција ученика. Полазећи од тога да од школске климе у многоме зависи и квалитет образовно-васпитног рада, циљ рада је био да се идентификују фактори који утичу на развијање позитивне школске климе и утврде разлике у перцепцији њених димензија у односу на пол и успех ученика. Узорак истраживања чинило је 216 ученика основних школа у Републици

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* Corresponding author: Bisera Jevtić, Faculty of Philosophy, Ćirila i Metodija 2, 18105 Niš, Serbia, bisera.jevtic@filfak.ni.ac.rs

Србији. У раду је коришћен инструмент састављен од 43 ајтема. Факторском анализом утврђено је 6 фактора који утичу на школску климу: подршка и доследност у раду наставника, аутономија ученика, академска подршка наставника, негативни вршњачки односи, дисциплинска строгост и колаборативно вршњачко учење. Резултати показују и да су школски успех и пол ученика утицали на перцепцију ученика о димензијама школске климе. Рад нуди свеобухватну теоријку перспективу за све истраживаче којима је област школске климе у центру интересовања, али и потенцијална решења њеног унапређивања у образовно-васпитној пракси.

INTRODUCTION

The school climate is one of the dominant areas of research today. The school climate reflects the character of school life and affects the cognitive, emotional and social development of students. The quality of the social environment and the work of teachers depend on the school climate (Altaf, 2015). Therefore, it is an indispensable element, on the quality of which the success of the entire teaching process largely depends.

In school climate research, most research starts from determining the perceptions of teachers (Gray et al., 2017; Tam, 2020) or students (Chatters & Joo, 2018; La Salle et al., 2016; Waasdorp, 2020). Therefore, many studies have shown that a positive school climate is associated with: a higher level of peer attachment and social skills (Acosta et al., 2019), student achievements (Hultin et al., 2018), teacher satisfaction and self-efficacy (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016), and physical security and lower levels of school violence (Shukla et al., 2019).

Having in mind that the school climate is one of the crucial factors in attaining educational achievements, prosocial behavior, and quality interpersonal relationships, this research sought to determine the factors influencing the development of a positive school climate and the differences in the perception of its dimensions in relation to the students' gender and success in school.

THEORETICAL APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH

The school climate implies the experience of the school environment, where the interactions between, and mutual experiences of the participants play an important role. The experience of the school climate includes mutual respect, trust, support and a sense of belonging in the school community (Osher et al., 2020). The definition of the school climate also refers to the attitudes of its members and includes their norms, culture, moral values, and productivity, and the contribution of individuals in achieving success. Accordingly, the school climate can have a positive or negative effect on its members (Gonder & Hymes, 1994). Freiberg

(1999) says that the school climate is the heart and soul of the school. The quality of the school largely depends on the quality of the climate, which includes developing creativity, fostering children's interests and motivating teachers to work.

One of the basic prerequisites for the successful education of students is a positive school climate. The efficiency of learning depends on the affirmation of relationships, and the integration of social, emotional and academic skills of students. The teacher has the primary influence in achieving the goals of education. The task of the teacher is to teach students how to learn, offering them support in the form of teaching strategies (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). The quality of the school climate depends on the quality of life, work, and the interaction of students at school (Đorđić & Damjanović, 2016: 310). Research has shown that the level of students' school achievements also depends on the academic and social support of teachers. With increasing teacher support, both self-efficacy and the cognitive engagement of students increase (Jansen et al., 2019). On the one hand, students' perception of the support provided by teachers correlates with motivation and the use of learning strategies (Yıldırım, 2012). Therefore, the supportive approach of the teacher has a positive effect on the student's motivation and increases his self-efficacy, i.e. the subjective experience of the student's competencies in the realization of various goals and tasks. On the other hand, the openness, commitment and high expectations of teachers contribute to the development of a favorable learning climate (Hoy & Hannum, 1997).

Although it has been shown that motivation to learn depends on the educational support of teachers, research findings confirm that motivation to learn is higher if students feel that their teachers provide them with personal support, which contributes to better educational outcomes (Kim et al., 2018). On the other hand, meaningful work that connects to students' prior knowledge and experiences, and actively engages them in motivating tasks supports their competence, self-efficacy, and self-directed learning (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

From the perspective of the teaching process, the optimal learning environment implies the application of innovative methods and forms of work in teaching. With the support and innovative approaches of teachers, students show a higher level of scientific creativity and interest in involvement in activities of a scientific nature (Akkanat & Gökdere, 2018). The results of research indicate that the participation of teachers in designing creative and innovative activities is important. However, its role in nurturing students' positive attitudes toward school is equally important (Hui et al., 2018). The results of a two-year longitudinal study confirm that students' attitudes about learning and school are positively related to academic performance.

The application of innovative methods and forms of work, along with the other previously mentioned characteristics important for attaining higher educational achievements, communicate the necessity to form an authoritative school climate. As the most desirable model, the authoritative school climate is characterized by the supportive approach of teachers and the multiple types of support provided to students. Such a climate model contributes to greater student participation and higher academic achievement (Konold et al., 2018). However, teachers' work motivation is one of the key elements in the students' attainment of educational achievements. Teachers' attitudes and expectations are related to student achievement outcomes (McGiboney, 2016). Also, the level of their support in the school community depends on the knowledge of the school climate and the factors that contribute to the well-being of teachers (Gray et al., 2017). Accordingly, the professional development of teachers is one of the key preconditions for achieving a favorable school climate, which, in turn, increases the educational achievements of students.

Interpersonal relationships in school are key indicators of the school climate. The creation of a positive pedagogical atmosphere in the classroom depends on the understanding, and mutual trust and communication between teachers and students. Teacher acceptance provides a sense of security and contributes to the constructive, productive and creative progress of students. Taking into account the above, it can be said that the teacher's personality and their way of work are extremely important in the formation of positive interpersonal relations in the classroom. Teachers are expected to show emotional stability and warmth towards students, to be tolerant and kind during communication, and to encourage students (Milošević, 2015). Through their actions, teachers influence the formation of the emotional climate in the classroom, and, with their pedagogical approach, they contribute to the development of the moral and prosocial personality of students (Jevtić & Vasić, 2014). Research has shown that the personality traits teachers consider important for working with students are honesty, empathy, closeness and consistency. Student knowledge, and the effective use of non-verbal messages and skills needed to deal with negative behavior are mentioned as the most important communication strategies (Ozsezer & Saban, 2016). On the other hand, research conducted in the Republic of Serbia has found that students single out tolerance, human kindness and willingness to help students as the most important characteristics of teachers (Milošević, 2015).

A positive attitude towards the school, and support from the school, parents and peers, are significant protective factors (Florić, Pavlović & Ninković, 2021, p. 1132). As a regulator of social relations in the classroom, the teacher has the task of continuously monitoring and supporting the positive interactions between students, and reducing the negative ones. Students who form positive relationships stand out for their

positive social behavior, mutual support and integration, and for making smart decisions (Moolman et al., 2020). On the other hand, if a student does not feel safe in his/her school and if he/she is isolated from other children, they may begin exhibiting destructive behavior towards himself/herself and others (McGiboney, 2016). The appearance of negative forms of behavior towards individuals may suggest that positive interactions do not develop among students, which indicates a negative and unfavorable school climate.

Since the occurrence of negative forms of behavior among students is more frequent in educational practice, a negative school climate is prevalent. Research findings confirm that a negative school climate influences the occurrence of violent student behavior (Chatters & Joo, 2018). Students' exposure to violence in the local community is associated with peer victimization (Starkey et al., 2019), and peer victimization is associated with social trust. Students who were exposed to victimization showed a lower level of social trust than those who were not (Lundberg & Abdelzadeh, 2019), which again indicates the existence of a negative climate. However, the results also show that the students' participation in reporting negative behaviors has a positive effect on reducing the negative climate in schools (Bosworth et al., 2018).

Thus, the engagement of students in recognizing and reacting in the event of violence is one of the important aspects of reducing the negative school climate. However, the teacher has a bigger role in this process. Teachers, who should monitor the mutual relations of students, promote positive relations and react in a timely manner in the reduction of negative peer interactions, are the main actors who influence the formation of a positive climate. If teachers promote prosocial behavior, clearly express negative attitudes about violence, and develop awareness of the presence of violence and report violent behavior, there will be no intolerance and violence among students (Wang et al., 2013). Research shows that the development of friendships, which creates a pleasant classroom atmosphere, is observable in classes whose teachers express tolerance and understanding for their pupils, and encourage their cooperation and solidarity, which is not the case with classes whose teachers encourage competition and the pursuit of prestige in their pupils (Jevtić & Jovanović, 2017, p. 600). Hence, it is necessary for the teacher to apply a democratic style of classroom management (Jevtić & Vasić, 2014) and possess interpersonal competencies (ability to criticize and self-criticize, teamwork, interpersonal skills, ability to communicate, respect for diversity, etc.) (Milošević, 2015) in order to feel safe in their role as a regulator of social relations, and in order to form a positive environment for the growth and development of each student.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Aim and Research Questions

Starting from the fact that the students' assessment of the school climate largely reflects its quality, the aim of this research was to examine students' perceptions of the school climate and determine its dominant dimensions. This research started with the following research questions: 1) what factors have an impact on the school climate from a student's perspective; and 2) can gender and school success influence students' perceptions of the school climate.

Research Tasks

The role of the school is extremely important in terms of developing and improving the capacity of students. Providing personal and academic support, encouraging positive interpersonal communication, and a pedagogical and innovative approach by teachers are crucial to students' overall progress. The aforementioned dimensions of the school climate represent the most important predictors of the quality of educational work in the school community.

In order to investigate the school climate, the following research tasks have been defined:
1) determine the most dominant dimensions of the school climate from a student's perspective;
2) examine the differences in the perception of the dimensions of the school climate in relation to the gender of students;
3) discover if there are differences in students' perceptions of the dimensions of the school climate in relation to school success.

General Research Hypothesis

This research started from the assumption that students will positively perceive the academic and social dimensions of the school climate and that students' perceptions of the identified dimensions of the school climate will differ according to their gender and success in school.

Research Sample

The research sample consists of 216 primary school students from the Republic of Serbia. Primary education in Serbia includes 8 grades, and the research sample consists of students from grades five through eight, ages 11 through 15. Random sampling was applied, and the research was conducted in the area of southeastern Serbia. In relation to gender, 95 (44%) male students and 121 (56%) female students participated in the research. Out of the total sample, the school success of 5 (2.3%) students was graded as insufficient, the success of 14 (6.5%) stu-

dents was graded as sufficient, the success of 33 (15.3%) students was graded as good, the success of 62 (28.7%) students was graded as very good and the success of a maximum of 102 (47.2%) respondents was graded as excellent. Since the participants are minors, the parents were informed about the purpose of this research and gave their consent for the participation of their children. Students who participated in the research were guaranteed anonymity.

Instrument and Procedure

An instrument containing 43 items was developed for the purposes of this research. Students' perceptions of the school climate were examined through an assessment scale, taking into account the different dimensions of the school climate. The assessment scale is of the Likert type, and students had the opportunity to circle the following values: 1 - I do not agree at all, 2 - I do not agree, 3 - I do not agree or disagree, 4 - I agree, and 5 - I completely agree . The reliability of the instrument was calculated, and its Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is .910. The normality of the distribution was examined by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Vilk tests, with a resulting significance level of .001.

Data Analysis

For the purposes of this research, the following were used: factor analysis as a form of multivariate data processing, via the categorical principal component analysis method; instrument reliability (Crombach Alpha); analysis of variants (ANOVA) for determining differences between variables; and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and Bartlett's test. The normality of the distribution was verified by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Vilk tests. Statistical analysis was performed in the SPSS software package.25.

THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The assessment scale is composed of 43 questions and is intended to examine primary school students' perceptions of the school climate. In order to reduce the data to latent factors, a statistical technique – factor analysis was applied. Data validity was checked by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and shown in Table 1.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5901.197
	df	780
	Sig.	.000

Table 1 presents the .904 value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, with the value of Bartlett's test showing a statistical significance of less than .05. Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that the implementation of factor analysis was justified.

The latent structure of the scale was determined by applying the Gutmann-Kaiser criterion for factor extraction, whereby varimax rotation of the factor was performed in order to maximize the sum of the variances of the square of the factor loads (Table 2).

Table 2. Matrix structure of extracted factors

	Initial value			Factor load extraction sum			The rotational sum of the factor load		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	12.897	32.242	32.242	12.897	32.242	32.242	7.402	18.505	18.505
2	3.496	8.740	40.981	3.496	8.740	40.981	4.240	10.601	29.106
3	2.717	6.792	47.773	2.717	6.792	47.773	4.053	10.132	39.238
4	2.297	5.742	53.515	2.297	5.742	53.515	3.096	7.740	46.978
5	1.332	3.330	56.845	1.332	3.330	56.845	2.792	6.981	53.959
6	1.114	2.784	59.629	1.114	2.784	59.629	1.885	4.713	58.672
7	1.080	2.700	62.329	1.080	2.700	62.329	1.463	3.657	62.329

Table 2 shows that seven factors with a high cumulative percentage of variance (62.32%) were isolated. Six factors were taken into account for further analysis, because the rotation of items determined that the last component contains only one item, which does not make it a significant factor for further analysis.

The first factor explains 18.50% of the total variance. Claims concerning the role of teachers in providing assistance in student work, as well as its consistency in classroom management, are grouped within this factor. In accordance with the content of the items, the factor is called *support and consistency in the work of teachers*. Subjects covered by this factor relate to the teachers' efforts to provide personal support in overcoming student barriers, teacher responsiveness to student demands, student involvement in work, and clarity and consistency in classroom conduct and management.

The second factor explains 10.60% of the total variance and brings together items related to providing students with the opportunity to express their own opinions, to participate in the selection of methods and forms of work, and to contribute to ideas and important decisions in the school community. In accordance with the content of the item, the name chosen for this factor is *the autonomy of students*.

The third factor which stood out explains 10.13% of the total variance. The grouped claims include the teacher's orientation towards crawling support in attaining high student achievement. Accordingly, the factor is named *academic support of teachers*.

The fourth factor explains 7.74% of the total variance, and the items within this factor refer to peer relationships. Claims that include negative interpersonal relationships of students expressed through negative behaviors in mutual interactions are grouped within this factor. Accordingly, the fourth factor is called *negative peer relationships*.

The fifth factor explains 6.98% of the total variance. The items that are part of this factor called *disciplinary rigor* are focused on the orientation of teachers towards maintaining order and discipline in the classroom. The items include the teacher's approach in setting rules aimed at controlling student behavior by applying various classroom discipline strategies (involving students in classroom discipline decision-making, rewards for good behavior, punishments for bad behavior, etc).

The sixth and last factor taken into consideration explains 4.71% of the total variance. The factor is named *collaborative peer learning*, because it includes items related to encouraging collaborative learning among students, to organizing activities that encourage cooperation and teamwork among students, and to the application of innovative teaching methods and forms of work that develop collaborative relationships.

To determine the difference in the male and female students' responses regarding their perception of the school climate based on grouped factors, a t-test for independent samples was applied. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Differences in the perception of the dimensions
of the school climate in relation to the gender of students

Factor	Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Negative peer relationships	male	95	2.19	.74	2.788	167.382	.006
	female	121	2.54	1.01			

Of the six defined factors, statistically significant differences in relation to gender were found in the fifth factor, which indicates negative peer relationships. Table 3 shows that male students assessed peer relationships more positively than female students. More precisely, as opposed to male students, females assessed negative peer interactions as more prevalent, and it can be assumed that such perceptions are conditioned by experience and greater sensitivity to negative peer behaviors.

*Table 4. Students' perceptions of the dimensions of the school climate
in relation to school success*

	School success	N	M	SD	F	df	p
Support and consistency in the work of teachers	insufficient	5	3.08	1.12	7.219	4	.000
	sufficient	14	3.32	1.47			
	good	33	3.46	.95			
	very good	62	4.64	.97			
	excellent	102	4.59	1.12			
Student autonomy	insufficient	5	1.88	.43	5.808	4	.000
	sufficient	14	3.68	1.37			
	good	33	3.55	1.17			
	very good	62	4.15	1.18			
	excellent	102	4.14	1.23			
Academic support of teachers	insufficient	5	1.86	1.33	5.417	4	.000
	sufficient	14	3.05	1.17			
	good	33	3.46	.97			
	very good	62	3.43	.81			
	excellent	102	3.62	1.02			

The results in Table 4 show that the value of p is less than .01, which indicates that there are statistically significant differences in students' responses about the school climate in relation to their school success. Differences were found in relation to three dimensions: support and consistency in the work of teachers ($F = 7.219$, $df = 4$, $p<.01$), student autonomy ($F = 5.808$, $df = 4$, $p<.01$) and academic support of teachers ($F = 5.417$, $df = 4$, $p <.01$). Based on the comparison of the values of arithmetic means, it can be seen that students with lower school success rated all three dimensions of the school climate more negatively than students with better school performance.

DISCUSSION

Using factor analysis, six key factors of the school climate were identified: support and consistency in the work of teachers, student autonomy, academic support of teachers, negative peer relationships, disciplinary rigor and collaborative peer learning. The selected factors indicate that, in order to determine students' perceptions of the school climate, it is important to take into account different segments, i.e. dimensions of measuring the school climate. The identified factors indicate the importance of understanding the personal characteristics, and the organizational and professional skills of teachers necessary to create a positive school climate. Some of these factors have been discussed in other studies. Specifically, the study examining school climate impact factors in the natural sciences identified 4 factors: teacher enthusiasm, teachers' efforts

in promoting overall student development, the social aspects of teaching, and the existence of and adherence to rules (Grecmanová et al., 2020). The four-factor model was determined in another study, which examined the dimensions of the school climate in a special school. The following indicators were identified: teacher support, positive student connections, negative student interactions and unstructured environment (Beld et al., 2018). On a sample of high school students, factor analysis identified seven factors: student-teacher relations, principal participation in school life, student-student relations, school satisfaction, motivation for achievement, student-teacher relationships, and safety perception (Co-coradă et al., 2018). Six dimensions of the school climate were also discovered on a sample of students from the United States and Mexico, where factors contained items related to: teacher connectivity, student connectivity, student achievements, school-wide connectivity, equality culture, and parental involvement (Shukla et al., 2019). Common to these studies is the fact that most of the identified factors of the school climate were related to interpersonal relationships and the provision of personal and academic support to students. The differences in these studies are observable in the fact that, in some studies, emphasis is placed on the role of principals and parents as important factors in developing a positive school climate. The obtained results indicate that, in creating the instrument, it is important to start from all actors who contribute to the development of the school climate and, accordingly, to look at and compare the perceptions of students, teachers, principals and parents.

Another significant result of this study is the fact that the students' gender and success in school significantly influence the perception of the dimensions of the school climate, which is confirmed by other research (La Salle et al., 2016). Differences in relation to gender occurred in the perception of negative peer relationships. More specifically, female students recognized a higher level of negative peer interactions than male students. The results suggest that an assumption can be made about the different experiences of boys and girls which arise from relationships with their peer groups. Hence, there are differences in the attitudes, behavior and skills of students of different genders. Given that some studies have shown that girls show greater empathy than boys (Allemand et al., 2014; Geng et al., 2012), the reason may be in the girls' greater sensitivity to negative interactions, but also in their awareness and successful recognition of negative interactions among peers. However, further research is needed in order to be able to claim this with certainty.

When it comes to school success, the identified differences indicate more negative assessments by students with lower school success in relation to the following dimensions: support and consistency in the work of teachers, student autonomy and academic support of teachers. The results suggest that students with lower school performance do not perceive

these dimensions as positive. Hence, it can be assumed that students with lower school success are much more exposed to negative experiences in the class. We should keep in mind the results of previous research, which show that the reasons for students' failure in school are the discriminatory behavior of their peers and teachers (Dreyer & Singh, 2016), insufficient support, and conflict with the teacher (Amani et al., 2020). Taking into account the aforementioned facts, it can be concluded that a more negative assessment of the school climate by students with lower school success results from insufficient support from teachers and peers. Students who do not show enviable results are often exposed to negative peer interactions and, due to their failure, they are often neglected by teachers. Those left to themselves do not have enough support to progress, because teachers are more oriented towards providing support to students who achieve better results. However, the obtained results confirm that, in the formation of a positive school climate, it is necessary to create a stimulating atmosphere for the learning and development of all, without differentiating between individuals.

In order to get a complete picture of the school climate, it is important to examine the perceptions of teachers and compare them with students' perceptions. The teachers' self-assessment in achieving a positive school climate is a good indicator of the success and quality of the teachers' work and student satisfaction. All these factors should be borne in mind when planning future research in this area.

CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The main findings of this research indicate that students showed positive perceptions of the academic and social dimensions of the school climate, and that their perceptions of certain dimensions of the school climate differed according to their gender (negative peer relationships) and school success (support and consistency in the work of teachers, student autonomy, academic support of teachers). These findings reveal that different dimensions of the school climate are interdependent. The success of students depends on the personal and academic support of the teacher, but the teacher's enthusiasm and desire to work can also depend on the feedback from their students. In accordance with that, it is important to improve every segment of the school climate, because only in that case will every student feel safe, supported, motivated, respected and equal.

Although the primary schools in the Republic of Serbia strive to develop a positive school climate, content-structural changes would still greatly contribute to the better quality of interpersonal relationships, the development of students' prosocial behavior, and the improvement of students' educational outcomes.

The potential strategies for improving the school climate can be:
- Developing more action plans and programs that would contribute to the improvement of the schools' psychosocial atmosphere, would reduce negative forms of behavior in schools, and would imply the joint action of students, teachers, pedagogues, and parents;
- Organizing various additional extracurricular activities which would encourage activism, volunteerism, and togetherness among students in the school community;
- Organizing seminars and other educational meetings and workshops which would develop the teachers' competence for the application of strategies aimed at developing students' social and emotional competencies;
- Providing better quality training aimed at acquiring leadership skills and independence in writing projects, so as to contribute to solving problems in the school community;
- Promoting a psychology of success in school (cause-and-effect and clarity, student collective identity and sense of belonging, student responsibility, choice and voice, emotional safety, etc).

Implementing these strategies would result in the students' desired school, in which there are no limits to versatile and free development, which keeps pace with innovative changes, and which is in line with the concept of the schools of the future and is based on the idea of a humanistic education.

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ИДЕНТИФИКОВАЊЕ ДИМЕНЗИЈА ШКОЛСКЕ КЛИМЕ ИЗ УГЛА УЧЕНИКА ОСНОВНИХ ШКОЛА

Бисера Јефтић, Данијела Милошевић
Универзитет у Нишу, Филозофски факултет, Ниш, Србија

Резиме

Школска клима је неизоставни елемент образовно-васпитног рада од чијег квалитета умногоме зависи успешност целокупног наставног процеса. Уколико се школска клима размотри као потенцијални елемент за развијање потенцијала ученика, увиђа се њен несумњив утицај на когнитивни, морални, емоционални, и социјални развој ученика. Узимајући у обзир различите класификације димензија школске климе, у теоријском делу рада се разматрају три које се односе на улогу наставника у пружању образовне подршке, одржавање реда и дисциплине, и развијање квалитетних интерперсоналних односа. Полазећи од чињенице да од школске климе у великој мери зависи и квалитет образовно-васпитног рада, циљ рада је био да се идентификују фактори који утичу на развијање позитивне школске климе и да се утврде разлике у перцепцији њених димензија у односу на пол и успех ученика. Истраживање је пошло од претпоставке да ће ученици позитивно перципирати академску и социјалну димензију школске климе и да ће се у односу на идентификоване димензије школске климе перцепције ученика разликовати у односу на њихов пол и школски успех. Узорак истраживања чинило је 216 ученика основних школа на простору југоисточне Србије. Примењена је скала процене Ликертовог типа, састављена од 43 ајтема, која се показала високо поузданом (α=.910). Применом факторске анализе идентифико-вано је 6 кључних фактора школске климе: подршка и доследност у раду на-ставника, аутономија ученика, академска подршка наставника, негативни вршњачки односи, дисциплинска строгост и колаборативно вршњачко учење. Други значајан резултат до којег се дошло јесте да су пол и школски успех уче-ника значајно утицали на перцепцију димензија школске климе. Тачније, пока-зало се да су припадници мушког пола позитивније проценили вршњачке одно-се од припадница женског пола. Са друге стране, ученици лошијег школског успеха су негативније проценили димензије подршке и доследности у раду на-ставника, аутономије ученика и образовне подршке наставника од ученика са бољим школским успехом. У раду се указује и на одређене педагошке имплика-ције и нуде се потенцијална решења за унапређивање школске климе у Републи-ци Србији.