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The connection between classroom climate and emotions in educational context and their relationship with academic achievement²

Extended summary

In addition to cognitive and conative aspects, the emotional component of the teaching process is of exceptional importance for all participants in educational work. The small number of empirical studies, especially in our region, that focus on objective indicators of the affective side of the teaching process and their corresponding correlates, inspired the authors to design a study that examined the relationship between classroom climate and students' emotions, as well as their potential effects on student achievement. The theoretical framework for the study is the control-value theory by Pekrun and his colleagues. Pekrun emphasizes that emotions in the educational process are significant based on their valence, dividing them into positive and negative. Positive emotions stimulate motivation, memory, and creativity, while negative emotions reduce attention and motivation, complicate recall, and can lead to dropping out of learning.

The general aim of the empirical research presented in this paper was to examine whether there is a connection between the dimensions of classroom atmosphere and the intensity of experienced academic emotions (positive and negative), and to determine the possibility of predicting academic achievement based on the dimensions of classroom atmosphere and aca-

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demic emotions. The research considered six academic emotions: three positive (enjoyment, pride, relaxation) and three negative ones (anger, anxiety, boredom); as well as four dimensions of classroom atmosphere (teacher-student interaction, social atmosphere, fear of failure, and emotional atmosphere). The sample consisted of 200 fourth-grade students from three high schools in Kosovska Mitrovica (High School, Medical School, and Technical School). The instruments used were: Classroom Atmosphere Assessment Questionnaire, the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire, and the Sociodemographic Questionnaire. All instruments used showed satisfactory psychometric characteristics.

The results show that positive emotions are more pronounced than negative ones during class. The teacher-student interaction dimension positively correlates with enjoyment and pride, and negatively with relief, anger, anxiety, and boredom. Social atmosphere positively correlates with enjoyment and pride, and negatively with relief, anger, anxiety, and boredom. The feeling of fear of failure negatively correlates with pride and enjoyment, and positively with relief, anger, anxiety, and boredom. The emotional atmosphere positively correlates with enjoyment and pride, and negatively with anxiety and boredom. Enjoyment and pride show a weak positive correlation with academic success. It was shown that academic success can be predicted based on the dimensions of the classroom atmosphere and academic emotions, with 10% of the variance explained.

The results are partially consistent with the findings of the previous research, and their coherent connection with the theoretical interpretation of emotions in education, in line with the control-value theory by Pekrun and his colleagues, has been shown.

Overall, the results support the view that the classroom climate is more than just a context it represents a crucial pedagogical and psychological resource that has an effect not only on emotions but also on students' educational outcomes. This opens up space for pedagogical interventions aimed at improving the emotional climate in the classroom, through supporting teachers in developing empathic and flexible relationships with students.

Keywords: classroom climate, positive and negative emotions in teaching, academic success, high school students

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