REVIEW OF RESEARCH

EFFECT OF SCHOOL CLIMATE ON ADOLESCENT AUTONOMY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

The present study is an attempt to find out the effect of School Climate on Adolescent Autonomy of senior secondary school students. For the purpose of investigation, descriptive survey method of research was used. A multi-stage random sampling technique was used to draw the sample of 300 students studying in private senior secondary schools of district Jind. Adolescent Autonomy Scale by Dr. Jitender and Dr. Mohit Malik (2016) and School climate scale by Dr. S.P. Singh and Ali Imam (2015) were used to collect the data. Statistical Techniques such as Mean, S.D.,'t' test and Karl Pearson's Product Movement Coefficient Correlation were used to analyze the data. The findings of the present study revealed a significant positive relationship between Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate of senior secondary school students. It clearly indicates that if School Climate is above average then there will be higher Adolescent Autonomy and vice versa. Further both the groups' i.e. senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate were found to differ in terms of their adolescent autonomy. The results revealed that students with above average school climate were found to have higher adolescent autonomy in comparison to the students with below average school climate.

KEYWORDS: *School Climate, Adolescent Autonomy.*

INTRODUCTION:-

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life as it relates to norms and values, interpersonal relations, social interactions and organizational processes and structures of the institute. School climate sets the tone for all the learning and teaching done in the school environment and, as research proves, it is predictive of students' ability to learn and develop in healthy ways.

School climate may be defined as an aggregate measure of school's characteristics, such as relationships among students, parents, teachers, non teaching staff and administrators, as well as the physical facilities available in the school. It could be seen as the overall interaction resulting from human relationships with each other and with the physical facilities. Climate refers to the atmosphere in an organization. It affects the morale and personal satisfaction of all persons involved in the schools. Climate reflects how staff, students and community feel about a school and/or the district—whether it is a positive place or one that is full of problems. Anyone who spends time in schools quickly discovers how one school can feel different from other schools. School climate is a general term that refers to the feel, atmosphere, tone, ideology or milieu of a school.

The National School Climate Council (2007) defines school climate as "norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe" (p.4). School climate is a product of the inter-personal relationships among

students, families, teachers, support staff, and administrators. Positive school climate is fostered through a shared vision of respect and encouragement across the educational system.

The National School Climate Center identifies five elements of school climate: i.e.
(1) Safety (e.g., rules and norms, physical security, social-emotional security);
(2) Teaching and learning (e.g., support for learning, social and civic learning);
(3) Interpersonal Relationships (e.g., respect for diversity, social support from adults, social sup port from peers);
(4) Institutional Environment (e.g., school connectedness, engagement, physical surroundings); and
(5) Staff Relationships (e.g., leadership, professional relationships).

Freiberg and Stein (1999) described school climate as the heart and soul of the school and the essence of the school that draws teachers and students to love the school and to want to be a part of it. This renewed emphasis on the importance of school climate was further reinforced by a meta-analysis study performed by Wang et al. (1997), which found that school culture and climate were among the top influences in affecting improved student achievement. Their study also found that state and local policies, school organization and student demographics exerted the least influence on student learning.

The term adolescence comes from the Latin word adolescere, which means "to go into adulthood. Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, cognitive, sexual, social and emotional changes. Basically the transition period between childhood to adulthood from about the age of 13 to 19 known as the teen years. This age period is an adjustment period for the adolescents, their parents, and those who are in frequent contact with them.

Adolescence is known to be a period of discovery when much time is spent searching for an identity or purpose in life (Hartar 1990). It is an exciting and dynamic period in one's life (Devore and Ginsberg 2005). Adolescents are like fire - a spark at first, growing into a flame presenting the brightening into a blaze. The passage through adolescence is difficult or easy according to how he/she has been prepared for it (Barber 1990). When properly motivated and sufficiently guided they can do more in their life

The term autonomy is often used to refer to a set of psychosocial issues that are of particular importance during adolescence. Yet, the particular meaning of the term is often difficult to specify. Moreover, how individuals become autonomous – and why some either do not or do so only partially—varies, depending upon one's initial assumptions about the meaning and significance of autonomy.

Basically Autonomy refers to a person's self ability to think, feel and make decisions for his /her future. The term adolescent autonomy refers to an adolescents growing ability to think, feel and make decisions. The development of the autonomy does not end after the teen years. Throughout adulthood, autonomy continues to develop whenever someone is challenged to act with a new level of self-reliance. Autonomy has special meaning during the preteen and teen years because it signifies that an adolescent is a unique, capable, independent person who depends less on parents and other adults.

Adolescents spend a large proportion of their day in school or pursuing school related activities. While the primary purpose of school is the academic development of students, its effects on adolescents are far broader, also encompassing their physical and mental health, safety, civic engagement, and social development. Further, its effect on all these outcomes are produced through a variety of activities including formal pedagogy, after school programs, caretaking activities (e.g., feeding, providing a safe environment) as well as the informal social environment created by students and the staff on a daily basis. While most reports focus on a particular aspect of the school environment (e.g., academics, safety, health promotion), but more comprehensively school environment affects multiple aspects of adolescent development. Research has repeatedly demonstrated the interconnectedness of the elements like: safety and health affecting the academic environment, academics affecting health and social development (Pilar and Brett, 2008).

A positive school climate has been equated with a healthy school (Hoy & Hannum, 1997). A healthy school is one in which there's harmony across the technical (teaching and learning), managerial

(the internal coordination of the school), and institutional levels (connections between the varsity and therefore the community) of the varsity. In healthy schools, the scholars, teachers, administrative staff, and community work together constructively, in full cooperation (Hoy & Hannum, 1997).

Here again, a healthy school climate may be a property of the varsity environment that's collectively experienced by its members and affects their behaviour. Some definitions expanded to capture other important aspects of students' experiences at school/college. These include support for and sensitivity to cultural pluralism and variety, and an experience of a secure school environment (Brand, Felner, Shim, Seitsinger, & Dumas, 2003). Additionally , subsequent operationalization of faculty climate acknowledged the importance of the perceptions of the whole school community, including teachers and other staff members, the scholars , and their parents and families about the climate of their school (Bear, Yang, Mantz, Pasipanodya, & Boyer, 2014; Brand, Felner, Seitsinger, Burns, & Bolton, 2008).

Eccles et al. (1991) reported that it is important to consider the individual's developmental stage regarding the need for control and autonomy. Autonomy is influenced by gender, age, family structure, culture, school environment, and the individual's desire for independence and perception of control (Allen, Aber, & Leadbeater, 1990; Bumpus, Crouter, & McHale, 2001; Crittenden, 1990; Pardeck & Pardeck, 1990). Curtis (1992) pointed out that adolescents seek to become independent and see risk-taking as a way to achieve autonomy and identity. She further stated that teacher can channel these desires for autonomy and independence in a positive way by providing proper activities.

Chirkov and Ryan (2001) found that among Russian and American culture, autonomy supported by parents and teachers had a positive effect on adolescents and was predictive of greater academic self-motivation and perceived well-being.

JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM:

School Climate plays a very important role in the development of adolescent autonomy. In the schools adolescent autonomy is essential for the student's development in multiple ways like moral maturity, career maturity, social maturity and mental maturity.

The rapid development of technology and globalization affect every field of life. In the modern age the number of nuclear families are increasing day by day, due to this child faces lot of problems related to sharing and adjustment. Parents are working, so they have limited time to spend with their child. Due to lot of reasons, the support and co-operation is decreasing in the family. The onus lies on schools and school environment plays a major role in educational and vocational progress of children. The proper and congenial atmosphere at school along with proper disciplinary behaviour of the parents towards the child, affect his/ her academic achievement and development of adolescent autonomy.

Keeping in view the aforesaid facts in mind, the present study has been designed to understand the effect of school climate on adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students. The problem under investigation is more specifically delineated as under:

"Effect of school climate on adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students"

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the relationship between adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students and School Climate.
2. To compare adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students having Above Average and Below Average School Climate

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There exists no significant relationship between adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students and school climate.
2. There exists no significant difference in adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students having above average and below average school climate

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY :

The descriptive survey method has been used for the present investigation.

For the present study, students studying in private senior secondary schools of district Jind were taken as a sample. Multistage random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Initially a sample of 330 students studying in private senior secondary schools of district Jind was taken as a sample but due to subject mortality during the course of study, the investigator was left with only 300 students which comprised the sample of the study. The sample included both male and female students. The selection of the schools was done randomly by the investigator and the subjects within the schools were also selected randomly.

VARIABLES INVOLVED:

In the present study, independent variable is School Climate. The dependent variable is Adolescent Autonomy.

TOOLS USED:

School Climate Scale (2015) by Dr. S. P. Singh and Dr. Ali Imam
Adolescent Autonomy Scale (2016) by Dr. Jitender and Dr. Mohit Malik

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:-

The study was delimited to

1. Jind District Only.
2. Private Sr. Secondary Schools only.
3. 300 students of 11th class.
4. The tools as mentioned above.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The present study has been conducted with the aim of examining the relationship of Adolescent Autonomy with School climate of students of senior secondary schools. The data of 300 students (166 male and 134 female) was analyzed by calculating coefficient of correlations besides the descriptive statistics. The study also intended to identify the role of School Climate in Adolescent Autonomy among senior secondary school students. For this purpose 't' test was used to see significant difference between the mean scores of various groups with relation to school climate of senior secondary school students. The obtained results are given in tables below

Relationship between Adolescent Autonomy of Sr. Secondary School students and School Climate

The first objective of the study was to find out the relationship between adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students and school climate. It was hypothesized that "there exists no significant relationship between adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students and school climate". The results pertaining to this objective are presented in Table No. 1.

**** Table No. 1 ****

Correlations between Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate of Senior Secondary School Students

		Adolescent	SC	interpretation
Adolescent Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	1	.591**	significant at the 0.01 level
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	300	300	
SC	Pearson Correlation	.591**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	300	300	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table No. 1 indicates that calculated 'r' value of Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate is 0.591. The significant value of 2-tailed test is .000. It is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It means there is positive significant correlation between Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate. So the null hypothesis stating that "there exists no significant relationship between adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students and School Climate" is rejected and it can be reframed as there is significant positive correlation between adolescent autonomy and school climate. So it clearly indicates that if School Climate is above average then there will be higher Adolescent Autonomy and vice versa. The School Climate affects the Adolescent Autonomy as the students spend most of their time in the school.

Comparison between Adolescent Autonomy of Sr. Secondary School Students having Above Average and Below Average School Climate

The second objective of the study was to compare adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate. It was hypothesized that there exists no significant difference between Adolescent Autonomy of senior secondary school students having above average and below average School Climate. The results regarding this objective are presented in Table No. 2

**** Table No. 2 ****

Mean, SDs, DF and t-value of Adolescent Autonomy of Senior Secondary School Students having Above Average and Below Average School Climate.

	School Climate	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Adolescent Autonomy	Above Average	191	72.16	4.498	.325	9.746	298	.000	Significant at 0.01 Level
	Below Average	109	66.43	5.533	.530				

It is evident from Table No. 2 that the mean scores of senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate are 72.16 and 66.43 with the respective standard deviations of 4.498 and 5.533. The calculated t-value is 9.746 which is greater than 2.59. The t-value is significant at 0.01 level of significance (df 398). It means that there is a significant difference between both the groups' i.e. senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate differ in terms of their adolescent autonomy. Therefore null hypothesis stating that "There exists no significant difference in adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students having above

average and below average school climate" is rejected and it can be reframed as there exists a significant difference in adolescent autonomy of Sr. secondary school students having above average and below average school climate. Further it was found that the mean scores of students with above average school climate was greater than the students having below average school climate, it clearly indicates that students with above average school climate have higher adolescent autonomy in comparison to the students with below average school climate.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1 A Positive and significant correlation was found between Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate of senior secondary school students.
2 A significant difference was found in Adolescent Autonomy of senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate. Further, the students with above average school climate were found to have higher adolescent autonomy in comparison to the student with below average school climate.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSION:

The present study is an attempt to study the adolescent autonomy of senior secondary school students in relation to school climate. School Climate is recognized as an important factor of adolescent autonomy. In the present study a significant positive relationship was found between adolescent autonomy and school climate of senior secondary school students. The present finding is supported by **Allen and Land 1999**; **Steinberg and Silverberg 1986**, who found that school climate along with other factors has a significant influence on adolescent autonomy. Another finding of the study reveals a significant difference in Adolescent Autonomy of senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate. Further, the students with above average school climate were found to have higher adolescent autonomy in comparison to the students with below average school climate. This finding is also somewhat in line with the findings of **(Hafen et al. 2012 June 28**) who confirmed that classrooms with students who reported having greater autonomy early in a course had increase in student engagement throughout the year, while classrooms without autonomy exhibited common decline in student engagement.

It may be concluded that in the present study, Adolescent Autonomy and School Climate were found to be positively and significantly correlated with each other. So it clearly indicates that if School Climate is above average then there will be higher Adolescent Autonomy and vice versa. Further both the groups' i.e. senior secondary school students having above average and below average school climate were found to differ in terms of their adolescent autonomy. The results revealed that students with above average school climate had higher adolescent autonomy in comparison to the students with below average school climate. So it can be stated that school climate contributes to a great extent in child all-round development.

Based on the results obtained from this study, it is concluded that school climate, which is an important factor in creating a healthy and positive atmosphere in schools and in ensuring the effectiveness of interpersonal relations, affects the adolescent autonomy of students positively. In other words, school climate appears as one of the basic factors that is crucial for predicting and increasing adolescent autonomy.

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