

School Climate as Predictor of Mindfulness in Teaching Among Teaching Staff in Jordan

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ABSTRACT:

The primary objective of this study was to determine how effective the productiveness of school climate can be for mindfulness in teaching. 611 teachers in Jordan participated in this study and completed a school-level environment questionnaire and a scale of mindfulness in teaching. The findings demonstrated mindfulness in teaching and the school climate are positively correlated ($r = 0.55$).

They also showed that the correlation between school environment subscales (collaboration, student relations, school resources, decision making, and instructional motivation) and mindfulness subscales (intrapersonal and interpersonal) ranged between ($r = 0.32$) and ($r = 0.61$). Consequently, the school environment and its subscales well-predicted mindfulness in teaching. These variables explained 38.5% of the total variance.

Keywords: School climate, Mindfulness in Teaching, Teacher Well-Being, Teaching Staff in Jordan.

Introduction

The school learning environment and its influence on the significant learning consequences were first recognized early in the twentieth century and have remained of substantial interest to both educators and researchers (Anderson, 1982; Fraser, 1992). Over the past few decades, there has been a noticeable growth in the amount of study on school climate issues (Cohen et al., 2009; Zullig et al., 2010).

The importance and regularity of significant interpersonal relationships within the school are what constitute the school climate. It has a

positive influence on the children's social, psychological, and cognitive development (Haynes et al. 1997). The nature and standard of everyday school life have been incorporated a more contemporary concept of school climate: its standards, customs, and rules, as well as the support and feelings of familiarity and safety physically, emotionally, and socially at any school (Cohen et al. 2009). The emphasis in the above-mentioned definitions draws attention to the importance of relationships, specifically, social interaction among students, students-teachers, and students-non-academic members of the school community. School safety is another crucial element that has been

emphasized in recent years (Cohen et al. 2009). The distinctive features of school climate can have a wide range of effects on administrators' conduct and performance and that of the members of the school community (Çalik & Kurt, 2010).

In schools with a supportive climate, there are obvious positive attributes: mutual respect between staff, other community members, and pupils, creating a collaborative network and atmosphere that is beneficial to both teachers and pupils. It improves the quality of classroom instruction. In this supportive climate, the principal is the prime initiator of the school ethos. As such, he is receptive and responsive to ideas and suggestions from staff. Professional orientation matters as well. collegial and cordial connections between educators and principles, wherein they provide mutual support, engage in idea-sharing, and socialite together, are indicative of this mindset (Hoy et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, within the confines of restrictive school environment, teachers face significant limitations that hinder their critical thinking, creativity, and productivity. The unnecessary workload does not allow them the time to stimulate and encourage students' enthusiasm and productive thought by which they can be innovative. Such school climates dull both teachers and students alike. School characterized by directive climates are known for their strict rigid oversight from principal, leading to authorisation dominance over all aspects of school operations, faculty, and students (Hoy & Clover, 1986).

Previous studies have shown the importance of school climate and its clear influence on a wide spectrum of outcomes and perceptions encompassing students, teachers, and schools. The outcome is frequently interrelated not only with students' perceptions but also with those of the teachers and their job satisfaction (Cohen et al., 2009). Numerous studies have indicated a direct correlation between teacher's perceptions and various aspects of their professional lives, such as job satisfaction, burnout and retention rates, perceptions of work conditions, and

fidelity in implementing new academic techniques and curricula (Beets et al., 2008; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Ingersoll, 2001; Kallestad & Olweus, 2003; Liu & Meyer, 2005; Loeb et al., 2005; Ma & MacMillan, 1999; McLeskey & Billingsley, 2008; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995).

Motivating the school environment is essential to attain various educational objectives in the classroom and improve the school community level as well. An inspiring school atmosphere encourages shared principles, duties, and values (Ciani et al., 2008; Hord & Sommers, 2008). It also promotes cooperation among teachers, thus, fostering professional learning (Lunenburg, 2010). Therefore, such a motivational school environment is closely linked to teachers' individualistic success and, on a larger scale, to the teachers' community to assess and develop their teaching skills and effectiveness (Soini et al., 2010). Specifically, the development of dynamic, practical learning approaches is most likely initiated by adept and enthusiastic teachers, whose pupils subsequently accomplish the optimum learning strategies and results (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004). School environment research suggests that unreasonable workloads, classroom, and other management issues cause teachers' stress and contribute to the lack of managerial and social support.

Mindfulness in teaching is one of the factors that is highly influenced by the school environment. It focuses teachers' awareness and attention to the present moment without passing judgment (Flook et al., 2013; Hölzel et al., 2011). Mindfulness practices such as yoga poses, purposeful breathing, and guided meditation are utilized (Harris et al., 2016). These practices have numerous benefits, including reduced stress, improved sleep quality, heightened body awareness and emotion control, decreased reactivity and enhanced response flexibility, improved emotion regulation, and increased immune function (Davis et al., 2019; Frank et al., 2016; Hölzel et al., 2011; Hwang et al., 2017). The consequences of disregarding mindfulness, however, can result in high stress levels, unawareness of automatic

facial and body reactions, and brain fog syndrome. Using mindfulness practices could improve teachers' organizational and social well-being, as well as create a more inductive classroom environment (Harris et al., 2016; Flook et al., 2013).

Practicing mindfulness by teachers, particularly those struggling to cope with stress or conflict resulted in several mental benefits including conflict successful management, a heightened awareness of capabilities and control of emotional reactions, better clarity of mind and thought processes, improved reaction to challenges or stressful stimuli, reduced stress, and healthier classroom outcomes (Hwang et al. 2017). Practical improvements included classroom organization, the use of verbal encouragement, and regulated behaviour in the classroom.

Frank and colleagues (2016) characterized mindfulness in teaching as the capacity of the teacher's to focus and be conscious of the events occurring in the classroom and to act in a manner that is open and responsive to the needs of students. Mindfulness in teaching includes two dimensions. The first one has to do with the teacher-intrapersonal mindfulness. It consists of keeping the teacher focused and giving full attention to what is happening in the present. The second dimension is teacher-interpersonal mindfulness, which is indicative of the teacher's ability to respond to students in a positive way that is open, receptive, compassionate, and sensitive to their needs.

Mindfulness immensely reduces teachers' stress during the first year of teaching and enhances their ability to deal with the classroom. The results of previous studies indicated that the practice of mindfulness made an appreciable difference in the teachers' ability to deal with stress, especially during the first year of teaching, and provided the teacher with learning strategies to help their students (Bernay et al., 2016).

The teacher's practice of mindfulness in the classroom is closely related to effective teaching and has great importance in the teachers' interactions with students of different levels of

maturity, learning capabilities, and environments in a way that avoids abuse and unequal opportunities (Jena-Baptiste, 2014). It improves the teachers' awareness increasing their ability to meet students' needs. It also improves the level of emotional stability, enhancing students' abilities to deal with stress. The overall would be a positive classroom climate as mindfulness increases the effectiveness of classroom management, and positive feelings in the class environment (Albrecht, 2018; Schoeberlein & Sheth, 2009).

The teacher is an essential element in the educational process and plays an effective role in promoting this process. Mindfulness helps teachers understand their feelings and how to handle some negative behaviors by students and create a positive learning environment. This study aims to enhance our comprehension of the correlation between school climate and mindfulness in teaching. The findings would benefit the Ministry of Education teachers and enable them to have more professional growth opportunities. The primary objective of this study is to investigate if teachers' perceptions of school climate can predict their level of mindfulness in teaching among sample of Jordanian teachers.

Methodology

Study sample

Thirty public schools were selected from three governorates in northern Jordan. The study sample consisted of 611 teachers. According to gender, 360 were males and 251 were females. At the school level, 275 teachers were in primary schools, and 336 were in high schools. 336 of the teachers were bachelor's degree holders, and 275 were postgraduates. Regarding their teaching experiences, 168 teachers possessed 1-5 years of teaching experience, while 144 had 6-10 years of teaching experience. Additionally, 204 teachers had 11-15 years of teaching experience, and 95 teachers had over 16 years of teaching experience.

The SLEQ was developed by Johnson et al. (2007). It included 21 items, using a 5-point Likert scale to measure five dimensions: collaboration, student relations, school resources, decision-making, and instructional

motivation. The Cronbach alpha of SLEQ was 0.90. To assess the validity and readability of the SLEQ in this study, 60 teachers completed the SLEQ, and the correlation coefficients were calculated, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation matrix between school climate scale and its subscale

Variables	Collaboration	Students relations	School resources	Decision making	Instructional motivation	School climate
Collaboration	1					
Students relations	0.65*	1				
School resources	0.73*	0.81*	1			
Decision making	0.59*	0.68*	0.73*	1		
Instructional motivation	0.67*	0.70*	0.81*	0.69*	1	
School climate	0.84*	0.88*	0.94*	0.81*	0.88*	1

The results showed that correlation coefficients between the SLEQ and its dimensions ranged from ($r = 0.81$) to ($r = 0.94$), and the correlation coefficients between dimensions of the scale ranged from ($r = 0.59$) to ($r = 0.81$). The reliability of SLEQ in this study, using Cronbach alpha, was (0.75) and (0.78) for collaboration, (0.72) for students' relations, (0.76) for school resources, (0.73) for decision making, and (0.76) for instructional motivation.

The MTS was developed by Frank et al. (2016). The MTS included 15 items using a 5-point Likert scale to measure the two dimensions: intrapersonal (9 items), and interpersonal (5 items). The Cronbach alpha of MTS was (0.93). To assess the validity and readability of the MTS in this study, 60 teachers completed the MTS, and the correlation coefficients were calculated, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation matrix between mindfulness in teaching scale and its subscale

Variables	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Mindfulness in teaching
Intrapersonal	1		
Interpersonal	0.65*	1	
Mindfulness in teaching	0.95*	0.84*	1

The results showed that correlation coefficients between the MT and its dimensions ranged from ($r = 0.84$) to ($r = 0.95$), and the correlation coefficients between the dimensions of the scale were ($r = 0.65$).

The reliability of MTS in this study as it appears through using Cronbach alpha was (0.76), (0.77) for intrapersonal, and (0.79) for interpersonal.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection process lasted for one month. After that, the SPSS program was used to collate and analyse the data. The calculations for Pearson correlation and regression analyses were performed.

Results

To examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and mindfulness in teaching, the Pearson correlation was used, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation matrix between school climate and mindfulness in teaching

Variables	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Mindfulness in teaching
Collaboration	0.48*	0.61*	0.57*
Students relations	0.32*	0.46*	0.40*
School resources	0.50*	0.49*	0.54*
Decision making	0.32*	0.49*	0.42*
Instructional motivation	0.34*	0.47*	0.42*
School climate	0.46*	0.58*	0.55*

(*P= 0.01)

The findings indicated a favourable correlation between school climate and mindfulness in teaching ($r=0.55$). a positive correlation between school climate subscales (collaboration, student relations, school resources, decision-making, and instructional motivation) and

mindfulness subscales (intrapersonal and interpersonal) ranged from ($r=0.32$) to ($r=0.61$). To examine whether teachers' perceptions of school climate predict mindfulness in teaching, regression analysis was used, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. findings from the analysis of multiple regression

Variables	Dependent	R	R square	F	Beta	t	Sig
Collaboration	Mindfulness in teaching	0.620	0.385	75.601	0.400	8.310	0.00
Students relations					0.189	3.310	0.00
School resources					0.388	5.808	0.00
Decision making					0.119	2.030	0.04
Instructional motivation					0.289	4.033	0.00
School climate					0.903	10.071	0.00

The results presented in Table 4 showed that school climate and its subscales predicted mindfulness in teaching. These variables explained 38.5% of the total variance ($r=0.62$, $F=75.601$, $P=0.00$).

Discussion

The present study aimed to analyse the predictive nature of school climate and its influence on mindfulness in teaching among a sample of teachers in Jordan. The findings showed that teachers' perceptions of school climate highly affect their mindfulness in

teaching. Teachers in schools that have a well-structured, encouraging, and close-knit environment were inclined to exhibit higher levels of mindfulness. This mindfulness results in greater teacher self-efficacy and focused academic orientation toward improving students' achievements. As previously mentioned in this research, the various types of school climate differ in their effect on interpersonal relationships between school staff and pupils, as well as school harmony and efficacy (Çalik & Kurt, 2010). With their emphasis on the numerous ways in which a supportive school climate offers the opportunity for all members of the school community (principal, teachers, pupils, and parents), Hoy et al. (1991) envisaged that close collaboration should involve discussion of instruction and other topics. This cooperation can improve the effectiveness of the school community. The researcher here further points out that close, friendly interactions encourage reciprocal relationships and often result in a more advanced sense of teacher competence and expertise. Kottkamp and colleagues (1987) further emphasize that a favorable and optimistic school environment is not only beneficial but also forward-thinking. In Kottkamp's view, when teachers are well-communicating, supporting, and reflecting on school matters, teachers' academic orientation will be successful. Therefore, the correlation between teachers' mindfulness in teaching and a supportive school climate is logical. Tabancali and Öngel (2022) also identified a beneficial link between found a positive relationship between collaborative school climate and school mindfulness.

A positive school climate entails a healthy relationship among the school staff, which in turn enhance the effectiveness of the teachers and their level of mindfulness in teaching, increases their ability to give, and their efforts to help students achieve high academic performance. It is crucial to have a positive school environment in order to promote unity and academic achievement within the classroom and throughout the school community. The

success of the teachers' instructional commission is closely intertwined with the individual teacher and teacher community, as well as their ability to evaluate, analyze, and enhance instructional skills (Soini et al., 2010). A helpful and reassuring school atmosphere stimulates shared principles, values, and responsibilities (Ciani et al., 2008; Hord & Sommers, 2008) and teamwork among teachers, encouraging professional learning (Lunenburg, 2010). As a result, the more motivated and experienced teachers are likely to sponsor dynamic and purposeful strategies, the more they achieve the desired outcomes for pupils (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2004). The lack of support and excessive workload can be stressful for teachers. Classroom management and instructional strategies were found to be crucial to bringing about teachers' mindfulness in a school climate (Klassen & Chui, 2010).

According to Hoy et al. (2006), the degree and effect of organizational mindfulness is decided by the school principal. According to Soda et al. (2019), the principal's support and cooperation reinforce staff and staff/pupil relations; positive social climates are favorable and beneficial, promoting the effective introduction of beneficial new initiatives. The successful implementation of innovations is particularly facilitated by enlightened leadership by the principal (Gregory et al., 2007). Berberoglu (2018) also emphasized the significance of principals' involvement in fostering teachers' mindfulness, as revealed in her study.

According to Hoy (2003), different individuals talking about the same events or situations can have several varying interpretations. They can have different perspectives and interpretations, so mindful individuals are not trapped in their own thinking but seek intelligent diversity. By so doing, they can avoid reiteration and disorganization. Mindfulness in staff and pupils is crucial to discovering and practicing ultimate teaching strategies and administrative practices (Wagner, 2016). Ndubisi and Al-Shuridah (2009) found that organizations practicing mindfulness played a positive role in enhancing the overall performance of administrative and executive

personnel. teachers who are mindful do not adhere to procedures and regulations without careful consideration. Their minds are receptive to innovation and adaptability, utilizing knowledge and expertise under the framework of rules to reach accurate decisions and conclusions, without avoiding unique original circumstances (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

A healthy school climate is described by Hoy et al. (1991) as an orderly workplace that is committed to students' success and contains relation competence built on understandable work elements and trusted relationships among faculty members, with an emphasis on students learning. According to Turan (2002) teachers in a school-positive climate become more committed to their teaching careers. According to Hoy et al. (1991) a positive school atmosphere is expected to aid teachers in improving instruction quality by helping the creation of necessary conditions for effective collaboration between colleagues. All of the authors of Kottamp et al. (1987) agreed that a supportive school environment offered a variety of forums for conversation, collaboration, and reflection on different ideas for influencing student learning. The opposite is evident in classrooms where principals are not making an effort to alter a closed and unfavourable school atmosphere, and where teachers lack motivation and are not as focused on helping students reach higher learning levels (Hoy et al., 1991).

Sweetland and Hoy (2000) further explored the notion that educational institutions characterized by an unsupportive and negative school climate tend to witness a predominant emphasis on mundane tasks and superfluous responsibilities by teachers and administrators. They rarely enhance the school climate and environment physically, psychologically, and academically. In short, collegial and congenial relationships among faculty members, doubtlessly, show the reciprocal effects of positive and negative school climates.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the current study, it is essential to recognize the significant impact of teachers views on the school environment and their mindfulness in teaching on the overall success of the school community, with a particular emphasis on teachers themselves. The researcher recommends that the principal and school administration pay more attention to fostering a good school climate because of its positive impact on teachers' practices of mindfulness in teaching. Having training courses that promote mindfulness in teaching can yield more positive effects on teachers and reduce pressure. Mindfulness can also have positive effects on students' academic performance. The study recommends conducting future studies, examining the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the school climate and teacher academic optimism.

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