Environment Assessment Assignment

Tahiri Gutierrez

California State University, Chico

Introduction

 Environment assessment emphasizes the importance of evaluating the classroom environment and school climate. Evaluating the classroom environment is important because it provides the outcomes of the student’s engagement, interest, motivation, prosocial skills, school connectedness and achievement. In order to acquire the outcomes the classroom needs to have a positive learning environment and to achieve it, it needs to obtain emotional support (positive/negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for student perspective) classroom organization (behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats), and instructional support (concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling).

On the Other hand, evaluating school climate is important because it concentrates on the safety, relationships, teaching and learning, institutional environment, and processes of school improvement among the student, teachers, and school administration. When evaluating school climate the outcomes of the students are associated with self-esteem/self-concept, motivation, mitigating negative effects of SES on academic success, psychological well being and it decreases absenteeism, suspensions, substance abuse, psychiatric abuse, aggressive/violence and harassment (Hart, 2015). Therefore, when the students and the staff have a positive school climate they both benefit in various ways. This indicates that evaluating both the school climate and classroom environment is essential because if the school or classroom is lacking in some sort of way, researchers will be able to determine the default and do an intervention in order for the students and staff to succeed.

For instances, in the article of *Relationship Among School Climate Domains and School Satisfaction* by Zullig, Huebner, and Patton (2010) explains how school climate affects the students school satisfactory in eight different domains. The purpose of this study was to further examine the school environment determinants of the students satisfactory using the school climate measure. There has been limited research on identifying the environmental calculation of individual’s differences in school satisfactory. There were 2,049 middle and high school students participants from three rural school district of a Midwestern state who where predominantly Caucasian.

The researches gather their information by the students filling out survey questionaries’ that looked at eight domains, which are positive student-teacher relationship, school connectedness, academic support, order and discipline, school physical environment, school social environment, perceived exclusive/privileged and academic satisfaction. The results showed that five (academic support, positive student-teacher relationship, school connectedness, order and discipline, and academic satisfaction) of the eight domains were significantly related to school satisfaction. Therefore, evidence suggest that the school climate can affect the students in numerous way, which means that teacher and school administrated need to provide a positive climate for their students to succeed in academic achievement, relationships with teachers, prosocial skills, self-concept and have a better well-being with their environment and themselves.

The purpose of the environment assessment was to use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for toddlers to examine the classroom quality within the Early Childhood setting. Additionally, the environment assessment will investigate the observer’s disagreements they had between one another about the scoring and how similar their interrater reliability agreement scoring is. CLASS is an observation tool that assesses the education of the classroom and primarily concentrates on the effectiveness of teacher-child interactions. It is frequently used for program evaluation, professional improvement and research purpose. In this study, CLASS focused on program evaluation and the interactions between the teacher and the child. When using the CLASS tool the potential person will need to be a certified CLASS observer to fairly and accurately assess the teacher-child interactions. The domains that will be looked at while observing are emotional support and engaging support for leaning. The emotional support subclasses consist of positive/negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for child perspective, and behavior guidance. The subscales for engaging support for learning are facilitation of learning and development, quality of feedback, and language modeling (La Paro, Hamre and Pianta, 2012).

Methods

 The data was collected in the Associated Student Child Development Lab (ASCDL) in the Infant lab. The two observers obtain their observations on the maple room by using the cameras that enable them to see the classroom without interfering the children or teachers. The observations were conducted by using the CLASS observation sheet for toddlers and were done on a Thursday afternoon (one observation), Friday morning (two observations), and Monday afternoon (two observations). The CLASS observation sheet measure eight different subscales domains of emotional support and engaging support for learning. There were five observations cycle transmitted and each cycle took 15 minutes with a break that was taken after each cycle. Overall there were nine teachers and 15 children that were observed throughout the three days. The activities that were observed were mostly free choice play, which means it was child directed based such as using the rocker train, playing in the loft with dramatic play materials, lunch time, and outside playhouse. The activities were taken place inside and outside of the classroom.

Results

 As mention previously, the observation sheet included eight different subscales of the emotional support and engaging support for learning domains, which are positive/negative climate. Teacher sensitivity, regard for child perspective, behavior guidance, facilitation of learning and development quality of feedback, and language modeling. The scoring for each subscale range from one to seven and each were scored individually. The low scoring included the scoring of one and two. The mid scoring included three, four and five and the high scoring included six and seven.

Table 1 shows the scores for teacher one that each observer got and the areas where observer one and the disagreement between the observers were negative climate, behavior guidance and facilitation of learning and development. The Interrater reliability analysis for this teacher is .63. Table 2 shows the scores for teacher two that each observer obtain and the disagreement that observer had were positive climate, behavior guidance and quality feedback. The interrater reliability analysis for this teacher is .69.

Table 1.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Domains  | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
| Positive Climate  | 6 | 6 |
| Negative Climate  | 3 | 4 |
| Teacher Sensitivity  | 6 | 6 |
| Regard for Child Perspective | 5 | 6 |
| Behavior Guidance  | 6 | 1 |
| Facilitation of Learning & Development  | 5 | 1 |
| Quality of Feedback  | 6 | 6 |
| Language Modeling  | 6 | 2 |
| Positive Climate  | 6 | 6 |
| Negative Climate  | 1 | 1 |
| Teacher Sensitivity  | 6 | 6 |
| Regard for Child Perspective  | 6 | 6 |
| Behavior Guidance  | 6 | 6 |
| Facilitation of Learning & Development  | 6 | 6 |
| Quality of Feedback  | 6 | 6 |
| Language Modeling  | None | None  |
| Positive Climate  | 5 | 5 |
| Negative Climate  | 1 | 1 |
| Teacher Sensitivity  | 6 | 6 |
| Regard for Child Perspective | 6 | 7 |
| Behavior Guidance  | 5 | 6 |
| Facilitation of Learning & Development  | 5 | 5 |
| Quality of Feedback  | 6 | 6 |
| Language Modeling  | None | None |

Table 2.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Domains  | Observe 1  | Observe 2  |
| Positive Climate  | 5 | 3 |
| Negative Climate  | 2 | 2 |
| Teacher Sensitivity  | 6 | 6 |
| Regard for Child Perspectives | 6 | 6 |
| Behavior Guidance  | 4 | 3 |
| Facilitation of Learning & Development  | 6 | 6 |
| Quality of Feedback  | 5 | 2 |
| Language Modeling  | 6 | 6 |
| Positive Climate  | 5 | 5 |
| Negative Climate  | 2 | 4 |
| Teacher Sensitivity  | 6 | 6 |
| Regard for Child Perspectives  | 6 | 6 |
| Behavior Guidance  | 4 | 4 |
| Facilitation of Learning & Development  | 6 | 6 |
| Quality of Feedback  | None  | None  |
| Language Modeling  | 6 | 6 |

Discussion

Interpretation

The emotional support domain has five subscales that are used in the observation sheet, which are positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity and regard for child perspective. Each subscale has their own score, which ranges from one (low) to seven (high). Positive climate looks at the relationships, positive affect and respect among the teachers and the children. An example of a low score (1,2) in positive climate is when the teachers and students are distant from one another or aren’t displaying any affection towards each other’s. For a mid score (3,4,5) in positive climate is when that they seem generally interested in one another or the teacher demonstrates genuine positive affect with the children. For a high score (6,7) in a positive climate is when there are various signs that the teacher and the child enjoy each other company and there are frequent smiles.

Negative climate consists of negative affect, punitive control, teacher negativity, and child negativity. An example of a low score (1,2) is when the teacher shows no indication of negative affect, doesn’t yell or scream at the children. For mid score (3,4,5) in a negative climate is when the teacher displays little irritability or anger and makes threats or yells at children. For high score (6,7) in a negative climate is when the teacher display consistently anger, irritability, yells, uses physical actions towards the children. Teacher sensitivity includes awareness, responsiveness, and child comfort. An example for low score (1,2) is when the teacher doesn’t monitor the children, fail to response to children when they need help and doesn’t participant in activities with children. For a mid score (3,4,5) in teacher sensitivity is when the teacher sometimes is attentive to the children and teacher does not consistently respond to the children or when the need support. For a high score (6,7) in teacher sensitivity is when the teacher is consistently attentive and responsive to the children when they need support or help and the children seem to appear comfortable when seeking for help.

Regard for child perspective concentrates on the child focus, flexibility, and support of independence. An example for a low score (1,2) is when the activities are teacher driven and there is no clear understanding of a child focus of choice in that activity. An example for mid score (3,4,5) is when some activities are directed by the teacher and shows some flexibility. An example for high score (6,7) is when the teacher gives maximum effort in the child independence, the teacher is flexible in different places and most of the activities are child directed. Behavior guidance focused on proactive, supporting positive behavior, and problem behavior. For instances, a low score (1,2) is when the teacher unaware of the child behavior and fails to support positive behavior for the children. A mid score (3,4,5) is when the teacher is consistently monitoring the children behavior but the teacher is not consistent in telling the children the rules or behavior expectations. A high score (6,7) is when the is consistently monitoring the children behavior and states the behavior expectations and uses effective strategies when the children have problems.

The second domain is engaging support for learning has three subclasses, which are facilitating of learning and development, quality of feedback, and language modeling. Each of the subscales is scored individually from one (low) to seven (high). Facilitation of learning and development includes active facilitation, expansions of cognition, and children active engagement. An example for a low score (1,2) is when the teacher doesn’t provide any opportunity or guidance in the learning development of the children. A mid score (3,4,5) is when the teacher sometimes connects the activated to the children lives. A high score (6.7) is when the teacher is actively involved spending time with the children and connects activities with the children lives by asking questions and making the children think.

Quality of feedback consists of scaffolding, providing information, encouragement and affirmation. An example of a low score (1,2) is when the teacher doesn’t follow up on children actions and responses. A mid score (3,4,5) is when the teacher sometimes provides information or clarification to the children questions. A high score (6,7) is when the teacher frequently responsive to the children answers, questions, and comments and provides additional information. Language modeling focused on supporting language use, repetition and extensions, self and parallel talk, and advanced language. An example of a low score (1,2) is when the teacher has little or no conversation with the children. An example of a mid score (3,4,5) is when the teacher provides opportunities for the children to use language and sometimes extend children communication. An example of a high score is when the teacher uses conversation to provide multiple language opportunity for the children, the teacher consistently describes and narrates their actions when interacting with the children.

Interrater Reliability and Rationale

 The most disagreement that my partner and I had was with behavior guidance, I gave a score of six and my partner gave a one. The disagreement occur because I observe the teacher supporting positive behavior the child by teacher interacting with the child in the dramatic play. However, my partner stated that she was just sitting down watching the children. One thing that could be biased is because I worked in the maple room and I have work with that particular teacher and she does demonstrate behavior guidance frequently. Another reason that we might had gotten different scores would be that she missed what I saw when she was writing something down. Another disagreement was in facilitating of learning and development, my partner scored a one and I scored a 5. I gave the teacher a five because she was expanding the child cognitive by asking the child questions, gives child more objects in order to manipulate and explore his play more. On the other hand, my partner just stated a question that the teacher asked while he was playing with the objects. For me, that is facilitating their environment because they teacher is interacting with the child by asking the child questions and seeing how she can expand the child play. The last disagreement that we had was on language modeling my partner scored a one and I scored a six. The observation that we saw was when a child scream and the teacher said to use his words instead of screaming. This would be an example of an opportunity that the teacher is giving the child to use language. This could be as well biased because the children are in a younger age and don’t really have language to communicate and therefore rely on screaming and what we are told to do is tell children to use their words so we can know what they need.

 One thing that could of improved our reliability on the items is knowing the expectations the staff has when in comes to the children for instances, how they are suppose to behave or interact with them. A challenge that I had was being able to concentrate on what was happening with the students and doing the observation sheet. I think it is because I didn’t know the domains on top of my head and what each scores was looking more, I kept referring back to the book and I could of missed some interactions among the teacher and the student. Another challenge was the times we went to see the children is was mostly afternoon and around that time not a lot is going on and not as many children are there, and they waken up from nap. I think that influence our scores.

Concluding Statement

 I learned that the classroom environment plays a big role in the children whether it is positive or negative. By having a positive learning environment in the classroom the children benefit developmental well in psychology, physical, and social/emoticon domains. I did learn a lot about CLASS and I do think that it is a great tool to use when assessing a classroom environment because you are looking at the teacher and child interactions. I do think that it was reliable, however, I do think it might have a lot of biased. As I am looking back I can see that I did have subjectivity and so did my partner.

References

Hart, R. S. (2015). Assessing School and Classroom Quality and Climate (PDF Document). Retrieved from Lecture Notes Online Wed Site: https://learn.csuchico.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-1529980-dt-content-rid-7913407\_1/courses/152-CHLD440-01-1201/7-CHLD440%20School%20Quality-StHdt.pdf

La Paro, M. K., Hamre, K. B., & Pianta, C. R. (2012). *Classroom assessment scoring system: manual toddler.* Baltimore, Maryland: Brookes Plushing.

Zulling, J. K., Huebner, S. E., & Patton, M. J. (2010). Relationship among school climate domains and school satisfactory. *Psychology in the Schools, 48(2),* 133-145. doi: 10.1002/pits.20532