

INTERPRETATION AND IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study tend to indicate that different school climates have differential effects on certain aspects of student behaviour. Personality characteristics such as Emotional Instability, Depressive Tendency, Moral Values, Activity, Paranoid Tendency, and Introversion differentiate between climate groups, and to a lesser extent, characteristics such as Hypomanic Temperament and Dominance tend to differentiate them. But all these studied 'simultaneously' discriminate significantly between school climates. Other characteristics related to attitudes and values examined in the study, however, do not discriminate between climate groups.

Among the climates, the schools with the Open Climate, tend to show better personal adjustment of pupils, than other groups of climate. Next to Open Climate is the Closed Climate group of schools on this criterion. The Autonomous, the Controlled, and the Paternal occupy the mid position in this respect, and the Familiar being the last among the climates. As mentioned earlier (under Description of Variables), a typical Open Climate school demonstrates an energetic and lively organization which is moving towards its goals, but which is also providing satisfaction for the individual needs of its staff. In such a school,

leadership acts emerge easily and appropriately as they are required. The group is not preoccupied exclusively with either task-achievement or social needs satisfaction; satisfaction on both counts seem to be obtained easily and almost effortlessly. The principal and teachers in such a situation are zestful and exude confidence in what they are doing. They find pleasure in working with each other. The interpersonal, relations in such a situation are likely to provide optimal conditions for the healthy development of students' personal-social adjustment.

Under Familiar Climate, on the contrary, little is done to control or direct the group activities towards achievement of goals, although the principal and teachers enjoy friendly relations, and the social-needs satisfaction is extremely high. Results of this study suggest that this type of climate does not foster development of positive common goals.

Other climate groups show characteristics of the Open and the Familiar in different degrees and thus they show their positive influence on student personality adjustment also in different degrees.

The findings demonstrate empirically what Halpin has assumed on a priori basis, regarding the effectiveness of the Open climate for the proper development of personality and adjustment of pupils (Halpin, 1966).

Inspite of wide divergences in cultural background, the results of the present study point to a possibility of basic causal link between climate characteristics and the pupil variables. It may perhaps be justified to conclude that the behavioural characteristics of teachers and the principal in an Open Climate school get transmitted over to students who in turn tend to show better personal adjustment than their counterparts in other climates, through constant positive interactions with a better adjusted group of adults (that is, teachers and principal) during the school period.

The findings also appear to indicate some resemblance with the results obtained in the Lewinian group of studies. Lewin et al, for example, found in their study of the effect of social climates in groups on boys' behaviour that "the productive behaviour was higher than or as high in authoritarian climates when the leader was present as in democratic climates but much lower when the leader was absent, moderately high and independent of the leader's presence or absence in the democratic climates, and lowest in the laissez-faire climates" (see Getzels, 1969, p. 505). If the cultivation of desirable personal-social-emotional characteristics of personality or personal adjustment of students is also taken into account in assessing productivity in a more inclusive sense than that of Lewinian group of

studies*, then it follows that the Open and the Controlled Climates form the two extremes of a climate continuum like the democratic and the authoritarian climates in Lewin's study. The contribution of the Open Climate group of schools has been observed in the present study to be the highest towards positive personal adjustment of pupils among the climate groups, and that of the Controlled Climate in the middle range. The Familiar Climate group, which is a close equivalent of "laissez faire", contributes least towards the personal adjustment.

A crucial question may be raised regarding the findings: whether the observed differences in personality characteristics of students belonging to different climate groups are due to the nature of school climate or to the nature of the students in the schools. Studies of college and university environment report interesting results in this context. The work of Knapp et al (1952) and Pace (1963 a) was predicated on the popularly known "institutional productivity" hypothesis. Holland's (1957) study tends to support the so called "student quality and motivation" hypothesis. Knapp and Greenbaum (1953) suggested that

*In Lewins' study the group productivity was assessed in terms of masks produced by different groups, but in this study productivity has been considered in a wider context. It includes educational as well personality development of students (see page / of this report).

ultimately the differential productivity of schools, and especially of the small liberal arts colleges lay in the "climate of values" which "elevated the scholar and the intellectual to the position of the "culture hero" (p. 97). Pace (1963a) reported the results of a long-term investigation of differences in the "atmospheres" of 32 colleges. Among the major results were that beyond a few common characteristics, colleges are vastly different from one another. The range of correlations was from 0.93 to -0.87, differences between college environments tending to fall into several distinctive clusters - humanistic, scientific, practical, welfare, and rebellion. These in turn form patterns of inter-correlations such that (for example), though the humanistic and scientific clusters are positively related in an intellectual pattern, the humanistic cluster is unrelated and the scientific cluster is negatively related to the social welfare cluster. In short, one may think about college environment as "whole cultures" having distinctive "atmospheres". More than this, there are "predictable and demonstrable consequences" which follow from the differences: the correlation between the intellectual-humanistic cluster and the percentage of men who go on to graduate school was 0.80, and of women 0.84 (p. 77).

Holland (1957) sought answers to three fundamental questions regarding institutional productivity*. He concluded, that the evidence argues strongly against the "institutional productivity" hypothesis; variations in college productivity are probably due to the divergent proportions of high-aptitude students in these colleges and to differences in their educational motivations.

Heist et al (1961) further explored the hypothesis that colleges are differentially selective, not only with respect to scholastic aptitude, which may be self-evident,

*First, are different rates of college productivity a function of differential attendance rates by scholastically superior students? Holland calculated the "expected" rate and the "observed" rate of attendance by his talented students at "high" and "low" productive colleges; and found that they attended "high" productive institutions in frequencies 3 to 15 times the expected frequencies (p. 434). Second, are differential rates of institutional productivity a function of differential socio-economic status in the student population? Knapp and Goodrich (1952) had suggested that scientists may originate more often in "lower" than in "higher" socio-economic groups and, conceivably, institutions with high productivity may attract larger proportions of such students, but Holland found no evidence for this (p.434). Third, are differential rates of productivity a function of parental vocational motivations and their implied attitudes and values concerning scholarly achievement? Holland found that the students in "high" productive colleges tended to have fathers in physical-activity, scientific, and social welfare occupations, and students in "low" productive institutions tended to have fathers in persuasive, sales, and supervisory occupations. It is not unreasonable to believe that the differential backgrounds of parents have significant implications of their children's interest in scientific and scholarly attainment (p. 435).

but also with respect to underlying attitudes, values, and intellectual dispositions. When students were divided into two subsamples matched for scholastic aptitude, one attending "high" and the other "low" productive colleges, highly significant differences in the hypothesized directions were found. The investigators concluded that students of high ability in "high" and "low" productive colleges tend to differ significantly in dispositions related to serious intellectual pursuits, thus supporting the explanation that differential college productivity resides in who the students are rather than in what the institutions do.

Thistlethwaite (1959, 1959a, 1960), on the other hand, reached an opposite conclusion, that even if the quality of students is equated, there still remains an appreciable institutional effect. He devised an index of institutional productivity independent of student quality based on the discrepancy between a school's expected rate of Ph.D. output as predicted by its enrolment of talented students and its actual rate of output (1959, p. 72). Two such indices were developed: one for the natural sciences and the other for the arts, humanities, and social sciences. When he applied these indices to different types of institutions, Thistlethwaite found wide variations in productivity independent of the quality of student body.

In a subsequent study Thistlethwaite (1960) investigated the effect of differential college environments on student motives by examining the relationship between the college experiences of 1500 Merit students in 327 colleges and changes in their major field of study and level of training sought. His salient findings were that all predictions regarding the effect of faculty press on student motivation to seek graduate training in certain fields were confirmed: college environments characterized by faculty affiliations, emphasis on achievement, enthusiasm, and independence were associated with increased student level of academic aspiration in the arts, humanities, and social sciences; college environments characterized by lack of faculty emphasis on compliance were associated with increased student level of academic aspiration in the natural sciences. There was no evidence that student press influenced the level of aspiration, at least as far as Merit students are concerned.

Stern (1962) approached the problem from a different angle. He examined the relative congruence or discrepancy between student needs and environmental press in his notable series of studies of college environments as milieus for learning. Among his findings were the following: students in the same institution tend to have similar need scores;

the perceptions of press are not projections of needs; different types of institutions vary in the uniqueness of student needs and environmental press.

It seems quite clear, that different school climates do have a demonstrable effect on student behaviour over and above the student culture which is embedded in the total culture. This is borne by the results of the present study with respect to certain personality characteristics which show significant differences between school climates. The possible effect of non-climate variables in this study was minimised by adopting the principle of randomisation in selecting school samples from a relatively homogeneous school population.

It may thus be said, that inspite of other sources of influence acting on students, the hierarchical and collegial interactions between the principal and teachers of school populations examined in this study, show a tendency to influence personal-social-adjustment characteristics of pupils.

Findings of this study may interest students of group dynamics in general, and educational administrators in particular. It may be worthwhile experimenting with hierarchical and collegial interactions between the principal and teachers that characterize Open Climate in

schools to study the effect of such interactions on other aspects of student behaviour such as development of secular democratic behaviours, scientific attitude, and achievement oriented behaviour. It may also prove fruitful to investigate what makes the Closed climate group of schools to contribute more towards positive personal-social adjustment of pupil in Indian schools whereas some Western investigators believe that the Closed Climate group of organizations seem to be stagnant, and nothing seems to be going on in such organizations (Halpin, 1966, p. 190).