

Identifying Ekvall's Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Program Classroom Setting: An Executive Summary of Jesberger's 2001 Master's Project

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Rationale: The purpose of this project was to collect and categorize the dimensions of a creative climate identified by Ekvall's research in a case study concerning the classroom work of a teacher. This hands-on research adds to the initial investigation in the creation of Creative Climate Checklist About School Settings (CLASS), an instrument to be used to assess creativity in the classroom. This project relates to the theme of Understanding Multifaceted Interactions through Developing Instrumentation at the Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College.

Questions: The following questions guided this project:

- Which elements of Ekvall's creative climate are apparent in the selected classroom? What artifacts support the climate dimensions?
- How were the elements of creative climate developed and what was the impact on students of this atmosphere and teaching style?
- What does this creative climate sound like, feel like, and look like?

Significance: Education is the primary basis for future business and organizational structure, and it is important that further research on a creative climate is done at the classroom level. Ultimately, teachers establish the climate in their classroom as the two coexist together. This case study contains classroom observations, collection of artifacts, and an interview with the teacher who developed them. It documents her work as an educator in a classroom setting. The documentation through case studies to view and describe the dimensions of a creative classroom climate is beneficial to help describe Ekvall's dimensions through the eyes of an educator who models these theories in her curriculum, classroom atmosphere and teaching style.

Dimensions: Interview questions and classroom observations were developed using the following ten dimensions:

Dynamism & Liveliness-eventfulness of the life of the organization.

Trust & Openness-ideas, opinions, and initiatives are openly communicated without fear of reprisal.

Idea Time-amount of time people use for elaborating new ideas.

Playfulness & Humor-spontaneity and ease present in the organization.

Idea Support-handling of ideas in an attentive and kind way by others in the workplace.

Debates-encounters and exchanges among viewpoints/ideas that result in differing experiences and knowledge.

Risk-Taking- tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the workplace.

Conflicts-personal /interpersonal or emotional tensions present in an organization.

Challenge-energy and motivation by participates in the organization's operation and goal setting.

Freedom- independence in behavior exerted by of the people in the organization.

Findings: For each dimension listed above, the following three categories were presented. First, Ekvall's definition of each dimension is given. Secondly, interview answers from the teacher regarding dimensions are quoted. Thirdly, observations, photographs and curriculum pieces, which exemplify Ekvall's dimensions, were introduced. Using this format, readers are able to gain insight on how each dimension was manifested in this classroom setting.

Although several of the dimensions were present in this enrichment program, debate and idea time were not given much attention and therefore lack supportive materials. Several color photographs and sample curriculum pieces are included in this project. Student reflections and suggestions for further research are also presented.

Project References:

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