

School As A Caring Community A Challenge For Qualitative Expansion In Education Beyond Classroom: A Comparative Survey Of Select Principals, Teachers And Class IX -Students Of Tura Town In Meghalaya With Nalbari Town In Assam, India

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Abstract: School Climate or School environment plays a major role in shaping the quality of school life, teaching, learning, and support. Key concepts for understanding school and classroom climate are social system organization; social attitudes; staff and student morale; power, control, guidance, support, and evaluation structures; curricular and instructional practices; communicated expectations; efficacy; accountability demands; cohesion; competition; "fit" between learner and classroom; system maintenance, growth, and change; orderliness; and safety. Research has indicated a range of strategies for enhancing a positive climate. All school staff have a significant role to play in ensuring that such strategies are well-implemented and maintained. With this in view, the researchers have undertaken a comparative survey of select principals, teachers and Class IX students of Nalbari Town and Tura Town with the Five Points rating scale adapted from "School as a Caring Community Profile-II A Survey of Students, Staff, and Parents", developed by T.Lickona and M.Davidson in January, 2003. The findings indicate that though there are variations in the Private Schools and Government Schools in Nalbari and Tura Town, Schools in Tura Town indicate a better picture of learning environment as compared to schools in Nalbari Town.

Index Terms: School, Caring Community, Challenge, Qualitative Expansion, Beyond Classroom, Comparative Survey, Principals, Students, teachers

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Rapid change, global competition and smarter customers have driven organizations to strive for excellence in all areas of organizational operations. Indeed one of the most important developments of recent years is the renewed attention to the concept of quality; quality underwent many changes from quality to quality control to quality assurance and today it stands as Total Quality Management. Total quality Management is a real and meaningful effort by an organization to change its whole approach and to make quality a guiding factor in everything the organization does. It is a people focused management system that aims at continual increase in customer satisfaction. It is a total system approach that works horizontally across all functions and departments involving all employees, top to bottom, extend backwards, and forward to include the supply chain and the customer. Jose M. Juran, an important pioneer in the field of quality management, acknowledged that managing for quality is not easy and requires important changes but does not believe great managerial efforts as considered necessary by Deming. He proposed that quality must be viewed as an investment in a firm's profitability. While Deming emphasized worker involvement and worker pride, Juran focused on quality planning, quality control and quality improvement. In the same way quality education is very important and for this undertaking school climate or school environment is necessarily essential for better learning which in turn will bring quality learning in all levels of Education.

1.1 Concept of School and Classroom Climate

The concept of *climate* plays a major role in shaping the quality of school life, teaching, learning, and support. School and classroom climate are temporal, and somewhat

fluid, perceived qualities of the immediate setting which emerge from the complex transaction of many factors. In turn, the climate reflects the influence of the underlying, institutionalized values and belief systems, norms, ideologies, rituals, and traditions that constitute the school *culture*. And, of course, the climate and culture at a school also are shaped by the surrounding political, social, cultural, and economic contexts (e.g., home, neighborhood, city, state, country). School and classroom climate sometimes are referred to as the learning environment, as well as by terms such as atmosphere, ambience, ecology, and milieu. Depending on quality, the impact on students and staff can be beneficial for or a barrier to learning. Key concepts for understanding school and classroom climate are social system organization; social attitudes; staff and student morale; power, control, guidance, support, and evaluation structures; curricular and instructional practices; communicated expectations; efficacy; accountability demands; cohesion; competition; "fit" between learner and classroom; system maintenance, growth, and change; orderliness; and safety. Moos (e.g.1979) groups such concepts into three dimensions: (1) Relationship (i.e., the nature and intensity of personal relationships within the environment; the extent to which people are involved in the environment and support and help each other); (2) Personal development (i.e., basic directions along which personal growth and self-enhancement tend to occur); and (3) System maintenance and change (i.e., the extent to which the environment is orderly, clear in expectations, maintains control, and is responsive to change). Research has indicated a range of strategies for enhancing a positive climate. All school staff have a significant role to play in ensuring that such strategies are well-implemented and maintained.

1.2 Nalbari Town

Nalbari is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. It is formally declared as a district in 14th August, 1985. The district headquarters are located in Nalbari. The district occupies an area of 2257sq.km and has a population of 7, 69, 919 according to 2011 census. Nalbari town is 2 km away from the national highway 31. The rate of total literacy is 68.08% (as of 2011 census). The first middle school is established in Nalbari in the year 1887. In 1917 it was formally declared as Nalbari High School. Later on this school was named as 'Nalbari Gordon High School'. With the passage of time, different schools, colleges were established at Nalbari. Nalbari is famous for Sanskrit Education. It is known as 'NABADEEP' of Assam because there are various Sanskrit education centres at Nalbari. Nalbari has got intertwined with its socio-cultural life. It has several small scale industries. Besides, agriculture there is various sectors that contribute to the economy of Nalbari district such as fisheries, animal husbandry, sericulture and handcraft industries. Tourism in Nalbari district refers the picturesque beauty as well as the enriching history of the district. Some of the popular tourist attractions of this place are Hari Mandir, Jain Temple, Billeswar Temple, Sripur Dewalay Mandir, Ganga pukhuri and more.

1.3 Tura Town

Tura is a city and a municipality in West Garo Hills district in the Indian state of Meghalaya having a population of 75,45,58,391. One of the largest towns in Meghalaya, Tura is a valley located at the foothills of the Tura Hills and right below the Tura Peak which is famous for its picture postcard beauty. The climate in Tura is moderate throughout the year and has a large number of interesting and unexplored areas. It is 220 kilometers from the nearest city Guwahati and is filled with small rivulets, fascinating waterfalls and green valleys all around which attract many visitors to reside in the town. The town is mostly inhabited by the Garo tribes along with some more ethnic groups like Hajongs, Koches, Bengalis and Nepalais. Christianity is the main religion of the valley more than 90% of the Garos are Baptist. The Garos have a matrilineal and matrilocal society. In case of education the town has a literacy level of 73% and has some popular missionaries, 4 colleges and a host of good 40 numbers of secondary schools.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

1. To study the current problems in school environment in Tura Town and Nalbari Town.
2. To study the challenges of caring environment in Tura Town and Nalbari Town.
3. To study the concern of expansion in the process of teaching-learning in Tura Town and Nalbari Town.
4. To study the management of the schools regarding school environment in Tura Town and Nalbari Town.
5. To study the opinions of Principals/headmasters, teachers and students of Tura Town and Nalbari Town in relation to school environment.
6. To find out the problems faced by Principals/headmasters, students and teachers in a learning community of Tura Town and Nalbari Town.

3.0 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Population:

The population of the given study is from 20 Schools illustrated in the following table:

Town Name	Student	Teacher	Principal
Nalbari	1388	479	20
Tura	1426	558	20

3.2 Sample:

The sample of the population is taken randomly as given in the following table.

Town Name	Student	Teacher	Principal
Nalbari	430(30%)	120 (25%)	20 (100%)
Tura	421(30%)	140(25%)	20 (100%)

3.3 Tool for Data Collection:

The tool for the present study is Five Points rating scale as adapted from "*School as a Caring Community Profile-II A Survey of Students, Staff, and Parents*", developed by T.Lickona and M.Davidson in January, 2003. It has 42 question items. The five point rating scale implies the following:

Rating NO.	Indication
1	Almost never
2	Sometimes
3	As often as not
4	Frequently
5	Almost always

3.4 Data Collection:

For the convenience sake, the researchers have circulated the five point rating scale for the select Administrator/Principal/Head Masters/Mistress, the Teachers, and the Students of Class IX studying in Nalbari and Tura Towns and collected the information in person.

3.5 Data Analysis:

The data is analyzed by using simple percentages and average mean of the collected information from the schools in Tura Town and Nalbari Town.

4.0 OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Nalbari Town

- i) Girls were more active than boys in most of the schools of Nalbari Town
- ii) Most of the students are sincere. But a few students are not so sincere in the class.
- iii) Teachers try to control the student.
- iv) Principals were also very welcoming and responding.
- v) Schools are very active in both education and cultural field.
- vi) Parents are also very sensitive to their children.
- vii) The whole environment of all the 20 schools in Nalbari Town is comfortable.
- viii) Most of the schools have laboratory facilities for science with well trained teachers.
- ix) Parents are very careful to their children, they often meet the teachers.
- x) A few students are afraid of teachers. They keep silence in the classroom, even they become frightened whenever teacher asked them questions.
- xi) Principals take decision after discussing with the administrative body and teachers.
- xii) Students clean up their classroom before the class starts (mainly in the Govt. Schools)
- xiii) The students are also helpful.
- xiv) Sometimes teachers take extra class after the school is over whenever needed.
- xv) In solving some classroom problems teachers discuss with the principal.
- xvi) Basic teaching aids are available in every school but sometime few private schools facilitate visual aids also.
- xvii) Most of the students are respectful towards their teachers and principal.
- xviii) Few students cannot feel comfortable with their classmates.
- xix) Teacher parents relationships are very good.
- xx) There is exclusion of students belonging to different race, religion or culture in schools of Nalbari Town.
- xxi) It is found from the study that students never resolve conflicts without insults.
- xxii) Students hardly can talk to teachers about problems which means fear exists in their mind.
- xxiii) All students can't feel comfortable with their classmates.
- xxiv) Some students at Nalbari Town can't express their problems. Because fear exists in their mind.
- xxv) But all 20 schools can't organize teacher-parent meet timely.
- xxvi) Some students are not so sincere.
- xxvii) Teachers are not so strict in some schools.
- xxviii) Some parents are over sensitive to their children. Sometimes it may harm to the students.
- xxix) Proper audio visual aids are not used in schools mainly in the Govt. Schools.

- xxx) Some schools in Nalbari Town are situated along the main road area due to noises from vehicles, the teaching-learning activities are being disturbed.
- xxxii) Some teachers' voice is not clear during teaching-learning process.
- xxxiii) In some Govt. schools of Nalbari Town discipline is not appropriate.

4.2 Tura Town

- i) Students were very enthusiastic in giving opinions.
- ii) Teachers and Principals cooperated but some principals were reluctant to spare time for the students of Class IX since they were engaged in completing their syllabus.
- iii) Students of the schools were found to be obedient and disciplined towards the rules and regulation of the school but some students of private schools found to be very chaotic in the classroom because of the improper seating arrangement and space.
- iv) In some school teachers were very motivating and had a good control over their respective classroom.
- v) Appropriate teacher-student interactions were found to be homely.
- vi) Principals as well as teachers were very frank with the students and they inculcated the modern thoughts in them.
- vii) Teachers absenteeism were observed in some private schools, even principal and vice-principal were absent in one private school.
- viii) In the absence of teachers students were observed smoking and chewing tobacco inside the classroom.
- ix) Some teachers were found smoking in the staff room.
- x) Students having mutual respects towards one another in a team, but girls were found to be more competitive than boys in some schools.
- xi) Parents are very much concerned of their children's performance and attitude and have a good relationship with teachers and principals.
- xii) Teacher-teacher and teacher-principal relationship were found to be healthy.
- xiii) Most of the schools were found to be clean and students maintain bulletin board with up-to-date information and also with creative arts in the classrooms.
- xiv) Untrained and senior teachers were found to be lifeless and less enthusiastic towards students' activities.
- xv) Some classrooms were observed to be very untidy with bidis and tobacco on the floors.
- xvi) It is found that students of schools in Tura Town almost always exclude those who are different race, religion or culture.

4.3 Comparison between the Schools in Nalbari Town and Schools in Tura Town

The following is subjected to the Researchers view point which is analyzed from the information collected and observed personally from students, teachers and the Principals and compared between the towns of Nalbari and Tura, Assam and Meghalaya respectively in India.

Question Items(42)	Nalbari Town	Tura Town
Students treatment for classmates	Frequently	As often as not
Students exclude those who are different	Sometimes	Almost always
Students try to comfort peers	As often as not	Sometimes
Students respect the personal property	As often as not	Almost always
Students help each other, even if not friends	Frequently	Frequently
When hurtful, students try to make up	As often as not	Sometimes
Students show respect for school property	Frequently	Frequently
Students help others to follow rules	frequently	Frequently
Students behave respectfully towards staff	Almost always	Frequently
Students work well together	Almost always	Frequently
Students help to improve the school	Almost always	Frequently
Students disrespectful toward their teachers	Almost never	Almost never
Students help new students feel accepted	Some times	Almost always
Students have positive influence on students	Frequently	As often as not
Students pick on other students	Frequently	Sometimes
Students are willing to forgive each other	As often as not	Frequently
Students show poor sportsmanship	Almost never	Sometimes
Students are patient with each other	Frequently	Sometimes
Students resolve conflicts without insults etc.	Almost never	Sometimes
Students disrespectful toward their classmates	Almost never	Sometimes
Students listen to each other in discussion	Frequently	Frequently
When other students pick up students help	As often as not	Sometimes
Students refrain from put-down	As often as not	Sometimes
Students share what they have	Frequently	Frequently

Question Items(42)	Nalbari Town	Tura Town
Students are Involved in helping to solve school problems	Almost always	As often as not
Students can talk to teachers about problems	Almost never	Almost always
Parents show they care children's education	As often as not	Almost always
Students disrespectful to parents in school	Almost never	Almost never
Teachers go out to help students in need	Almost always	Almost always
Teachers treat parents with respect	Almost always	Almost always
Count on adults in the school	As often as not	Almost always
Teachers unfair in treating students	Almost never	Almost never
Parents treat others with respect	Almost always	Almost always
Parents show respect for teachers	Almost always	Almost always
Teachers act in character of the school	Frequently	Frequently
All staff act in character of the school	Frequently	Almost always
Children, parents act in character	Frequently	Frequently
Faculty and staff respect each other well	Frequently	Almost always
Faculty and staff are involve in helping decision	Frequently	Almost always
Schools show appreciation to staff, faculty	Almost always	Almost always
Schools treat parents with respect	Almost always	Almost always
Parents are involved actively in schools	Frequently	Almost always

5.0 SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Nalbari Town

1. Teacher-student relation can be made friendly by mutual understanding. In this regard teacher should also co-operate with the students.
2. There should have some extra guidance which helps the students to adjust with their classmates.
3. Teacher-parent meet must be held on time to time.

4. Teacher must be sometimes strict and firm in principles.
5. Proper audio-visual aids can be utilized in the classroom.
6. Mainly educational institutions should be established at peaceful area.
7. There should have some training programme for teachers from time to time.
8. Principals of the schools must be socialable, frank and possess sound characters.
9. Teachers should be well trained, mainly for the science class with the knowledge of the proper use of laboratory equipments.
10. Classroom should be big and comfortable in size.
11. Teachers' voice should be loud and clear while teaching in the classrooms.
12. Discipline should be maintained properly.

5.2 Tura Town

1. Proper Parent-teacher association can be established in the school.
2. Parents must be actively involved in their children's education and care.
3. Life skill education should be incorporated with lesson taught in the classroom by the teachers.
4. Students can be made aware of their needs, misconducts and talents by proper guidance and counselling services once in a week.
5. Proper guidance to the students regarding the code of conducts inside the Classroom can be availed.
6. School rules can be discussed by the principals and teachers every day in their assembly to make students obey and respect the school rules.
7. Students can be involved in decision making process in every activity in the school to inculcate values and make them a responsible member of a community.
8. Teacher can extend their class with the discussion regarding the issues and problems of their community and sort out the solution from them to raise their self confidence and make them aware of their duties as a responsible citizen.
9. Parents can be made aware always concerning about the teacher's activities and the programs in the school.
10. Students can be involved in school activities or any projects works group-wise to build leadership qualities and establish mutual respect among themselves.
11. School managing committee can always be particular about the formal training of the teachers.
12. Time to time training is a must for the principals and teachers in planning, management and administration of the school activities and programs to be up-to-date.
13. Proper inspection by the department of education and Literacy for proper administration of the schools can be implemented.
14. Teacher should have minimum knowledge of professional ethics and be conscious of their roles which can be evaluated through teacher-principal interactions and teacher-teacher interactions.

15. Teachers', Parent's and Children's day must be celebrated in the school for proper recognition of teachers, parents and students and their interaction as the members of the community.
16. Students behaviour can be monitored by the teacher-parent interaction which is an important collaborative task for students' proper character building.
17. A healthy relationship between teacher and principal can be established for proper functioning of the school activities in the absence of any staff members.
18. Seating arrangement has to be done properly with spacious classroom for motivating and maintaining the interest among the students in learning.
19. A teacher must create a cordial and smooth relationship through individual discussion with the students to make the students feel homely.
20. Importance of clean and healthy environment must be inculcated through cleaning and decorating the school campus.
21. Extracurricular activities with sports and games make students mentally healthy and also remove boredom. So, principals and teachers should take care of it by actively involving themselves in those activities.
22. All kinds of cultural and community programs should be organized in the schools to make the students participate and learn respecting the values and ideologies of every culture to erase the feeling of hatred towards the people of different culture and religion.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The concepts for understanding school and classroom climate are social system organization; social attitudes; staff and student morale; power, control, guidance, support, and evaluation structures, curricular and instructional practices, communicated expectations, efficacy, accountability demands, cohesion, competition, "fit" between learner and classroom. There will be expansion in qualitative education if the environment surrounded by the above elements are sound. Thus, this present survey of Select Principals, teachers and students of Class IX in Nalbari Town and Tura Town shows the environment in the schools. Though there is variation because of the Private and Government managed schools and this indicates a difference in the management, administration of the schools etc. whatever be the situations and conditions the students, teachers and the principals of the schools need a sound environment of learning, teaching and managing the educational enterprise. And hence, Schools in Tura Town indicate a better picture of learning environment as compared to schools in Nalbari Town.

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