



Psycho-Social Climate of class and Academic Performance with the Mediation of Hope and Happiness in Students

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A B S T R A C T

The aim of the research was to study causal relationship of psycho-social climate of class and academic performance with the mediation of hope and happiness in the first year high school students. In this causal-correlative study, population was all of the girls and boys in first year high school of Bandar Abbas that 222 students were selected using cluster sampling. Tools of this research were fisher and Fraser my class questionnaire (MCI), Snyder Hope Scale and Oxford Happiness questionnaire. Students' averages were also used as measure of academic performance index. Proposal evaluation performed using structural equation modeling. Based on result of this research, structural equations proposal of causal relationship between mentioned variables was acceptable ($P=0.0001$ NFI= 0.773, CMIN/DF= 3.179 RMSEA= 0.099, CFI= 0.825, TLI= 0.738). Generally, in research proposal it was shown that endogenous variable of psychosocial climate of class has direct significant effect on academic performance. Direct effect of psycho-social climate of class was positive and significant on hope and happiness. Indirect effect of psycho-social climate of class was positive and significant through hope and happiness. Direct effect of hope and happiness was positive and significant on academic performance.

Keywords: Hope, Psycho- Social Climate Of Class, Happiness, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Students' achievement is one of the important indices in education evaluation and this system tries to do it in the best way. In other words, society and specially education are interested and worried in related to the destiny, successful growth and development of individual and his position in the society and expect him to develop in different aspects such as personality, emotional and behavior (Hassanzadeh & Mahdinejad, 2013). Educational achievement is related to different factors among them personal, social, educational, psychological factors. Studying these factors and to determine the contribution of each them in academic achievement leads to determine ways to identify factors contributing to the academic success and failure and this helps to planners and educators to improve positive affecting factors and reduce negative factors effect (Tugade, Fredrickson, & Feldman Barrett, 2004). Among the most important factors affecting on teaching-learning process is Psycho-social climate of class (Fisher & Fraser, 1981; SABO, 2013). Class as a social group consists of different people who are different in terms of experience, culture, personality and other different

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DOI: **In pressing**

To cite this article: Farajpour, N. Samavi, S. A. and Ebrahimi, K. (2016). Psycho-Social Climate of class and Academic Performance with the Mediation of Hope and Happiness in Students. *Iranian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 2 (2), 24-33.

dimensions. Interact with each other class members affects from proper and effective interaction and to achieve academic purposes it is necessary to have proper and desirable climate in classes. Desirable and proper and climate are a positive and purposeful relation between teacher and students in the class(Høigaard, Kovač, Øverbj, & Haugen, 2015).

Results of researched of(Bennett, 2003; Høigaard et al., 2015) showed that there is significant relationship between psycho-social climate of class and academic achievement. Fisher and Fraser (1981) in an article called validation and using my class questionnaire for psycho-social climate of class consider five subscales: Friction, Cohesiveness Satisfaction, competitiveness, and difficulty.

Friction refers to the tension between students and staff(Bennett, 2003). Researches show that, there is significant negative relationship between friction and academic achievement (Vermunt, 2005; Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Anderson (1970) refers to significant relationship between friction and learning in his research(Bennett, 2003).

Shapiro (1993) define cohesiveness as feelings of members about their group as a whole. Teacher provides a cohesive classroom environment for students by creating a sense of community relationship and interaction between students and internalize it. In the cohesive classes, students value for their classmates, and are responsible in their learning and have better understanding of each other through social activities. Slavin (2010) believes that students who work in group love more the schools than students who work individually. Results of researches of Bishop (2008) refer to significant relationship between cohesiveness and academic achievement.

Against above researches results, Dunn and Harris (1998) in their research called organizational dimensions of class climate and their effects on academic achievement concluded that there is not significant relationship between cohesiveness and academic achievement. Bennett (2003) has defined the satisfaction as the pleasure of classroom for students. Results of Fisher and Fraser (1981) research showed that students who are satisfied their classroom learn more and love school more than others. Research findings of White (1986) show that there is significant and positive relationship between satisfaction and academic achievement.

Competitive purposes structures occur when students compete with each other to achieve success. Creating competitive environment leads to direct learning experience and students work together without interaction with each other. Chávez (1984) in a research as "naturalistic evaluation of program reading" concluded that there is significant and negative relationship between competitive environment of class and students' reading progress. Students who understand higher level of competition reduced their reading progress scores.

The final component to determine classroom climate is difficulty. Challenging environments are necessary to create positive classroom climate. Burkman and Brezin (1981)believe that learning standards should be achievable and if these standards are very high and learning tasks are too difficult will discourage students and diminishes their performance. Haertel, Walberg, and Haertel (1981) by a conducted Meta - Analysis on implemented researches in 823 classes, concluded that satisfaction, cohesiveness and objectiveness in the class climate associated with higher academic performance and less friction and conflict between students. The other effective factor on students' academic performance development is

structural hope. Hope is an emotional condition which leads to positive attitude to the next events in the life and it is a process which is formed of thinking about purpose, attitude to move toward the purpose and the ways to achieve it (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Therefore encouraging thinking includes three main concepts, purpose, reflection thinking and routing thinking. Routing thinking reflects the individual perception to produce cognitive routes towards purpose (Richardson, Abraham, & Bond, 2012; Charles R Snyder & Lopez, 2001) and hope includes individuals recognizing to their ability at the beginning and during the selected routes toward the purpose (C. R. Snyder, Cheavens, & Sympson, 1997).

Charles R Snyder and Lopez (2001) studied relationship between hope and students' success in first high school class during 6 years, results of this research showed that hope high levels are valid predictor of high academic performance in university (Luthans, Luthans, & Jensen, 2012). Additionally, results of the researches of Luthans et al. (2012), Charles R Snyder and Lopez (2001) point to the significant and positive relationship between hope and academic achievement. Happiness is another factor which is related to academic achievement. Happiness is based on attitude and personal understandings and is a desirable emotion and come from positive experiences and life satisfaction. Psychologically, there are two kinds of happiness. One kind of happiness comes from sensible living conditions such as education, job, financial resources and welfare that are objective happiness. The other kind of happiness affect from inner states and personal perceptions that is subjective happiness. Happiness is generating of vitality, motion and dynamism (Hills & Argyle, 2001). Carr (2013) believes that happy people, usually evaluate their skills better and remember positive events better than negative events and make better decisions in their life. Results of the researches of Hassanzadeh and Mahdinejad (2013) point to the significant and positive relationship between happiness and academic achievement. Previous researches about psycho-social climate of class, hope and happiness, show that these variables are closely related to academic achievement and can develop students recognition to improve academic performance. Studying them as a model presents deeper understanding from relations of all these variables and helps to better learning for students. The main aim of the present studies us to study causal relationship of psycho-social climate of class with academic performance with the mediation of hope and happiness in the students. Figure 1 shows the proposed model research.

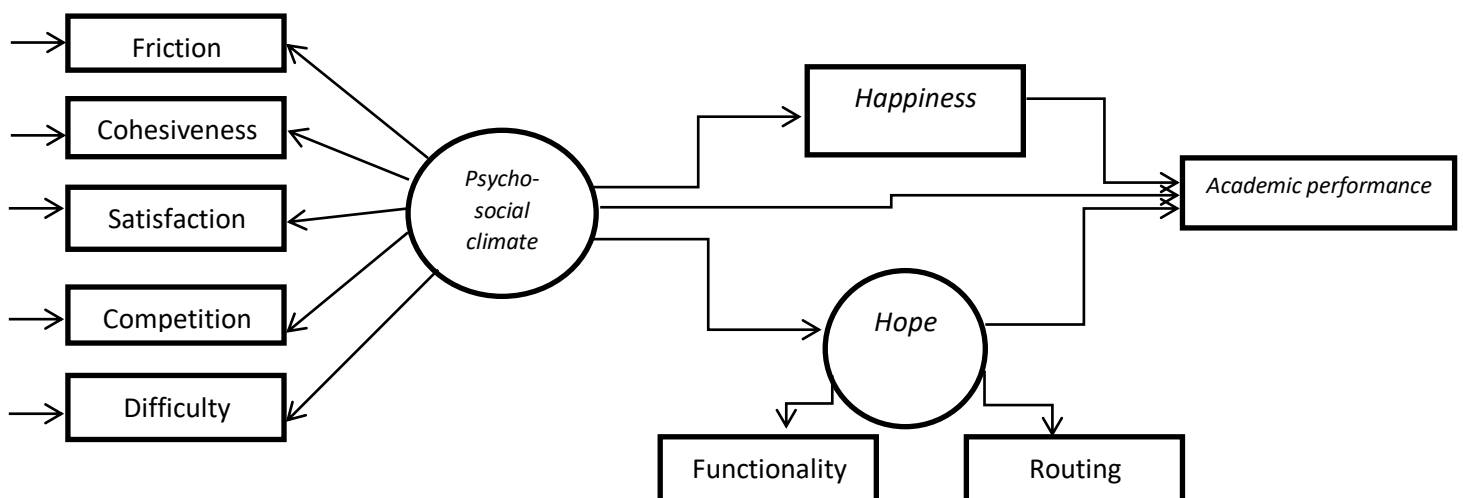


Diagram 1. The role of psycho -social climate of class on academic performance with the mediation of hope and happiness in first high school students in Bandar Abbas

Research Hypotheses

- Psycho-social climate of class with the mediation of hope and happiness effect on academic Performance.

Direct and Indirect hypotheses:

- Psycho-social climate of class is related to hope.
- Psycho-social climate of class is related to happiness.
- Psycho-social climate of class is related to academic performance.
- Hope is positively related to academic performance.
- Happiness is related to academic performance.
- Psycho-social climate of class is related to academic performance through hope.
- Psycho-social climate of class is related to academic performance through happiness.

METHODOLOGY

Population of this research includes all girls and boys in first high school of public schools in Bandar Abbas who were educating in 2014-2015 academic year. 222 girls and boys among students (105 girls, 117 boys) selected by clustering sampling method from dual areas of education in Bandar Abbas. That, in any area a school from boys and a school from girls selected randomly and questionnaires distributed between first grade students of the selected schools.

My Class Inventory (MCI): My class inventory of Fisher and Fraser (1981) used to study psycho-social climate of class. This inventory consists of 25 articles which are set as Yes, No questions and has five subscales called friction, cohesiveness, satisfaction, competition and difficulty (Fisher & Fraser, 1981). Focus of the main version of this inventory is on primary school student, but it is also suitable for high school students. Reliability of this inventory using Cronbach's alpha method between 0.62-0.78 (Bennett, 2003). In the present research Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the whole questionnaire was calculated 0.87 and for Friction 0.84, Cohesiveness 0.81, Satisfaction 0.79, Competition 0.88 and difficulty 0.71 that shows satisfactory internal consistency of My Class Inventory

Snyder Hope Scale (HS): In order to measure hope variable of Hope Scale, Charles R Snyder and Lopez (2001) scale was used. This scale has 12 articles which is graded based on an eight-point scale from completely disagree to completely agree. The minimum grade is in this inquiry and the maximum is 64. The higher the score in this scale shows the higher hope. This inquiry has two subscales called hope functionality and hope routing.

Hope functionality component is measured with Articles 2, 9, 10, 12 and hope routing component is measured with Articles 1,4,7,8. In order to increase the accuracy of the test, Articles 3, 5, 6 and 11 were considered as deviant questions and finally they will be deleted from the analysis process. Reliability coefficients for scale totally and subscales of hope functionality and hope routing in Charles R Snyder and Lopez (2001) is reported 0.85, 0.81 and 0.74

respectively. Functional structure of this inquiry is reported satisfactory by its manufacturer. Also, Babyak, Snyder, and Yoshinobu (1993) reported reliability coefficient of this scale using Cronbach's alpha 0.86 and by retest 0.81. In the present study reliability coefficient for total score of hope obtained 0.86 using Cronbach's alpha and for subscales of hope functionality and hope routing 0.82 and 0.75 respectively.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ): Oxford Happiness Questionnaire is improved version of Oxford Happiness Questionnaire of Hills and Argyle (2001) which is made by Hills and Argyle (2002) and evaluates following psychological structures: life rewarding, mental preparation, self-content aesthetic feeling, life satisfaction, time organizing, finding fun and happy memories. Hills and Argyle (2002) reported reliability coefficient of the questionnaire 0.91 and internal consistency of items 0.04 to 0.65. Kashdan (2004) in their research reported test reliability coefficient in test and retest stages using cronbach's alpha method 0.84 and 0.87 respectively. In the present study, reliability coefficient obtained 0.91 using Cronbach's alpha method.

Academic Performance: In this research GPA of writing courses at the high school final exam is considered as an academic performance criterion.

RESULT

Table1. Descriptive findings related to the research variables (Mean standard deviation, minimum score, and maximum score)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Psycho-Social Climate Of Class	53.32	5.97	37	67
Friction	12.52	2.04	9	15
Cohesiveness	10.31	3.42	5	15
Satisfaction	10.47	2.78	5	15
Competition	12.38	1.75	9	15
Difficulty	7.63	1.88	5	11
Hope	53.29	5.90	33	64
Hope Functionality	26.67	5.03	16	32
Hope Routing	26.61	3.33	17	32
Happiness	100.32	10.79	72	129
Academic Performance	19.28	0.77	16.44	20

As it is shown in table 1 mean and standard deviation for these variables were 53.32 and 5.97 for psycho-social climate of class, 12.52 and 2.04 for friction, 10.31 and 3.42 for cohesiveness, 10.47 and 2.78 for satisfaction, 12.38 and 1.75 for competition, 7.63 and 1.88 for difficulty, 53.29 and 5.90 for hope, 20.67 and 5.03 for hope functionality, 26.61 and 3.33 for hope routing, 100.32 and 10.79 for happiness, 19.28 and 0.77 for academic performance.

Coefficients between the variables:

As can be seen in Figure 2, all coefficients are significant path to happiness than the path to academic performance.

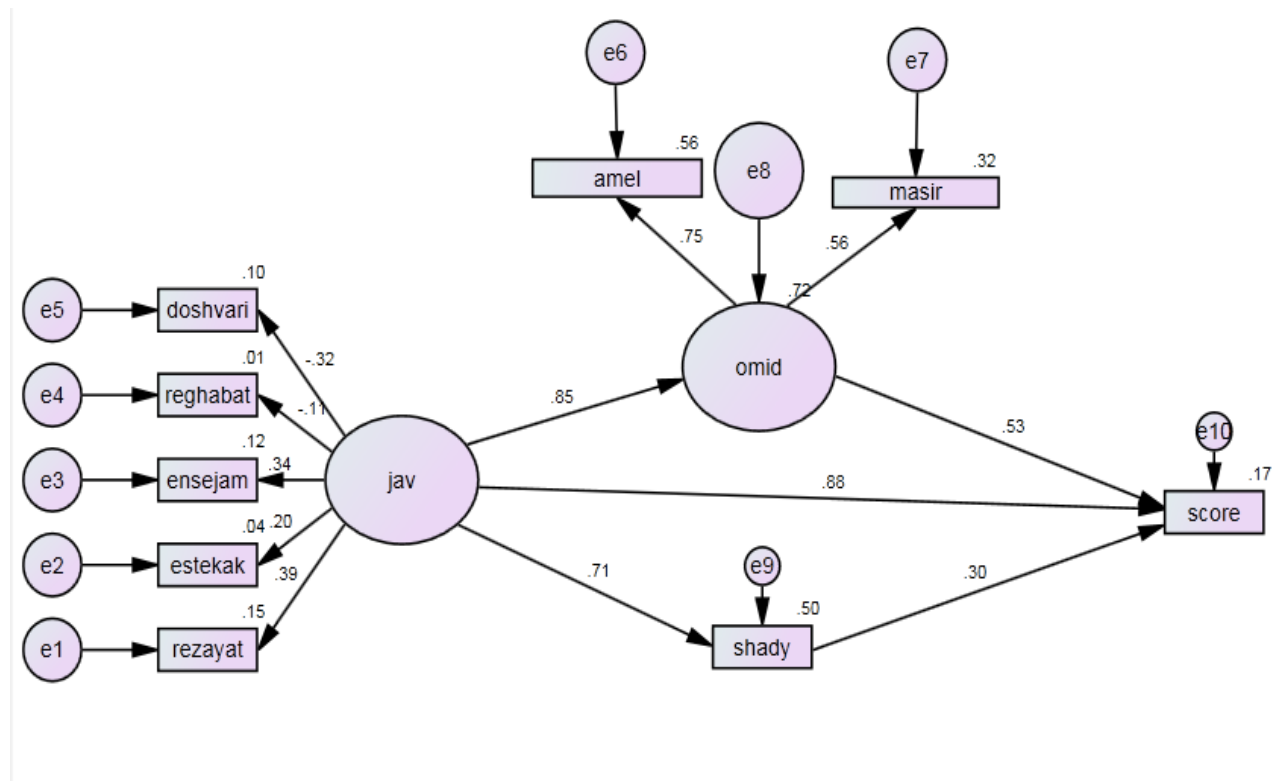


Figure2. Coefficients between the variables

Before studying main model fitness based on fitness indices, routing coefficients of direct relationships of research hypotheses were studied in the proposed model. Table 3 shows routing coefficients of direct relations and other parameters of measuring the variables of the proposed model.

Table2. Measuring the parameters of the variables in study model

	β	b	SE	CR	Sig.
Psycho-Social Climate Of Class To Happiness	0.71	7.02	1.56	4.48	001/0 \geq
Psycho-Social Climate Of Class To Hope	0.85	2.14	0.983	2.962	001/0 \geq
Psycho-Social Climate Of Class To Academic Performance	0.88	0.62	0.44	1.39	001/0 \geq
Hope To Academic Performance	0.30	0.02	0.01	1.66	001/0 \geq
Hope To Academic Performance	0.53	0.15	0.14	1.04	001/0 \geq

According to the standard routing coefficients and the corresponding critical values presented in table 2, it is seen that all routes are significant. Among direct significant standard relations between variables of the proposal model of the research, the relationship of psycho-social climate with happiness is (p 0.001, B=0.71), psycho-social climate with hope (p 0.001, B=0.85), psycho-social climate with academic performance (p 0.001, B=0.88) happiness with academic performance (p 0.001, B=0.30) and hope with academic performance (p 0.001, B=0.53) respectively.

Evaluation of structural section of the proposed model was studied using fitness indices. Table 3 shows fitness indices of the proposed model of research.

Table3. Model Fit Indices of Study Model

Fitting Indices	Value
(χ^2)	76.30
Sig.	0.001
df	24
(χ^2 /df)	3.179
Goodness-of-fit (GFI)	0.925
adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI)	0.859
normed fit index (NFI)	0.773
comparative fit index CFI	0.825
Incremental fit index (IFI)	0.832
Tucker-Lewis (TLI)	0.738
Root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.099

According to table 3, Chi-square goodness-of-fit index (χ^2) is equal to 76.30 degree of freedom 24 and significant level 0.001. Therefore other indices of the research proposal were studied. according to the mentioned results in table 4. The ratio chi-square index to degree of freedom (χ^2 /df) is equal to 3.179, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) equal to 0.925, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) equal to 0.859, normalized fit index (NFI) equal to 0.773, Comparative fit index equal to 0.825, increasing fit index (IFI) equal to 0.832, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) equal to 0.738 and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) equal to 0.099, that show the model has mode rate fit.

CONCLUSION

As it was seen in the results of research hypotheses test in findings section, all direct hypotheses are confirmed. Also, all of the indirect hypotheses were confirmed, and mediating role of hope and happiness with academic performance were confirmed. Following, research hypotheses are explained.

The relationship of psycho-social climate with hope: results of the present research showed that there is significant relationship between psycho-social climate of class and hope. In order to explain this finding we should say that achievability of learning tasks and standards, providing various learning situations by group working, interaction and relationship between students and reducing serious competitions between them which led to increase hope in students are the most important features of proper and desirable psycho-social climate in classrooms. In such situations, students understand more their abilities and think that learning goals are achievable thus they plan to achieve their goals.

Relationship of psycho-social climate of class with happiness: Obtained examples of the present research show that there is significant relationship between psycho-social climate of class and happiness. Proper and desirable climate provides positive and significant relationship between teacher and students. Students are responsible to learning of each other and understand better group activities in related to the values of each other, tension and conflict decreases between them so; classroom will be delightful for them. By positive and desirable

experiences and achievement of objectives with cooperation, positive attitude towards academic performance of students is created which leads to increase their happiness indeed it is not unexpected that in such environment, students' happiness will increase.

Psycho-social climate of class relationship with academic performance: Results showed that there is significant positive relationship between psycho-social climate of class and academic performance. In order to achieve academic objectives, appropriate interaction should be established between teacher and students. Class member is interaction influence of class climate. In the cohesive classrooms in which students value to learn each other, and working together, have more learning opportunities and learn from each other. In such environments conflict is less thus, students will be more interested to learning. Students who are satisfied with their class learn more and therefore they will have better performance.

Relationship between hope and academic performance:

Obtained results of structural model showed that there is positive and significant relationship between hope and academic performance. Hopeful people Believe that there are many ways to achieve to the considered objectives thus when they collide with an obstacle can maintain their motivation and use alternative ways. Such people believe that objects are achievable and try more to achieve them and this will led to increase their performance.

Happiness relationship with academic performance: Obtained results of the present research show that there is positive significant relationship between happiness and academic performance.

The student who has proper happiness level, evaluates better his skills and has more mental-well-being and relaxation and can better educate and achieve appropriate academic performance. But, above finding is not consistent to the results of the researches of Askari et.al 2005 .Their research results showed that there is not significant relationship between happiness and academic performance.

Relationship between psycho-social climates with academic performance through hope: According to the results of indirect routes analysis, psycho-social climate of class is related to the academic performance through hope. Hopeful person believes that he is able to achieve considered objectives in addition to this he has different ways to achieve to the objectives in the case he is unsuccessful; he will follow other possible ways. Such a person provides more learning opportunities with group activities in classroom. He is interacted with members of his group and is interested to him and others learning. This leads to appropriate psycho-social climate and thus improves their performance.

Relationship between psycho-social climate of class and academic performance through happiness: The other mediating route in the proposal is relationship between psycho-social climates of class with academic performance through happiness. As, it was shown, findings of the present study confirms this hypotheses. A student with high level of happiness satisfies his academic situation and gains positive experiences in this this field. These experiences foster a sense of empowerment in student and as the result he involves more in his tasks and better does them. Such a student is powerful in communication and collaboration and social relationships

with other people, teachers and peers.

The present study showed that there is significant relationship between psycho-social climate of class and students' academic performance. Therefore, it is proposed that in order to improve students' academic performance we should pay attention to the effective factors on.

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